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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.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF EXPERIMENT STATIONS

PUERTO RICO AGRICULTURAL  
EXPERIMENT STATION

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico,  
December 28, 1939

Mr. Wilson Popenoe  
United Fruit Company  
Guatemala City, Guatemala

Dear Wilson:

Greetings and Happy New Year to Mrs. Wilson and yourself. Also apologies for not having written earlier, but you will appreciate that it is very hard to get stenographers in English in such towns as Guayaquil and Quito. Perhaps I will make up by writing too frequently and at too great length while I am here in Puerto Rico.

Ecuador was fully as interesting as you told me it would be. To me it is a great country for investment and the people are agreeable and pleasant to deal with. I am going to enclose copies of three reports which I sent to Washington and which will probably put you to sleep and particularly immediately after lunch. If you find time to read them I would appreciate any comments you might make and which might be of value not only to me but in the policies of the Department of Agriculture.

I met Abelardo Pachano just as you said I would. He is director of the School of Agriculture in Ambato. Ernesto Molestina is Director General of Agriculture. Both young fellows were extremely cooperative and helpful. However, the Department of Agriculture and in fact the whole Government of Ecuador is so poverty-stricken that they cannot be of much material assistance. The budget of the whole Agricultural School at Ambato is 20,000 sucres which at present rates of exchange comes to \$1333.33; the dollar being worth 15 sucres. This appropriation takes care of the salaries of 6 or 8 professors, any experimental activities, and about twelve acres of land. The Director General of Agriculture receives a monthly salary of 1000 sucres which amounts to \$66.66 in terms of United States money.

As you will see from the copies of the reports which I enclose, if you find time to read them, I think that Ecuador is a fine place for U.S. investments. With the cheap labor which they have and the climatic advantages it seems to me that Ecuador can undersell Japan in a number of crops and the Philippines in such crops as manila hemp and copra. If it meets with approval in Washington, I would like to see some experimentation done with such crops as mulberries and silkworms, pyrethrum and

menthol now produced in Japan and quinine and some of the essential oils now produced in Java. In the uplands of Ecuador and with such cheap labor it might be possible to compete with some of the oriental countries in the production of tea.

I had several fine visits with Mr. Goodell and with the plantation manager, Richard Davis. I spent three profitable days at the plantation. Both Mr. Goodell and Mr. Davis are interested in having me send them some suckers of manila hemp and cuttings of some of our best Derris and Lonchocarpus clons. Would it be in line with the policies of the company for me to send these materials? As you mentioned in Jamaica, manila hemp could be grown successfully in Ecuador with or without a stripping machine because the labor there can so easily compete with the labor in the Philippines.

I am just back in Puerto Rico for over the holidays. Early in January I will have to return to Bogotá for three months. This two weeks in Puerto Rico is a good rest from the difficult living conditions in Ecuador and also gives me the opportunity to finish some of the reports on Ecuador.

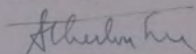
I am hopeful to return to Ecuador some time in the next six months. I would like to get some experimental work started with some of the new crops.

Wilson, would you please comment freely on these reports. They are not meant to be final in any way and any comments that would guide us into any of the best policies would be appreciated. Thank you for your letters of introduction which were most valuable; those in Colombia I have not utilized as yet, but if they serve as well as those in Ecuador, they will be invaluable. Thank you also for the various comments which guided my procedure in Ecuador. Any further guidance you can be sure will be appreciated.

I had a nice note from Knowles this morning.

Best regards and hope that I will be seeing you some place in Guatemala, Jamaica, Panama or Colombia.

Sincerely,



Atherton Lee  
Director

AL:db



San José de Costa Rica, 14 Jan 1940

Atherton Lee Esq.,  
Mayaguez, Puerto Rico.

Dear Lee,

Your interesting letter and the Ecuadorian reports reached me just as I was leaving Guatemala City three days ago. I will send the original of this reply to Mayaguez, but a copy in care of the Ambassador at Bogotá, as I suspect you will be in Colombia before this reaches you.

