

Parker Maisterra, Nicholas Murray, Xavier Nunez-Sundara,
Brianna Sparks, and Chase Thomas (editors)

Got Seeds?

*Letters from Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Cultivating the U.S. Midwest and Denmark (1875–1878)*

Shelfmark

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Letters from Jens Pedersen Bjergaard to Edwin Melancthon Haven.
June 4, 1875, to July 25, 1878.
15 correspondences (numbered 1 to 15 below).

Introduction

The fifteen correspondences edited here were addressed by the Danish agricultural economist Jens Pedersen-Bjergaard (1843–1930) to the American agricultural pioneer Edwin Melancthon Haven (1855–1917) between June 4, 1875, and July 25, 1878. They are housed in the University Archives and Special Collections (UA&SC) at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), and belong to the “Haven Seed Company Records” Collection. Purchased by CSUF from the Orange County Historical Society (OCHS) in 2014 for \$5,000, this collection had been donated to the OCHS between 1978 and 1981 by Randy Ema of Anaheim on behalf of his stepfather, Archibald B. Haven Jr. (1914–1986), who was Edwin Melancthon Haven’s grandson. It includes the business records of the Haven Seed Company (1873–1946) and the personal papers of the Haven family (1849–1980). The letters, postcards, and envelopes edited here are, for the most part, written in black-ink cursive on paper; their specific measurements are included below; and they are in good condition apart from some stains, tears, folds, stamp smudges, and areas of discoloration. For their vital assistance in identifying and tracking down the historical Jens Pedersen-Bjergaard (who in these manuscripts only appears as “J. Pedersen”), the editors wish to thank professors Jeppe Nevers (Syddansk Universitet, Denmark) and Kurt Villads Jensen (Stockholms Universitet, Sweden); see also [online](#).

The series begins as formal business communication and gradually develops into a personal friendship. Eleven correspondences hail from Rockford (Illinois), one from Chicago, and three from Denmark (Aarhus, Odense, and Copenhagen). While employed by the seed company of J. B. Root in Rockford, Pedersen writes primarily for business purposes, requesting seed samples and information on plant varieties, as he is envisioning their suitability for the Danish environment. Pedersen mentions his travels, which include a visit to the 1876 “Centennial International Exhibition,” a world’s fair in Philadelphia 100 years after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence; he refers to news from the Root, Haven, and Pedersen families; and he indicates his difficulties settling back into professional life in Denmark after a ten-year

stay in the American Midwest. In his final letter, Pedersen mentions a visit to Denmark by former U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant and hints at his brother's plans to travel to the United States.

These correspondences should be of interest to scholars of nineteenth-century migration and interpersonal networks between Europe and North America, agricultural and economic history, and epistolography. The manuscripts' original paragraphs, spelling, punctuation, and underlining have been retained as much as possible. In the original text, capitalization is not always clear. All editorial insertions, including expanded abbreviations, added punctuation, and page numbers, appear in square brackets. Identifiable individuals, locations, and technical terms (but not botanical specimens mentioned by their English names) have been referenced in the footnotes, usually when they first appear.

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The primary-source edition published below originated in the "History and Editing" course offered by CSUF's Department of History.

