



Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
5th Floor, Hunt Library
Carnegie Mellon University
4909 Frew Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890
Contact: Archives
Telephone: 412-268-2434
Email: huntinst@andrew.cmu.edu
Web site: www.huntbotanical.org

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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.

2784 GLENDESSARY LANE
SANTA BARBARA
CALIFORNIA

January 20, 1956

Dear Wilson and Helen:

What a joy to get your letter! There seems every reason to think that I have now been pulled out of the flood that seemed to be bearing me off. And so the year that began (and went on) so badly ends in triumph. But as you say, life has brought us all some heavy blows and this is no more than the common lot of humanity.

I was delighted to hear about the marriages of Dorothy's daughters. In Pomona my boys, two of them at least, knew them very slightly or knew of them, but it was never their good luck to know them well. And how wonderful that Hugh is to come to Central America for his doctorate.

I hope that when you come to Santa Barbara next summer you will plan to stay longer than you did last time! You must dine with us and drink with us and let us talk over old times and new times.

Yes, I have written about Father Serra and I only wish that The Reader's Digest would let me go to Latin America, but there are so many people who have a head start on me there that I can't seem to persuade them. Articles about Spain itself would be much in demand, and if my health ever lets me travel that far I shall certainly want to be there when you are.

Our youngest, Noel, was briefly in the Navy, but they wouldn't take his migraine headaches on board and so he is out now and will be going to Europe soon for a Wanderjahr -- something every writer needs. And a writer is, I fear, exactly what he must be. Our oldest son Malcolm is a lawyer in the State employ in Sacramento, with two little girls. The "middle boy", Mark, is off in Phnom-Penh, Cambodia, with the United States Information Service -- and with his bride! Some of it is tough and some of it is wonderful. But we won't see them for another twenty months at least. And how much we love our daughters-in-law, who are really daughters indeed.

Ever with love from us both,

Dm

Antigua, Guatemala, 22 January 1959

[Photo]
Dear Don (also Louise, ca va sans dire):

They turned me out to pasture a year and a half ago - the Naval Reserve did the same, so I guess it must be alright. The pasture is fairly green. We went over to Europe; I was instrumental in getting some 20 good varieties of avocados established on the Mediterranean coast, (Almuñecar, due south of Granada); we went on to Italy to have a look-see and then to Istanbul where I bought Helen a velvet jacket which the merchant swore had been used by the favorite of the late-lamented Abdul Hamid, on whom be peace and the blessings of Allah; then we went to Greece and saw, on the island of Cos, the Platanus orientalis under which Hippocrates sat when he prescribed, some 2000 years ago, $MgSO_4$ to suffering humanity (I suspect it might be the 8th generation from the original P.orientalis) and then we went to Israel where I tried to help the suffering brethren grow two stems of bananas where one has grown before, and then to the Canary Islands where they have one of the loveliest little botanical gardens on the known world - Alexander von Humboldt got out of his Ford and down on his knees and uttered a prayer of thanksgiving when he crossed the ridge and viewed the lovely vale of Orotava. I am not sure about that Ford. but there are many in Spain and the Canaries which must be just about as wild.

But all the above is apropos de rien. Helen and I leave tomorrow for the land of Sunshine, Fruit and Flowers. Mainly Pasadena and San Francisco. But just don't be alarmed if we should drop in on you as we go southward from the latter to the former. Provided you still live in that part of the world, and you would be a fool if you didn't. I would, if I could afford it, but I can't.

Ever yours,

2784 GLENDESSARY LANE
SANTA BARBARA
CALIFORNIA

January 27th, 1959

Dear Wilson and Helen:

Nothing could give us greater delight than to see you at any time, providing we are here. We have to take a short trip to San Francisco and Sacramento, but the exact dates are not known to us. By all means let us not miss each other.

If you want to telephone from Altadena, my secretary, Mrs. Forkum, will know where we are - if we are not at home - and our address, and probably our telephone number too. Our number here in Santa Barbara is Woodland 5-6708.

Ever most affectionately,

Donald

2784 GLENDESSARY LANE
SANTA BARBARA
CALIFORNIA

July 28th, 1960

Dear Wilson:

Do you really wish to have a copy of your tropical horticultural book? I can send you my copy if you cannot find one yourself to work from in your revised edition or new book.

And how are you and your dear Helen? I hope that all goes well with your health. And your children too!

Here Louise and I have had our ups and downs of health, some of the downs very down, and yet here we both are. Today we receive a month-long visit from our middle son, Mark, and his lovely wife and their two children. They have been in Japan for three years with U.S.I.S. And our eldest son and his wife and their two children will be here too; a great get-together it is.

California this morning is at its most beautiful, warm in the sun and cool in the shade, a sea-breeze stirring and wine laid in for our visitors and the cook planning mountainous festivals.

Ever most cordially to you both,

Donald Peattie

Antigua, Guatemala, 20 October 1960

Dear Donald:

Your letter of 28 July was awaiting me on my return from Peru (you see we are still moving around a bit!). It is mighty good of you to offer me a copy of the "Manual of Tropical and Sub-tropical Fruits" but I hesitate to accept because (1) I do have a copy here, and (2) that book, when a copy comes onto the market, which is scarcely once a year (we know, because have orders outstanding with folks like Steinhart-Hafner) rarely sells for less than \$35 and Ed Menninger of Stuart, Florida, who deals in books on tropical horticulture, wrote me some months ago that a copy had just been sold for a hundred bucks.

Someone sent me a clipping, a picture of your son Mark and his attractive family. What a satisfaction it is to see the boys push ahead. My Hugh, who got his doctorate at the University of Florida last January, has just been appointed an Assistant Professor there, and is teaching Basic Soils and Tropical Soil Management.

My daughter Nancy, with husband and three children, has just moved from Washington where Bob was in the USGS, to Santa Barbara, where he is with an outfit name of which I can't remember; but I believe she calls it E G and E, which deals in atomic energy; they have just rented what she says is "an old house" (25 years) at 3217 Calle Cedro and I have informed her that our house here in Antigua was built in 1632 by Doctor don Luis de las Infantas Mendoza y Venegas and we anti-Menos consider to be of relatively recent construction; and furthermore, I don't like that name "Calle Cedro". Now, no member of the De la Guerra family gave it that name - it probably was not a street anyway, in the De la Guerra days, but a part of the Rancho Coleta or something like that. It would have been Calle de los Cedros, even though there was not a single cedar tree on it, any more than is an orange grove on Orange Grove Avenue in Pasadena.

I spend my time as a (or do you Harvard guys say an) horticultural consultant - "expert in around," as Shamel used to put it. I don't take any salary because they will take it off my Social Security, but I have a lot of fun; Venezuela and Nicaragua and El Salvador most recently. Strangely enough, I cannot stand such hard days in the field as I could when DF sent me down the Andes.

Though I don't know just when we shall fly to California again, it might be next year, in which case we shall of course visit Nancy and family and give ourselves the pleasure of calling on you and Louise.

With old time regards (as DF always like to say)

Faithfully yours,