I am glad you found Ecuador up to advance notices. Though I have not been there in many years, a country doesn't change very greatly from year to year and as I told you, I have always thought Ecuador one of the most interesting, enjoyable and simpático of the Latin American nations. Scenically it is surpassed only by Guatemala. I suspect its economic situation is pretty desperate, but it is not alone in that respect.

Particularly was I glad to have news of my old friends Pachano and Molestina. They seem to have been the two leading figures in Ecuadorian agriculture ever since my day, which was fifteen years ago. Pachano is a sound fellow who doesn't like politics and who is patriotic in the truest sense.

Now to comment on your reports, which have interested me greatly. First about Cinchona: While in Guatemala this past month I went over the experimental Cinchona plantings in that country in some detail, at the request of Merck and Co. A good deal of real progress has been made. But it will be some years yet before the industry can be put on a commercial basis. The first part of the job is finished: that is, the experiments have shown that Ledgeriana can be grown in Guatemala, if you choose the right climatic and soil conditions. Good growth has resulted at elevations between 5000 and 5500 feet, where the trees have been planted on volcanic loams in moist climates free from wind. It is fairly apparent that they do not like the loose sandy soils. Neither do they want heavy clays, but good rich loams with plenty of organic matter. The job now is to select out seedlings which combine the necessary characteristics for commercial exploitation. This means the individual seedlings (from which trees can be grafted on succirubra stocks for commercial planting) must show good vigor of growth (and many do not, for there is an enormous and almost unbelievable range of variation in the Ledgeriana seedlings from Java); they must show a reasonable resistance to the root diseases which seem to attack this tree wherever grown; they must not bloom at an early age (and many do); they must show good thickness of bark; and lastly but of course most important of all, they must show a reasonably good quinine content. There are enough seedlings in Guatemala now to serve as a basis for commercial propagation but it will be several years more before the best types can be selected, since bark samples cannot be taken before the trees are about

four years old, and have made trunks some 2-1/2 ins. in diameter.

If a quinine industry is to be developed in Ecuador, more or less along the Java lines - that is, with grafted trees of high-yielding strains - it will be a job requiring skillful and intelligent leadership for not less than ten years. The same applies to Colombia. And of course the most difficult feature is this: there is already an overproduction of quinine in the world, and our only reason for wanting to see an industry established in America is to be independent of the Java supply. This is all right for us as a government, but does not help the small grower who has to throw his product on the world market.

Naturally it is extremely interesting to learn that the Japanese are going in for this product in Ecuador. They will probably do a better job of it than the local agriculturists because they are likely to have more patience and perhaps more skill.

I quite agree with your recommendations regarding rehabilitation of the cacao industry. I believe there is a real opportunity in this field. But I seriously question the practicability of getting several countries to cooperate in financing such a program. It will be a long-time job, and long-time jobs are tough propositions in Latin America. And each country supporting the project will wish to see a major portion of the work done on its own soil. It would be a fine thing if the U.S. could loan Ecuador a capable man to operate such a project, paying his salary and guaranteeing sufficiency of time to accomplish something. Ecuador probably could not think of financing the job itself. Colombia might. I would think on the whole that such a project would have greater chances of success if started in the Cauca valley of Colombia. Of course it should be feasible to carry out some program in Puerto Rico, which would ultimately benefit all these countries by supplying improved varieties. This would have to be a project financed wholly by the American government, in my opinion, I greatly doubt that any of the Latin American governments would contribute with hard cash.

I like your idea of lending an agricultural technologist to the Ecuadorian government, to assist in the development of new crops. But I think this man's salary should be paid by the American government. Otherwise I feel confident the results would be what they have been in 95% of similar cases in the past: they would keep the man a year a two, find his salary a financial burden, a new group would come into political power, and would either drop the man, or if he had a contract which prevented this, provide no money for him to carry on his work. I am strongly of the opinion which amounts in fact to a conviction - that we must pay the bills if we are to give very much agricultural cooperation to these smaller countries which are in poor financial condition. Their politicians have not the background and the experience to visualize the requirements of agricultural research and supply financial support over the period necessary to accomplish tangible results.