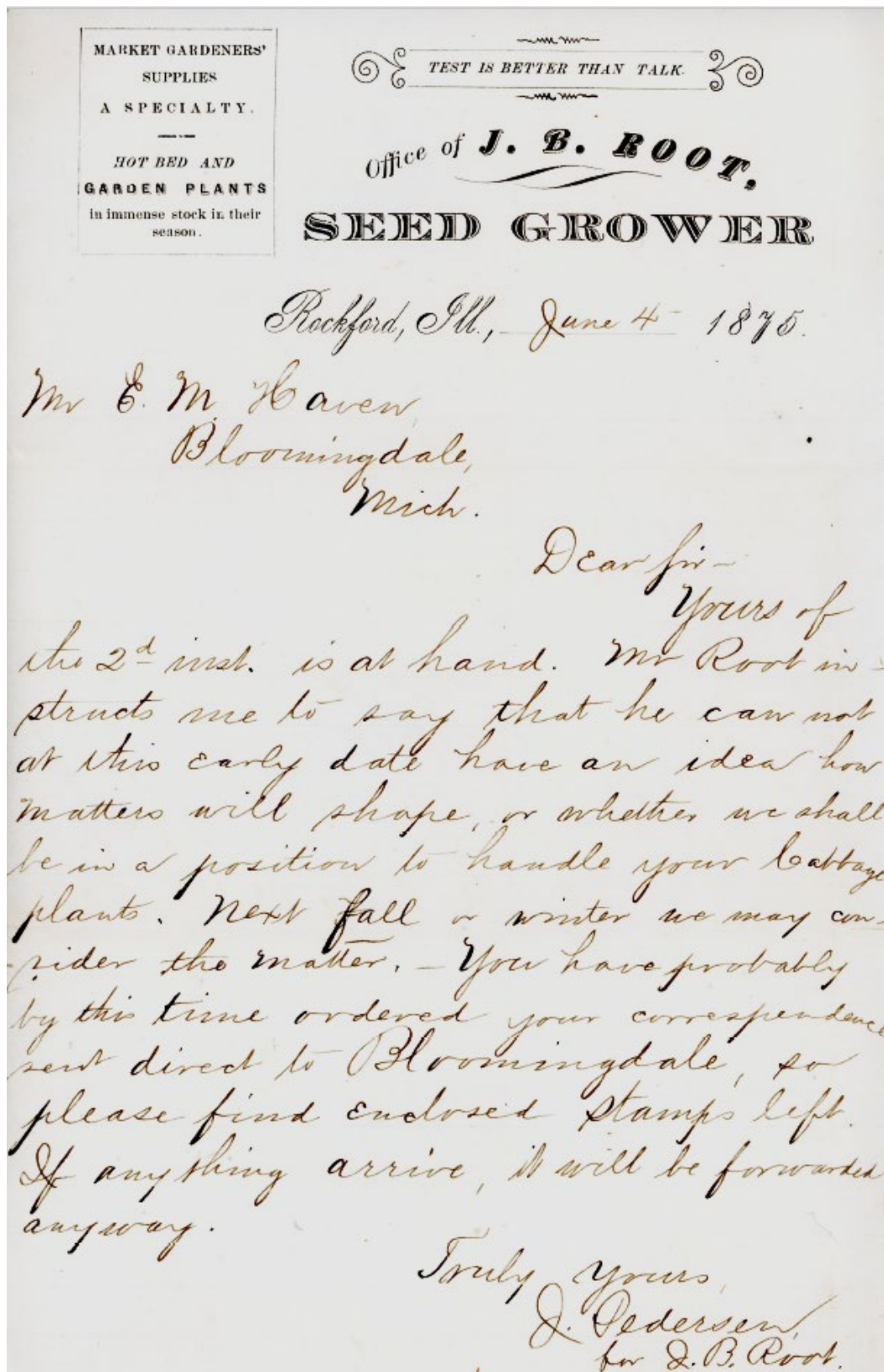


Figure 1: Image of Edition No. 1, stationery.

*Edition No. 1: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, June 4, 1875.*

[envelope, front; 6" x 3.5"; top left corner, sender's address, printed: J[ohn]. B[arnes]. ROOT¹ / SEED GROWER / Rockford;² Ill[inoi]s.³ / Return if not called for in 10 days; top right, round postal mark, stamped: ROCKFORD / ILL[INOIS] / JUN[E] 5; top right corner, green postal stamp, canceled, featuring a side-view portrait of George Washington:⁴ U.S. POSTAGE / THREE CENTS / 3; text, ink (crossed out in pencil/different hand/Edwin Haven):]

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven,⁵
Bloomingtondale,⁶
Van Buren Co[unty].⁷
Mich[igan].⁸

[stationery; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: MARKET GARDENERS' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY / HOT BED AND / GARDEN PLANTS / in immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS BETTER THAN TALK / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inois], ____ 1875; text, ink:]

June 4

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven
Bloomingtondale,
Mich[igan].

Dear Sir -

Yours of the 2^{[n]d} inst[ante mense].⁹ is at hand. Mr[.] Root instructs me to say that he can not at this early date have an idea how matters will shape, or whether we shall be in a position to handle your Cabbage plants. Next fall or winter we may consider the matter. - You have probably by this time ordered your correspondence sent direct to Bloomingtondale, so please find enclosed stamps left. If anything arrive, it will be forwarded anyway.

Truly yours,
J[ens]. Pedersen,¹⁰
for J[ohn]. B[arnes]. Root.

¹ (1845–1876), seed grower and gardener.

² City in the northern part of the U.S. state of Illinois.

³ U.S. state in the Midwest.

⁴ (1732–1799), first U.S. president (in office 1789–1797).

⁵ (1855–1917), American agricultural pioneer.

⁶ Village in the southwestern part of the U.S. state of Michigan.

⁷ County in the southwestern part of the U.S. state of Michigan.

⁸ U.S. state in the Midwest.

⁹ Latin, meaning "of the current month."

¹⁰ (1843–1930) Danish agricultural economist. Jens Pedersen Bjergaard (1843–1930).

*Edition No. 2: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, June 14, 1875.*

[envelope, front; 6" x 3.5"; top left corner, sender's address, printed: J[ohn]. B[arnes]. ROOT / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inoi]s. / Return if not called for in 10 days; top right, round postal mark, stamped: ROCKFORD / ILL[INOIS] / JUN[E] 14; top right corner, green postal stamp, canceled, featuring a side-view portrait of George Washington: U.S. POSTAGE / THREE CENTS / 3; text, ink (lines 1–4) and pencil/different hand/Edwin Haven (lines 5–6):]

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven,
Bloomingdale,
Van Buren Co[unty].
Mich[igan].

ans[wered] June 16
1875

[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: MARKET GARDENERS' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY / HOT BED AND / GARDEN PLANTS / in immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS BETTER THAN TALK / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inois], ____ 1875; text, ink:]

June 14

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven,
Bloomingdale,
Mich[igan].

Dear Sir:

Having been ill and absent for a couple of days, I find this morning at the office a letter for you which please find enclosed.

And now, being about writing to you, I would like to ask you a question or two, which you will oblige me by answering at your leisure: What kinds of trees do you find to do best on poor sandy land? and what is their comparative value and use? They are contemplating to plant an extensive tract of barren sandy heath¹¹ in a certain part of Denmark with useful forest trees. I have just opened correspondence with several

[stationery, page 2; text, ink (with a flourish at the bottom of the page):]

of the most prominent and leading men in the country in regard to the matter. It will of course take quite a while before any decision can be made, and I would like to be prepared to meet enquiries as promptly as possible.

Were any of the trees you may propose to recommend for a poor soil represented in the samples of wood you so kindly furnished me? If not, I would be greatly obliged for such

¹¹ Open, uncultivated land.

samples, and if you can furnish them without going to too much trouble, please let me know, and I will send on the required stamps.

If, in return, I can favor you, I will be pleased to do so.

Yours truly,
J[ens]. Pedersen.

P[ost].O[ffice]. Box 2089

*Edition No. 3: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, July 3, 1875.*

[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: MARKET GARDENERS' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY / HOT BED AND / GARDEN PLANTS / in immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS BETTER THAN TALK / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inois], ____ 1875; text, ink:]

July 3rd

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven,
Bloomington,
Mich[igan].

Dear Sir:

Thanks for your favor¹² of the 16th ult[imo mense].¹³ with kind suggestions. I felt like expressing my acknowledgement long ago, but then again I have not been in good health and have been indisposed to almost anything. I thoroughly appreciate your offer to furnish further samples of wood. If it be not "encroaching too much on good nature,[" I would be glad to have you send me duplicates of very small (thin) specimens of what I have already got and such others as your own judgment will suggest, as I have proposed to send samples to various prominent parties at home.¹⁴ Another

[stationery, page 2; text, ink and (last line) pencil/different hand/Edwin Haven:]

thing, that would be very acceptable is foliage (pressed) of the different kinds, for flowers of the Tulip Tree &c[etera].¹⁵ I presume it is too late now. For whatever you may send, in the way indicated, I beg you to accept my thanks in advance.

This summer I shall, in all probability have to stay nicely at home. Next year, by this time, or perhaps somewhat later, I propose, if Providence be willing, to start for Europe. The fates may then carry me round your way.

¹² Nineteenth-century synonym for "letter" or "correspondence."

¹³ Latin, meaning "of the last month."

¹⁴ In Denmark.

¹⁵ Abbreviation of the Latin "et cetera," meaning "and others."

Mr[.] Johnson left here for Chicago¹⁶ a couple of days ago.

Do not put yourself to too much trouble for the sake of obtaining specimens.

I am

Yours very truly,

J[ens]. Pedersen.

Stamps enclosed!

(July 29: asked 2nd time for wood list.)

*Edition No. 4: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, August 4, 1875.*

[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: MARKET GARDENERS' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY / HOT BED AND / GARDEN PLANTS / in immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS BETTER THAN TALK / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inois], ____ 1875; text, ink:]

Aug[ust] 4th

Mr[.] Edwin M[elancthon]. Haven

Bloomington, Mich[igan].

Dear Sir:

Your card of the 29th ult[imo mense]. came to hand a few days ago - your former Postal, referred to, never reached me. Having the list of samples at home, I forgot it time after time. On the next page is a copy of samples received[.] If you have any new ones to add, will be pleased to receive them. Mr[.] Root has returned after a short roundabout to sundry places. Everything is very quiet at Rockford just now. There is hardly anything for any one to do for some time to come. I should rather prefer a steady routine the year round. The see[d] harvest will probably commence by the first or middle of September.

With thanks for favors, I remain

Truly yours,

J[ens]. Pedersen.

[stationery, page 2; text, ink and (final word at N° 12) pencil/different hand/Edwin Haven:]

N^o17

- 1A Plain Sugar Maple
- 1B Birds. Eye "[Sugar Maple]"
- 1C Curly "[Sugar Maple]"

¹⁶ City in the northeastern part of the U.S. state of Illinois.

¹⁷ This list constitutes the "copy of samples received" by Jens Pedersen from Edwin Haven, referenced on the previous page.

- 2 White Ash
- 3 White Oak
- 4 Snow Wood
- 5 Hickory. - What variety? -
- 6 White Birch
- 7 Hemlock
- 8 Beech - What variety? -
- 9 Rock Glen
- 10 Black Walnut
- 11 Sycamore
- 12 White Pine - is this the same as Michigan Pine? - Yes.
- 13 Cherry
- 14 Basswood or Linden
- 15 Butternut or White Walnut
- 16 White Wood or Tulip Tree
- 17 Soft Maple
- 18 Tamarack.

*Edition No. 5: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, August 12, 1875.*

*[envelope, front; 6" x 3.5"; top left corner, sender's address, printed: J[ohn]. B[arnes]. ROOT / SEED
GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inoi]s. / Return if not called for in 10 days; top right, round postal mark,
stamped: ROCKFORD / ILL[INOIS] / AUG[UST] 22; top right corner, green postal stamp, canceled,
featuring a side-view portrait of George Washington: U.S. POSTAGE / THREE CENTS / 3; text, ink:]*

Mr[.] Edwin M[elancthon]. Haven,
Bloomingtondale,
Van Buren Co[unty].
Mich[igan].

[envelope, back; text, pencil/different hand/Edwin Haven, with "x" marks in ink:]

~~Onion~~
Cabbage
Cucumber X
Melon X
Tomato X

Pear
Beans, D.
Corn
Cabbage X
Quince X

*[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: MARKET GARDENERS' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY
/ HOT BED AND / GARDEN PLANTS / in immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS*

BETTER THAN TALK / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inois], _____
1875; text, ink:]

Aug[ust] 12

Mr[.] Edwin M[elancthon]. Haven,
Bloomingtondale,
Mich[igan].

My dear Sir:

Samples came to hand several days ago. Accept my thanks for the pains you have been at and the very neat and accurate way in which you have disposed of the task. I really feel ashamed to have troubled you and know not how to requite your favor. I know not whether I shall find occasion to use the samples in a commercial way, but, at any rate, they are interesting to me. - I have been speaking with Mr[.] Root about you. He is of opinion that the work will be altogether too rough and driving for you. He feels the necessity, too, of cutting down expenses as much as possible; and as he of course will oversee the operations himself, he calculates to get along

[stationery, page 2; text, ink:]

with a corps of strong, active, unskilled boys whom he can get a moderate rate of wages. He has expressed that you might come here and witness the manipulations if that would be any object with you, and enough so to justify, in your opinion, the expense of travel &c[etera]. - You will perhaps recollect that I rented a private room a few days before you left Rockford. If you would be content to live in the same frugal manner that I have to do and share room with me, the monthly expenses would probably not exeeed \$11 or 12⁰⁰ - and might perhaps be kept below that.

The prospects for seed crops here are very promising, especially if we get some warmer weather soon; otherwise it is questionable if Melons and the like will ripen. We have quite a show of flowers - Petunias, Phlox, Asters (very fine), Portulacas[,] Balsams, Verbenas, Pansies &c[etera]. - but the weeds are fully up to them in luxuriance, and refuse to be kept down. - If you think of making any arrangement with Mr[.] Root, I would recommend that you write him personally.

With thanks for favors, I remain
Yours very truly,
J[ens]. Pedersen.

*Edition No. 6: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, August 25, 1875.*

*[envelope, front; 6" x 3.5"; top right, round postal mark, stamped: ROCKFORD / ILL[INOIS] / AUG[UST]
26; top right corner, green postal stamp, canceled, featuring a side-view portrait of George
Washington: U.S. POSTAGE / THREE CENTS / 3; text, ink:]*

Mr[.] Edwin M[elancthon]. Haven,
Bloomingtondale,
Van Buren Co[unty].
Mich[igan].