From your report I take it you have in mind that we should lend Mr Penneck to the Ecuadorian government without cost to them. This I hope is the case. But I wonder if Washington will agree to sending him on this basis, for a period of several years? I would think five years the minimum. Unless the jefes commit themselves to something of this sort I would think it better not to tackle the job at all.

In your memo on "Labor Conditions in Ecuador" I think you have brought out some very important points. In fact, I think this memo is a masterpiece. The only comment I can offer is to say that I trust this memo will be read and re-read by those in authority at Washington, and that it will assist in formulating their policy toward Ecuador.

So much for the reports. Now as to the point you raise regarding supplying our people at Guayaquil with suckers of Manila hemp and some of your best Derris and Lonchocarpus clones. I do not see how there could be any objection to this. Mr Goodell would of course be guided by Company policy in the use he makes of them. The main thing we want to avoid is encouraging small farmers to plant new crops only to find later that they cannot sell them at a profit. Many of these farmers have considerable faith in the Company and if we gave them some ginseng roots and told them to plant all their land in ginseng they would do it unhesitatingly. For this reason we like to feel we are on solid ground before starting them off.

I have come down to Costa Rica on one of these jobs. The north coast is practically out of the banana business, due to a combination of Fusarium and Cercospora, and we have offered the government our assistance in finding other crops for the erstwhile banana growers to produce. It is not an easy matter. I haven't yet gone over the ground thoroughly, but later on will give you my views since the problem is similar to some of those you are tackling.

Raul Varela wrote me that you were coming to Colombia, and asked if I could not come back to Bogotá at the same time and join all of you on some of the excursions. I wish I could do so. But I shall have to stay here in Costa Rica for a month or so, at least, to see if I can formulate some sort of a program on which we can begin work. I hope you will tell Raul how keenly I regret my inability to join you. I am writing him to this effect. Probably I shall get back to Colombia some time this year but I have this Costa Rican job and two others lined up which I must do first.

Drop me a line when you can. My address will be Compañía Bananera de Costa Rica, San José, for the next month at least. And please give my regards to Ambassador Braden and any other friends you meet at Bogotá. I envy you the days you spend in Colombia. It is a country of great possibilities. And don't fail to have Raul take you through Boyacá!

Helen joins me in best wishes for a pleasant stay in Colombia.

Ever yours

REPUBLICA DE COLOMBIA  
MINISTERIO DE LA ECONOMIA NACIONAL

DEPARTAMENTO AGRICULTURA  
SECCION \_\_\_\_\_  
NUMERO \_\_\_\_\_

BOGOTA, february 5 of 1940

Mr. Wilson Popenoe  
United Fruit Co.  
San José, Costa Rica.

Dear Wilson:

Thank you for your two letters of January 14th and 24th both of which are interesting and valuable to me.

First of all I share with you the feeling of regard for the Colombians. Their reception of me has been cordial and have had courtesies extended on all sides from many people with whom I had no connection and who didn't know who I was.

Was much interested in what you said about the Merck cinchonaplanting in Guatemala, their experience with soils and wind has corresponded with ours in Puerto Rico, although theirs is probably on a larger scale. We do not consider P.R. as a place for commercial production of cinchona of course but as a place to get experience. As to whether quinine is to be promoted in Ecuador will depend a lot on what the State Dept. and Export Import Bank think, as well as our Dept. of Agriculture. I will see Dr. Bressman tomorrow and in the next day or so will talk to him about it.

As you surmised it was not my conception to have a cooperative enterprise between various South American countries to work upon witch broom of cacao. Nor with so many pressing technical problems in the U. S. including Puerto Rico is it probable that our Department could loan a man with necessary budget for the 5 or 10 years necessary to do the work. However it may be that one of our boys at Mayaguez can do some breeding work and send the seedlings down to Colombia or Ecuador to be tested for resistance, at the same time getting back some of the fine quality of the old Nacional variety.