*[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: MARKET GARDENERS' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY
/ HOT BED AND / GARDEN PLANTS / in immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS
BETTER THAN TALK / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inois], ____
1875; text, ink:]*

August 25th

Mr[.] Edwin M[elancthon]. Haven
Bloomingtondale,
Mich[igan].

Dear Sir:

Your favor of the 24th (yesterday) just received. I do not think it necessary for you to come here in person in order to obtain a contract; and as to the gathering and curing¹⁸ of seeds, common sense and some experience will afford all needed teaching.

In writing to Mr[.] Root in regard to seed-growing, it might be well to set forth what you have special facilities for growing in utmost perfection.

Truly yours,
J[ens]. Pedersen.

[stationery, page 2; text, pencil/different hand/Edwin Haven, crossed out, presumably a draft:]

Mr. J[ohn]. B[arnes]. Root:

Dear Sir Enclosed is five (\$5.00) doll[ars.] for E[arly]. J[ersey]. Wak[efield] cab[bage]. seed. Brill¹⁹ sends us increased prices - cause, short crops.

Send to Geo[rge]. W[ashington]. Haven²⁰
Bloomingtondale
Mich[igan].
Van Buren Co[unty].

¹⁸ Drying.

¹⁹ [Francis] Brill Seed Company, established 1828 in Jersey City, New Jersey, by John Brill, Francis's father.

²⁰ (1831–1906), Edwin Haven's father.

Mr. -

Kind friend When I left you

*Edition No. 7: Jens Pedersen on behalf of J. B. Root to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, December 9, 1875.*

*[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: MARKET GARDENERS' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY
/ HOT BED AND / GARDEN PLANTS / in immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS
BETTER THAN TALK / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inois], _____
1875; text, ink:]*

Dec[ember] 9th

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven.

Dear Sir:

Your favor of the 6th inst[ante mense]. is at hand. I know no cause to assign for the failure with cabbage you mention, but have heard of somewhat similar cases with overgrown cold-frame plants; something, perhaps, may be in the season. We should think that by replanting the Lima Beans another season or two, you can bring them up to earlier maturity, as southern grown seeds generally require a longer season than northern grown. Hathaways²¹ Tomato was with us the least satisfactory this year; the quality was good, but the yield not quite satisfactory. I think next year will be very favorable for

[stationery, page 2; text, ink:]

growing onions for Market, as so many quit the business owing to low prices this year.

I would be well pleased to make some arrangement with you for growing seeds for me, and would make you the best terms I possibly can. Still I wish you to bear in mind some of the disadvantages (if I may say so) of seed-growing, among which is the long credits. I would not advise you to give your attention much to the vines, as we grow them so largely here; but would more especially recommend Cabbages and biennial crops and such other kinds as your climate and circumstances seem especially to favor. Please give me an idea of what you think you can grow to best advantage. If we make an arrangement, I would try to visit you once or twice during the growing season.

We are all well and send you our best regards.

Yours Truly

J[ohn]. B[arnes]. Root

[Jens] P[edersen].

²¹ The origins of the name for the "Hathaway Excelsior" heirloom tomato are unclear.

Edition No. 8: Jens Pedersen on behalf of J. B. Root to Edwin Haven, Rockford, Illinois, January 4, 1876.

[envelope, front; 6" x 3.5"; top left corner, sender's address, printed: J[ohn]. B[arnes]. ROOT / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inoi]s. / Return if not called for in 10 days; top right, round postal mark, stamped: ROCKFORD / ILL[INOIS] / 2; top right corner, green postal stamp, canceled, featuring a side-view portrait of George Washington: U.S. POSTAGE / THREE CENTS / 3; text, ink:]

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven
Bloomington
Van Buren Co[unty].
Mich[igan].

[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: MARKET GARDENERS' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY / HOT BED AND / GARDEN PLANTS / in immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS BETTER THAN TALK / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inois], ____ 1875 (with the "5" overwritten with a "6" in ink); text, ink:]

Jan[uary] 4

Mr[.] Edwin M[elancthon]. Haven,
Bloomington,
Mich[igan].

Dear Sir:

You may make your own choice as to what kinds of seed you would rather grow. I shall have occasion for the different kinds you mention, and will be glad to make arrangements with you. The contract price will depend somewhat on the varieties elected. The customary time of settlement with seed growers is the 1st of April. I intend to visit you once or twice during the summer; we may then confer on various matters in detail.

Yours Truly,
J[ohn]. B[arnes]. Root
[Jens] P[edersen].

Over²²

[stationery, page 2; text, ink:]

Have you ever tried Carrot?

²² Like the one-liner question on the next page, this word is written in a different, less regular hand, presumably J. B. Root's. Root would die later that year, on November 29, 1876, of heart disease.

*Edition No. 09: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, March 2, 1876.*

[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: Market Gardeners' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY / Hot Bed and / Garden Plants / In immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS BETTER THAN TALK. / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / Seed Grower / Rockford, Ill[inois], ____ 1876; text, ink:]

Mar[ch]. 2

E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven
Bloomingdale, Mich[igan].

Dear Sir:

It is in the midst of our hurry that I write these lines, and I shall therefore be curt as possible: I am sorry I did not commission you in due time to save me a few Black Walnuts and Shellbark Hickory Nuts with which to make a little inexpensive experiment in Denmark. Do you know how they are to [be] kept in order to preserve their vegetative Power? and do they grow in your vicinity? You are not in a position, I suppose, just now to send by mail to Denmark about a pound each of the

[stationery, page 2; text, ink:]

of the named sorts of nuts? If you are, be kind enough to advise me at once, and I will remit your price by return mail. Postage is the same as within the boundaries of the U[nited]. S[tates]. - They would have to be packed as light as possible in pasteboards 2 lbs²³ 3 oz²⁴ is the most that can be sent in one package. They might be divided.