Since making my recommendations to Washington regarding Ecuador, I have not had any reply; there is so much going on up there that it is easy to overlook a little country such as that. I will have to write asking for decisions of some of their questions. It was my conception that our Dept. of Agriculture would pay the salary of any technologist assigned to Ecuador to work on new crops.

Glad you liked my report on labor conditions in Ecuador and that it should be read and reread by officials in Washington.

About the abaca suckers and Derris cuttings for Mr. Goodell, I have asked the Washington office to approve sending these plants to Ecuador. Ecuador can put the Philippines out of business in the production of Manila hemp and therefore I would like to have someone else pass on sending these plants to Ecuador. However if I do not hear from them soon will undertake to send them on my own



REPUBLICA DE COLOMBIA  
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SECCION \_\_\_\_\_

NUMERO \_\_\_\_\_

PAG. Nº 2.-

BOGOTA,

responsibility.

Concerning cassava starch for Costa Rica I recall that Dr. Bressman recommended it as one of the principal crops for the areas approaching semi-arid conditions in Paraguay. It grows well with a limited water supply as you know probably better than I.

They grow it in Sto. Domingo, I know, but did not know they had any large export of it.

Someone at sometime has told me that starch or flour of Cassava is used in munitions manufacture and that England was buying a lot of it now. You might be able to check on this in Washington, if so, under present European conditions it must be in tremendous demand. I know little about it, whether there are better varieties than others, and processing. I do recall that in 1932 I was in Java where they have good labor at 11 cents a day and their factories were finding it unprofitable to produce casava products at that time. I believe that peeling the roots is done by hand which is of course, expensive. However that was in the worst depression year, 1932.

Derris and Lonchocarpus can use plenty of well distributed rain; 70 or 80 inches distributed over 9 or 10 months at least. Being a root crop, either Derris or Lonchocarpus can be harvested best in loose soils or sandy looms. We have trouble harvesting in our heavy clays at Mayaguez.

Our experiments show that Derris growing on living trellises of Erythrina posts give root yields almost double that obtained where the vines are allowed to run along the ground as in Malaya.

Although labor is probably cheaper in Malaya than Costa Rica, you compete with the Philippines which is now exporting and which pays 40 to 50 cents U.S. per day, This is especially true if you have high-yielding strains which we can supply you. You and the United Fruit Co. have been so good to me and others in the Department that we are glad to make them available to you.

Both genera grow readily from cuttings and after 12 or 18 months give big returns in additional cuttings for planting material. They also keep well and we could send several thousand to you by steam ship if it would not require more than 14 to 20 days. Write and tell me what would be the best shipping routes. It might be simplest to send them to New York, although if we watched carefully we might catch a transport running from San Juan to Panamá and could send them that way to Mr. Bennett at Christobal who could then tranship them to you at Port Limon.

Let me know when you will be ready for them. At time of shipping I can send further instructions as to spacing etc.

Varela and I doped up a cable to send you asking if you could accompany us on our trip here in Colombia and were both disa-



REPUBLICA DE COLOMBIA  
MINISTERIO DE LA ECONOMIA NACIONAL

DEPARTAMENTO AGRICULTURA  
SECCION \_\_\_\_\_  
NUMERO \_\_\_\_\_

PAG. Nº 3.-

BOGOTA.

ppointed that you could not come.

aid Dr. Bressman is here enroute to Brazil and is a tremendous/in determining matters particularly as to policies. Both he and Raul Varela will wish to join me in sending regards. He speaks of you often,

Sincerely,

*Lee*  
ATHERTON LEE

AL/ado.

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(copy)

Mr. Wilson Pope

Wilson:  
you will be interested in this  
H.

April 24, 1940

Dr. James T. Jardine, Chief  
Office of Experiment Stations  
U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dr. Jardine:

Mr. Pennock, who is in charge of our work on quinine and other drug crops, has just been offered the position of manager of the quinine plantings for Merck and Company in Guatemala. This is extremely pleasing to me for it shows that a progressive smart corporation, such as Merck and Company, has an appreciation of the training in tropical crops which experience at this station gives to our men.