Please advise me and oblige

Your Truly

J[ens]. Pedersen

*Edition No. 10: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, March 16, 1876.*

[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: Market Gardeners' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY / Hot Bed and / Garden Plants / In immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS BETTER THAN TALK. / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / Seed Grower / Rockford, Ill[inois], ____ 1876; text, ink:]

Mar[ch] 16 -

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven
Bloomingdale, Mich[igan].

²³ Abbreviation for "pounds."

²⁴ Abbreviation for "ounces."

Dear Sir: -

Your letter of a few days ago was received, but is not just now at hand. A person employed here has promised to obtain a few Black Walnuts to send home²⁵ for trial, also some Maple seeds, which I shall send with other matters. The maximum that can be sent in the package by mail to Denmark is 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces, packing and all. Postage is 2 c[en]ts for every 2 oz or fraction of 2 oz. - I have had so many things sent home this year for trial that it is perhaps best not to undertake any more until I get home myself and can assist in carrying

[stationery, page 2; text, ink:]

the experiments. Though I do not calculate on it as a source of income, I am interested even to enthusiasm in introducing some of our excellent American forrest trees in Denmark. Before I start for Denmark - via Philadelphia²⁶ - I would perhaps wish to ask a favor of you, and leave a small amount with you to pay for just a few seeds by mail, to my address in Denmark, next fall. - Business is driving just now. Most of the "boys" are here yet; Chally²⁷ among others; one or two have left the city. Mr[.] Johnsen is here again as packer. There is one male and one female assistant in the office. Two ladies beside Mrs[.] Root²⁸ in packing room. Mr[.] R[oot]. built last fall a handy little green-house. I think if I were in your situation, I would not wish much more. "Free and independent"²⁹ - room and chance for experiments - and opportunity to prepare yourself for a local "Florist's" business in some city in your vicinity (?) and now, in the mean time, seed growing - Enough, you ought to be real happy. And here punctum finalum.³⁰

I will be glad to hear from you at your leisure
Yours Truly,
J[ens]. Pedersen

*Edition No. 11: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Rockford, Illinois, April 30, 1876.*

[envelope, front; 6" x 3.5"; top left corner, sender's address, printed: J[ohn]. B[arnes]. ROOT / SEED GROWER / Rockford, Ill[inoi]s. / Return if not called for in 10 days; top right, round postal mark, stamped: ROCKFORD / ILL[INOIS] / MAY 11; top right corner, green postal stamp, canceled, featuring a side-view portrait of George Washington: U.S. POSTAGE / THREE CENTS / 3; text, ink:]

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven
Bloomington

²⁵ To Denmark.

²⁶ City in the southeastern part of the U.S. state of Pennsylvania.

²⁷ There were several members of the Chally family (of Norwegian descent) in Grundy County and Kendall County, Illinois, at this time, including John R. Chally (1862–1941), Louis R. Chally (1855–1885), Rasmus A. Chally (1857–1930).

²⁸ Ella Amanda Giddings Root (1845–1942), John Barnes Root's wife, who carried on their family's seed business after his passing.

²⁹ Edwin Haven was still unmarried in 1876.

³⁰ Incorrect Latin, meaning "the final point" (should be "punctum finale").

Van Buren Co[unty].
Mich[igan].

[envelope, back; text, ink/different hand/Edwin Haven:]

Negundo aceroides.³¹

2089

[stationery, page 1; 9" x 6"; top left corner, printed: Market Gardeners' / SUPPLIES / A SPECIALTY / Hot Bed and / Garden Plants / In immense stock in their season; top right, printed: TEST IS BETTER THAN TALK. / Office of J[OHN]. B[ARNES]. ROOT, / Seed Grower / Rockford, Ill[inois], ____ 1876; text, ink (first sentence written in the top left corner):]

Does the box elder maple flourish in your vicinity?

April 30 -

My dear Sir: -

I owe you thanks for your last kind favor of the 10th inst[ante mense]. I would have answered it long ago, but alas for time! Every minute seems to be preoccupied. I have got a good deal of correspondence and matters to arrange in view of my proposed homeward journey.³² In about 5 or 6 weeks I intend to start laying my way round Philadelphia. Accept my thanks for your hospitable invitation to visit you on my way thither, and be assured that I would have been much pleased to accept, but for one reason, and I think you can appreciate it: I find it necessary to practise the strictest

[stationery, page 2; text, ink:]

economy and to plan my traveling accordingly. I shall be encumbered by a great deal of baggage, and it is therefore desirable to go over the most direct route. I have spent quite considerable on plants and seeds and implements that I wish to try, and which will yield no immediate return, if they do not fail entirely, and then there are thousand unthought-of things wanted in a new business. I have a faint hope, in the progress of time, to visit America on a business tour; I will then take pleasure in endeavoring to "look you up." When I have reached home, and after I have got matters tolerably arranged, I wish to correspond with you with regard to forest tree seeds &c[etera]. I know not what may be wanted in this direction, until I have consulted with ~~fl~~ forest culturists. Before I close, let me congratulate you! I infer from your remarks that you have chosen your lady companion for life.³³

³¹ Type of box elder, boxelder maple, Manitoba maple or ash-leaved maple.

³² To Denmark.

³³ Possibly an early reference to Edwin Haven's future wife, Ludema "Dema" Delphine Pelong (1859–1934), although the two did not start courting until the following year (after her eighteenth birthday); they married on February 27, 1878. See Matthew Nguyen, Rielly K. Orrell, and Gregorio Ivan Urueta, eds., "Seeds of Faith in a Midwestern Diary (1877–1878, 1881): The Recollections of Edwin M. Haven as a Young Man," *The Welebaethan: A Journal of History* 52 (2025): 207–208 (entry for August 31, 1877).

Mr[.] and Mrs[.] Root have lost their sweet little girl, Stella.³⁴ She was buried about a week ago. Mr[.] Chandlers have encreased their family with a daughter.

I wish God-speed!

Yours truly

J[ens]. Pedersen.



Figure 2: Image of Edition No. 12, envelope.

Edition No. 12: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Chicago, Illinois, June 23, 1876.

[envelope, front, torn on right; 6" x 3.5"; top right, round postal mark, stamped: CHICAGO / ILL[INOIS] / JUNE 23 6PM; top right corner, blue postal stamp, canceled, featuring a side-view portrait of Benjamin Franklin:³⁵ U.S. POSTAGE / ONE CENT / 1; red postal stamp, canceled, bottom torn off, featuring a side-view portrait of Andrew Jackson:³⁶ U.S. POSTAGE / TWO CENTS / 2; text, purple ink:]

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven
Bloomingdale
Van Buren Co[unty].
Mic[higan]

[stationery, page 1; text, purple ink:]

Chicago, Ill[inois]. June 23 - [18]76

Mr[.] Edw[in]. M[elancthon]. Haven
Bloomingdale, Mich[igan].

³⁴ Stella F. Root (1872–April 17, 1876) died of "brain fever."

³⁵ (1706–1790), one of the Founding Fathers of the United States.

³⁶ (1767–1845), seventh U.S. president (in office 1829–1837).

My dear Sir: -

Your last favor was duly received at Rockford. I have been driven with business and put off writing, and here I am so beset by friends that I can do no more than just say bid you a cordial good-bye! I left Rockford yesterday. All is well there. I hope to meet Mr. and Mrs[.] Root in this city³⁷ Monday next³⁸ on their way to Philadelphia.

Enclosed please find \$1⁰⁰, just one dollar, for which I may wish you to send me a few seeds for growing specimen plants when I get home³⁹ and find out what I want. Black Walnut, Tulip tree and White Pine I am especially desirous

[stationery, page 2; text, purple ink:]

to get some of, but I will write you further when I get rested a little at home.⁴⁰

I appreciate and return the sentiments expressed in your last letter, and remain
Cordially yours
J[ens]. Pedersen

Please pardon my hurried scribbling. I have not got the least rest.

*Edition No. 13: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Aarhus, Denmark, Aug[ust]. 30, 1876.*

*[envelope, front; 6" x 3.5"; top right, round postal mark, stamped, text illegible except for: SEP[TEMBER]
16; text, purple ink:]*

Mr[.] Ed[win]. Haven
c/o Geo[rge] H. (?) Haven⁴¹ Esq[ui]re.⁴²
Bloomingdale
Van Buren Co[unty].
Mich[igan].
Nord Amerika

[stationery, page 1; text, ink:]

Aarhus,⁴³ Denmark, Aug[ust]. 30 - 1876

Mr[.] Ed[win]. Haven
Bloomingdale, Mich[igan].

³⁷ Chicago.

³⁸ June 26, 1876.

³⁹ To Denmark.

⁴⁰ In Denmark.

⁴¹ George Washington Haven (1831–1906), Edwin Haven's father.

⁴² General courtesy title, used for any respectable gentleman.

⁴³ City on the eastern shore of Jutland in central Denmark.

My dear Sir:

According to promise I write you a few hurried lines after sufficient delay; the fact is, it is very difficult to fall into the writing mood. The grandeur of the Centennial Exh[ibition]⁴⁴ surprised me, of course, beyond expectation; pity, I could not afford to stay there for a greater length of time. - The voyag[e] across the Atlantic was very fair. I went via England by rail, then across the North Sea to Hamburg,⁴⁵ and thence direct by rail home.⁴⁶ I am well pleased with matters generally in Denmark. Vast improvements have been made in many

[stationery, page 2; text, ink:]

directions during my ten years' absence.⁴⁷ Many of my relatives and friends I found it difficult to identify, so changed had they become. Life in Denmark is proportionately quiet and regular and flows on at an even tenor; there may be stoppages, but there are but few and slight convulsions. I have just returned from a very pleasant trip to Copenhagen.⁴⁸ A more pleasant city to visit or live in is hardly to be found. In some respects it is unique. I spent much of my time in the museums of arts and science.⁴⁹ Not only the city itself but its surroundings for miles are beautiful beyond any preconceived idea. The Sound between Denmark and Sweden,⁵⁰ all along from Copenhagen to Elsinore⁵¹ is studded with picturesque villas looking out from their moderate elevations

[stationery, page 3; text, ink:]

amid clumps of woods and larger forests on the hundreds of vessels and steamers that continually ply up and down the Sound. The only drawback to my enjoyment was and is the anxi[e]ty of mind one is conscious of until settled in permanent business. To reach this point is more difficult than I had anticipated, partly because a small amount due me has not been paid promptly as promised. The winter will have to be spent mainly in preparatory work. The question of planting forest trees for shelter, timber and ornament is becoming very popular, as is also the laying out of orchards, and there will doubtless be much to do in this direction in years to come. I will be much obliged if you will send me a small lot in such proportion

[stationery, page 4; text, ink:]

as you think best, of the following tree seeds for trial and sample grounds, viz:⁵² Black Walnut, Tulip Tree, ~~and~~ White Pine and Hemlock, and if there are any other Kind or variety in your

⁴⁴ Centennial International Exhibition, world's fair in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 10–November 10, 1876, 100 years after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, in the same city.

⁴⁵ City in northern Germany.

⁴⁶ To Denmark.

⁴⁷ Suggesting that he stayed in the United States from 1866 (post Civil War) until 1876.

⁴⁸ Capital city of Denmark on the islands of Zealand and Amager.

⁴⁹ This would have included the National Museum (established 1807), possibly the Thorvaldsens Museum (established 1848), as well as other institutions.

⁵⁰ Known as Øresund.

⁵¹ Helsingør, city in northeastern Denmark, north of Copenhagen.

⁵² Abbreviation of the Latin "videlicet," meaning "that is to say."

vicinity that you think much of for ornament or use, you might add a small proportion. I would be very glad for an opportunity to render you services in return for your kindness. Perhaps we may have occasion to transact business together in coming years.

I bear in mind your kind invitation before I left America and wish you to present my cordial compliments to your parents.⁵³

Sincerely and regardfully

Yours,

J[ens]. Pedersen

Østergade N^o 20⁵⁴



Figure 3: Image of Edition No. 14, postcard, front.