It will make a great hole in our staff, difficult to replace, and we will miss Pennock a great deal if he accepts the offer. However, it seems to me that he will be doing a greater service to the United States to accept this offer of Merck and Company than he will to remain with us.

Pennock has not definitely decided to accept the offer. He wishes to take some leave and go up and look over the situation. Moreover, Mrs. Pennock may not be entirely enthusiastic about the idea, her home being here in Puerto Rico. However, it is such a fine opportunity that I think that he will accept it.

In addition to a very good salary, he gets the manager's house furnished to him, he is but six hours from Guatemala City, and by airplane quite close to the continental United States and Puerto Rico. The Pan American highway will also go through in a few years without doubt.

Although it is against the immediate best interests of the station, I am advising him to accept the position on two grounds; that of the personal advancement and that of service to the United States.

I think that you will be as pleased as I am that a company such as Merck and Company is making such a fine offer to one of our technical personnel.

Sincerely,

Atherton Lee  
Director

AL:ab



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF EXPERIMENT STATIONS

PUERTO RICO AGRICULTURAL  
EXPERIMENT STATION

AL:HK  
AIR MAIL

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, July 20, 1940.

MR. WILSON POPENOE,  
ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA.

DEAR WILSON:

IT WAS A GREAT PLEASURE TO RECEIVE YOUR LETTER OF JULY 14 WRITTEN FROM ANTIGUA. THERE WAS NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE FOR NOT WRITING BECAUSE I HAVE HAD IN MIND WRITING YOU FOR A LONG TIME ABOUT MERCK'S OFFER TO PENNOCK.

PENNOCK IS NOW PLANNING TO LEAVE HERE BY PLANE FOR NEW YORK ABOUT AUGUST 3 AND AFTER CONFERENCE WITH THEM THERE YOU CAN PROBABLY EXPECT TO SEE HIM IN GUATEMALA CITY BY AIRPLANE IN TEN DAYS OR TWO WEEKS.

I WOULD LIKE TO WRITE YOU ABOUT PENNOCK, FOR YOU ARE GOING TO FIND HIM A VALUABLE MAN WITH WHOM TO HAVE ASSOCIATIONS AND CONTACTS AND I AM VERY ANXIOUS TO HAVE HIM HAVE THE VALUE OF YOUR FRIENDSHIP AND GUIDANCE.

PENNOCK WAS BORN HERE IN PUERTO RICO OF CONTINENTAL AMERICAN PARENTS. BEING BROUGHT UP HERE, HE SPEAKS SPANISH EQUALLY AS WELL AS ENGLISH. HIS FATHER OPERATED THE NORTH AND SOUTH NURSERIES IN RIO PIEDRAS HERE IN PUERTO RICO, AND BILL WAS BROUGHT UP WORKING IN THE NURSERIES OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS. HE THEN TOOK HIS UNIVERSITY WORK AT CORNELL AND RETURNED TO HELP IN THE NURSERY BUSINESS. FINDING THAT THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF PROGRESS BEING MADE IN THE PROPAGATION OF PLANTS, HE RETURNED TO CORNELL AND TOOK A MASTER'S DEGREE. FROM THERE HE JOINED US. YOU WILL SEE THAT HIS WHOLE BACKGROUND HAS BEEN ONE POINTING TO THE PROPAGATION AND CARE OF PLANTS WITH THE ADVANTAGE OF HIS INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF SPANISH.

TO THE FOREGOING HE ADDS A HIGH SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY. HE IS THE BEST ADMINISTRATOR OF LABORERS HERE AT THE EXPERIMENT STATION AND GETS MORE OUT OF THEM IN A QUIET WAY THAN ANYONE ELSE.

MERCK AND CO. ARE GETTING A PRIZE AND WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A BIG HOLE IN OUR ORGANIZATION. YET WE FEEL THAT PENNOCK CAN BE OF GREATER SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES WITH MERCK & CO. IN DEVELOPING QUININE PRODUCTION THAN HE CAN BE HERE IN PUERTO RICO WHERE HIS WORK WOULD HAVE MORE OR LESS ABSTRACT RESULTS.