Edition No. 14: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Odense, Denmark, Feb[ruary]. 14, 1877.

[postcard, front; 5.5" x 3"; blue decorative framing on all four sides; top left corner, the state version of the royal coat of arms of Denmark in blue, with a crown, three lions passant, and the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece; top left, round postal mark, stamped: ODENSE⁵⁵ / 15 - 2 [February] / 2 [Hamburg] POST; top center, printed in blue: BREV-KORT. [postcard] / (Paa denne Side skrives kun Adressen.) [On this side, write only the address.]; top right corner, blue postal stamp, canceled, featuring a crown, a wreath of wheat, and a postal horn: DANMARK [Denmark] / 4 / POSTFRIM 4 ØRE [Postage 4 Øre]; to the left of the stamp, two side-by-side stamp-shaped sections of yellowed discoloration; text, printed: Til [To]; text, ink:]

Mr[.] E[dwin]. M[elancthon]. Haven
Bloomingdale
Van Buren Co[unty].

⁵³ George Washington Haven (1831–1906) and Lucia Amanda Haven, née Wilmot (1836–1899).

⁵⁴ Address in central Aarhus, Denmark; today without any historic structures.

⁵⁵ City on the island of Funen in Denmark.

Mich[igan].
Nordamerika

[postcard, back; text, ink:]

Odense, Denmark, Feb[ruary]. 14-1877

Dear Sir: -

Both your favors of the 20th of Dec[ember] and the 19th ult[imo mense]. are received and also seeds. Thanks for the pains you have taken. I am sorry for having caused you so much trouble. Lack of necessary funds and other unforeseen difficulties have prevented my establishing a seed business. I am managing the office business of a wholesale Grocery House. I am looking out for some good article in this line for importation to Denmark. Can you put me on the track of something? Glad your prospects are bright. Can you recommend me a first class wholesale House in Clover and Grass seeds?

Your friend
J[ens]. Pedersen

*Edition No. 15: Jens Pedersen to Edwin Haven,
Copenhagen, Denmark, July 25, 1878.*

*[envelope, front; 6" x 5"; top center, printed header: KONTORET FOR FÆLLESINDKJØB AF
UNDERSØGT MARKFRØ [Office for the Wholesale Purchase of Inspected Field Seeds]; underneath,
right of center, red postal stamp, canceled, featuring a crown, a wreath of wheat, and a postal horn:
DANMARK [Denmark] / 8 / POSTFRIM 8 ØRE [Postage 8 Øre]; on top of the latter, round postal mark,
stamped: [K]JØBEN[HAVN] [Copenhagen] / 26 - 7 [July]; bottom left corner, round postal mark,
stamped: CHICAGO / ILL[INOIS] / AUG[UST] 11; text, ink (lines 1–5) and pencil/different hand/Edwin
Haven (line 6):]*

Edw[in]. M[elanchthon]. Haven, Esq[uires]
c/o Geo[rge]. H. (?) Haven, Esq[uires]
Bloomingdale, Van Buren Co[unty].
Mich[igan].
Nordamerika

June 2 - 1879

*[stationery, page 1; 11" x 8"; top left corner, printed (with the first three lines underlined in red):
KONTORET / for / Fællesindkjøb af undersøgt Markfrø. / Post-Adresse: MARKFRØKONTORET [Field
Seeds Office] / Amaliegade Nr. 8.⁵⁶ / Kjøbenhavn. / K. [Copenhagen Center]; top right corner (crossed
out in ink): ~~Kjøbenhavn~~, den [the] 187; bottom left corner, printed: Telegram-Adresse: /
MARKFRØKONTORET / Kjøbenhavn.; text, ink:]*

⁵⁶ Address in central Copenhagen, Denmark; existing building dates from 1785.

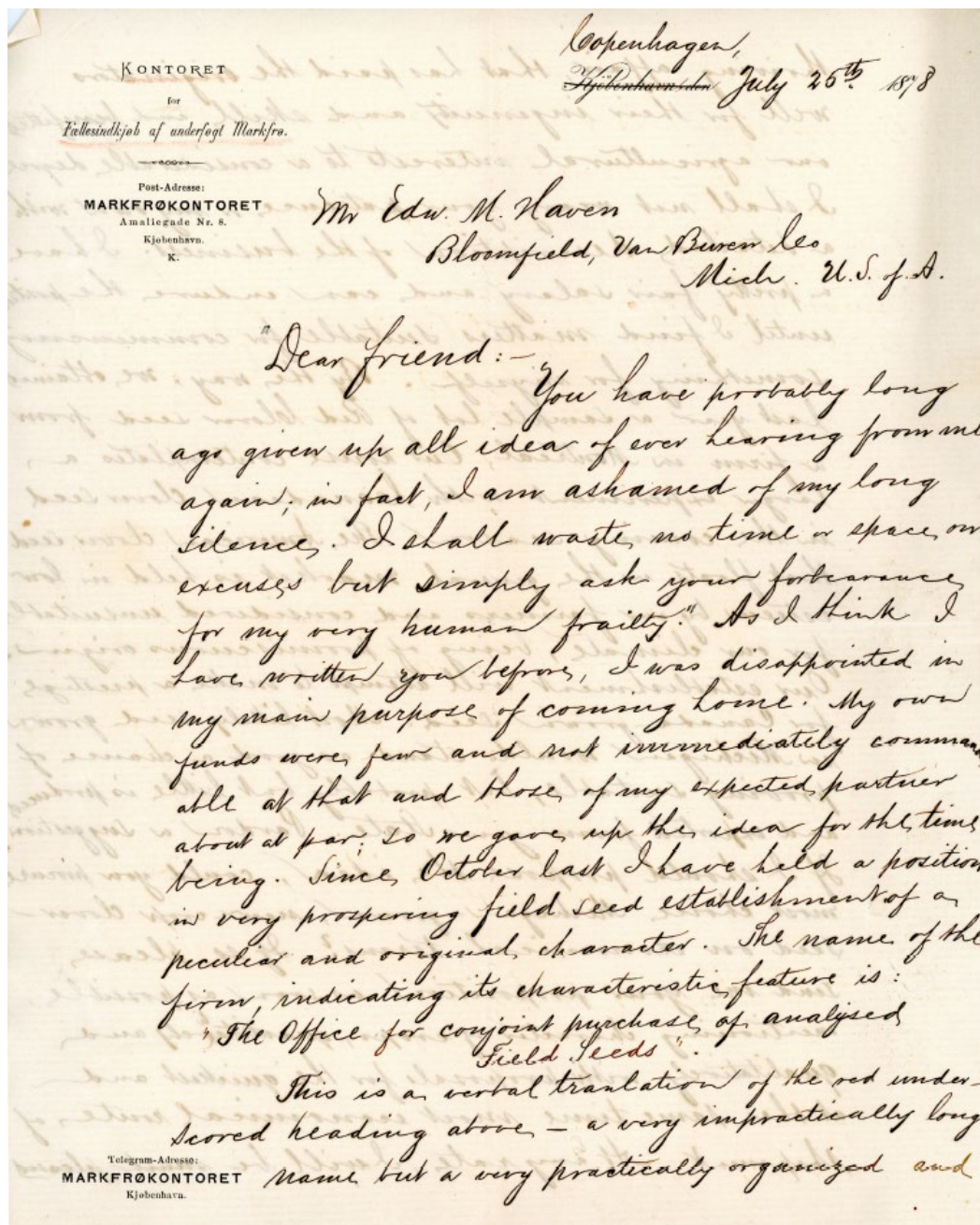


Figure 4: Image of Edition No. 15, stationery, page 1.

Copenhagen, July 25th [187]8

Mr[.] Edw[in]. M[elancthon]. Haven

Bloomfield, Van Buren Co[unty]

Mich[igan]. U[nited]. S[tates]. of A[merica].

"Dear friend: -

You have probably long ago given up all idea of ever hearing from me again; in fact, I am ashamed of my long silence. I shall waste no time or space on excuses but simply ask your forbearance for my very human frailty." As I think I have written you before, I was disappointed in my main purpose of coming home. My own funds were few and not immediately commandable at that and those of my expected partner about at par; so we gave up the idea for the time being. Since October last⁵⁷ I have held a position in very prospering field seed establishment of a peculiar and original character. The name of the firm, indicating its characteristic feature is:

"The Office for conjoint purchase of analysed Field Seeds"

This is a verbal translation of the red underscored heading above - a very impractically long name but a very practically organized and

[stationery, page 2; text, ink:]

thriving affair, that has paid the originators well for their ingenuity and skills and benefitted our agricultural interests to a considerable degree. I shall not weary your patience or my own with a detailed description of the business. I have a pretty fair salary and can endure the position until I find matters suitable for commencing something for myself. By the way; we obtained last year a sample lot of Red Clover seed from a firm in Montreal.⁵⁸ Our house contemplates a larger experiment with Canadean clover seed in the coming season. The American clover seed that floats in the general market is held in low esteem by our farmers and considered unsuitable for our climate, being of promiscuous origins. Our establishment will attempt to make a prestige for Canada-grown seed. Most likely seed grown in Michigan would stand as good a chance of proving suitable, but probably but little is produced and exported from your State. Pardon a suggestion: If I should propose the idea, could you procure most choice Michigan-grown, new-crop clover-seed on economical terms? If so, please send me your proposition as soon as possible, mentioning character of crops, quantitatively and qualitatively with proposals for the quickest and at the same time most economical route of shipment. At any rate, I will be much pleased

[stationery, page 3; text, ink:]

2 /

to hear from you at some convenient time, I hope you are getting on well and feel happy.

I feel better, I think, physically and mentally since coming home than ever I did before. Do you ever hear anything from Rockford? Wonder how matters are proceeding with Mrs[.]

⁵⁷ October 1877.

⁵⁸ City in the southeastern Canadian province of Québec.

Root? Your soldier hero, Ex President U[lysses]. S. Grant⁵⁹ has visited our charming city within a few days.⁶⁰ I now regret that I did seek opportunity to see him.

How are times in America just now? My youngest brother - we are quite number⁶¹ - has about made up his mind to go to America - Whether to remain or only for a shorter or longer space of time is undecided. He has no fixed program but feels convinced that a stay over there will do him good and help to make plain to him what sort of earnest life work he ought to choose. He is, like myself of course, of farmer-blood, but has been brought up a joiner. I think, however his inmost inclination goes in quite a different direction. He is religiously disposed, and much interested in educational matters. He will, of course, to begin with, take any kind of manual work that he can find, until he has made sufficient proficiency in the English language which he has only just commenced to study in leizure hours. He is able-bodied, diligent and frugal and of - I / over

[stationery, page 4; 11" x 8"; top left corner, printed: KONTORET / for / Fællesindkjøb af undersøgt Markfrø. / Post-Adresse: MARKFRØKONTORET [Field Seeds Office] / Amaliegade Nr. 8. / Kjøbenhavn. / K. [Copenhagen Center]; top right corner: Kjøbenhavn, den [the] 187]; bottom left corner, printed: Telegram-Adresse: / MARKFRØKONTORET / Kjøbenhavn.; text, ink:]

do believe literally - uncorruptible moral character. I know he has been corresponding with one or two Danish ministers - college-colleagues of his - perhaps he goes to one or the other of them this fall or next spring; if not, where would you advise him to go for a start, keeping in mind that he wants to do manual labour, in his trade or any other kind, till he is somewhat familiar with the English language and American life? Excuse my lengthiness.

May I hope to hear from you soon?

Cordially Your Friend
J[ens]. Pedersen

Bryggerlongen N^o 6 - 4^d Sal [level]
Copenhagen
K.

⁵⁹ (1822–1885), eighteenth U.S. president (in office 1869–1877).

⁶⁰ A visit during Grant's world tour (1877–1879).

⁶¹ Jens Pedersen's parents, Peder Sørensen (1797–1866) and Christiane Hansdatter (1812–1902), had sixteen children.