I KNOW THAT YOU WILL LIKE PENNOCK AND I KNOW THAT HE WILL LIKE YOU AND THAT CONTACT WITH YOU WILL BE OF GREAT ASSISTANCE TO HIM.

CONCERNING THE ORCHIDS, IT HAD BEEN MY INTENTION TO HAVE THEM SENT TO GUATEMALA AND I WAS SURPRISED TO LEARN FROM YOUR LETTER THAT THEY HAD BEEN SENT TO JAMAICA. PROBABLY IT IS BEST FOR THEM TO KEEP THE PLANTS AND FOR US TO SEND DUPLICATES TO YOU AT ANTIGUA. I WILL HAVE A NOTE MADE TO DO THIS RIGHT AWAY.

MR. WILSON POPENOE

- 2 -

JULY 20, 1940

NOW THAT PENNOCK WILL BE IN GUATEMALA WE ARE EXPECTING HIM TO COME BACK WITH ALL SORTS OF PLANT INTRODUCTIONS AT THE END OF HIS TRIAL PERIOD, WHETHER HE COMES TO PACK HIS FURNITURE AND GET MRS. PENNOCK, OR TO RETURN TO OUR EMPLOY. PROBABLY, THEREFORE, YOU HAD BETTER LET THE ORCHIDS GO UNTIL HIS RETURN HERE. HE WILL SURELY SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT THESE WHEN HE SEES YOU.

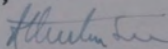
THANKS FOR THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CINCHONA AND ITS REACTION TO HUMUS AND AMMONIUM SULFATE. THESE ARE BOTH GOOD TIPS AND I PASSED ON YOUR WHOLE LETTER TO PENNOCK.

IF YOU CAN FIND THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEND US A COUPLE OF BAGS OF TONKA BEANS IT WOULD BE APPRECIATED. PROBABLY BILL PENNOCK, WHEN HE IS THERE, CAN HANDLE THIS AND A SHIPMENT OF ORCHIDS FOR YOU AND HANDLE IT SO THAT THE EXPENSE OF SHIPMENT WILL BE BORNE BY THIS EXPERIMENT STATION.

IT WAS GOOD OF YOU TO WRITE, WILSON, AND PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO WRITE AGAIN WHEN YOU CAN, AND I KNOW THAT BILL PENNOCK WILL OBTAIN A WEALTH OF INFORMATION FROM YOU WHICH HE WILL BRING BACK WHEN HE COMES.

REGARDS,

SINCERELY,



ATHERTON LEE  
DIRECTOR



Antigua, Guatemala, 29 July 1940

Dr Atherton Lee,  
Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

Dear Lee:

Yours of 20th July was awaiting me when I returned from the quinine property three days ago. I was extremely glad to have it, because the Pennock matter is very much in our minds right now and your comments regarding his qualifications are most encouraging. One or two rather serious mistakes have been made in connection with the personnel used on this project, and it is essential that the right man be put on it and kept there. If Pennock has not yet started, tell him I hope he will come down to Guatemala just as soon as he can. I want to have at least two weeks with him before Mr Perkins and Mr Lukens come down and make final plans for continuance of the work.

I am particularly impressed by the fact that Pennock was brought up in the nursery business. This means that he speaks my language, and it means that he will know how to handle plants, and have a practical outlook on the job. If he takes over, he can count upon all the assistance I am able to give him - which may not be much, but whatever it is, he will have it. As I think you know, I have been keenly interested in this project from the start and I am determined to do anything in my power to assist in making it a success. I know the United Fruit Co. will back me in this.

And I will also be glad to help Pennock line up some good plant material to take back to Puerto Rico with him. About the orchids, I was looking them over the other day and realised that this is a bad season to move orchids. They should be taken in March or April, just before new growth starts with the rainy

season in May. Still, if Pennock can escort them personally we will send at least some of the things from my garden which I want you to have. I can ship duplicates later - or he can - if these fail. And do you have Yucca elephantipes over there? I doubt it. I have just shipped cuttings to Jamaica. It is one of the favorite plants here for preventing soil erosion on coffee fincas and I believe it is a valuable thing.

I have heard nothing, yet, from Tela about the Tonka beans. As soon as I have turned back this Cinchona job to Merck and Co., which I feel must be by September at latest, I will probably go down to Tela for a couple of weeks and if nothing is done before that, will see what I can get. I have not been at Lancetilla for two years and do not know just how things stand.

Too bad that you can't come over here with Pennock; but if you still feel as you do when I passed through Puerto Rico a few months ago I suspect you would rather stay at home for a while, for which I can't blame you. I am certainly enjoying the opportunity to spend this summer in Guatemala. It's a mighty fine country.

Best regards to all of you.

Sincerely,



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF EXPERIMENT STATIONS

PUERTO RICO AGRICULTURAL  
EXPERIMENT STATION

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico,  
August 2, 1940

Air Mail

Dr. Wilson Popenoe  
Antigua, Guatemala

Dear Wilson:

Opportunely your letter of July 29 just came in this morning and Bill Pennock was just leaving for San Juan enroute to New York, so I showed it to him.

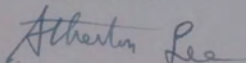
He is going to be very valuable to you, Wilson, because he has a sense of responsibility coupled with his knowledge of Spanish and plant propagation. We are also sorry to lose him, but think he is going to be of greater service to the United States with the quinine work in Guatemala; that is, if everything clicks.

Before he left we asked him, knowing our plant needs, to consult with you about shipping any plants over and bringing some with him. Most of us now have the orchid bug, but there are much more important things, such as tonka beans and other more economic crops. I know that Bill is going to appreciate working closely with you and I think that you will find him valuable also.

Bill is leaving Sunday, August 4, by plane and will be in New York probably August 6 or 7. He will probably fly to Guatemala City by Pan American, so I imagine that you may be seeing him before the 15th.

Best regards, Wilson, and I wonder when I myself will be seeing you again.

Sincerely,



Atherton Lee  
Director

AIR MAIL

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF EXPERIMENT STATIONS

PUERTO RICO AGRICULTURAL  
EXPERIMENT STATION

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico,

October 7, 1940.

Mr. Wilson Popenoe,  
La Lima, Honduras.

Dear Wilson:

It was a great pleasure to receive your letter of September 27 written from La Lima, Honduras. Bill Pennock returned about a week ago, conferred with our fellows about quinine, sold his furniture, and we just poured him into an automobile last night to take him to San Juan enroute to New York for his permanent assignment in Guatemala.

It would seem as if the arrangement made for Bill to live in Guatemala City will take care of the objections which his wife would probably have raised if they had had to live in an isolated place on a plantation. Bill seems quite pleased with the prospects and the change in the setup.

Mrs. Pennock has just received certification as a public accountant, the first woman certified in Puerto Rico. If something of such a nature could be found for her in Guatemala, it would probably keep her pretty satisfied. Her mother is an invalid and she has been supporting the mother in the past and has not liked to call upon Bill for such support. If she could find something to do in Guatemala City so that she could send funds back to her mother, it would probably take care of that situation completely.

We were very much pleased with the orchids which you sent to us. If I have not written to you about these previously, please accept our deep appreciation and thanks. They arrived in fine condition and are already mounted and growing, I hope.

If you can remember to send us seeds of the tonka bean when they come in season, we would appreciate it.

While Bill was here I talked with him about sending you some of our good East Indian bamboos. I know you have the Guadua angustifolia already in Guatemala, but some of these other bamboos have better advantages for furniture manufacture and

household use. When Bill gets back in Guatemala he will probably talk to you about getting in a shipment of some of these other species. It is my conception that bamboo is a crop which can do more to improve the standards of living in some of the tropical parts of the Western Hemisphere than any other crop.

Everything is going nicely here. Construction is going on on a new wing for our main building for chemistry laboratories, about which we are greatly pleased. When you visit us again I believe you will see considerable changes.

Best regards, Wilson, and write when you can.

Sincerely,

Lee