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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.

Gracias, Lempira
October 7, 1969

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

Your welcome and interesting letter, along with the grape cuttings, came just as I was leaving for a week's trip to the San Rafael and San José area of this Department. Upon returning I spent another week along the frontier--between Honduras and El Salvador, visiting the small towns of La Virtud and Mapulaca and surrounding country. Our work is growing the fastest in the outlying areas and we enjoy getting out to visit the folk in their aldeas. We have just completed an air strip near San Rafael which will facilitate our getting in and out as well as serve the people in emergencies. Things are pretty rough along the border. They have had little contact with Honduras before the war, buying and selling almost exclusively with El Salvador. Now that that market is cut off they are forced to either do without or pay prices way beyond their possibilities--that is for anything they cannot produce there.

Now I am home again until next Thursday when we go to San Marcos, Ocotepeque for Council meeting with other Honduras missionaries.

We surely appreciate all your trouble to send the grape cuttings. I have planted them along the edge of the garden spot near the orange trees. We followed your suggestion, taking out the old banana plants and terracing it and had a lovely vegetable garden until the heavy rains came. We hope the grapes will do well. Your description of them sounds delicious.

We had hoped to have the water system installed this year at the Camp, so as to be able to irrigate next dry season, but circumstances have dictated otherwise. We will follow your advice and not try to plant fruit trees this year, hoping to be able to do so next year.

We haven't heard anything from Pam since she left here and would be glad to be brought up to date if you are informed better than we are. We plan to take our vacation next spring in Guatemala, so maybe we can get together with you then and talk about things that we are all interested in. Goodbye for now.

Bernard and Wilma
Bernard and Wilma Richards

Oct. 13th:

Your letter of Oct. 8 just arrived and I had this letter ready to send off, so will add just a line. I just checked the grape cuttings. They have not sprouted yet. They did arrive O.K. The bamboo you shipped arrived in good shape and we have had no problems in getting air shipments here. Sometimes they are not as fast as we think air freight should be.

Our missionary from Ocotepeque is now on furlough in the U.S. and will try to get the water system ordered and shipped down but I am not sure that we can have it installed in time to irrigate next season.

Please be quiet about big Smithfield hams. You may make us
covetous.

Feb 25, 1978
10:30 A.M.

Dear Friend

We came by to see you but they say you are gone for the day. We are sorry to have missed you and your lovely wife. (Pam says she is charming.)

We brought some friends with us and have to be back at the Pan-Am Hotel at Guatemala City for lunch at 12:30 or we would wait to see you.

We expect to stay at the Instituto Biblico Centroamericano ~~for~~ until Friday morning. Then Wilma will stay in Chiquimula for a few days and Bernard will cover the Coastal area, Baxanera & Barrios & our new Indian Relocation center at El Florido on Lake Izabal.

We cordially invite you to visit us again in Gracias. As you know, Pam is now married and lives in San Pedro. Her husband is an architect and they have a beautiful new home.

We can't say enough about your beautiful house here. We wish we could stay longer.

Most cordially

Gracias, Lempira
9 de marzo de 1970

Dear Dr. and Mrs. Popenoe:

Thanks for your good letter of Feb. 25. We surely were sorry to miss you. Your little guide was very kind and did a good job of guiding the tourists. Your house of course is just fabulous--truly wonderful.

Pamelle's address is Apartado Postal 560, ^{San Pedro Sula} her name is Dávila. We have seen her several times since her marriage. They have a beautiful new home, not quite finished.

Bernard is working every day out at the campamento putting the roof on the new chapel, which is the first building to go up out there. We are sorry to say we do not have the water system in yet, as the man who was to have taken care of it has been busy going to school in California. We may just buy the pump here in the country.

The grapes you sent are growing beautifully. We put them out on the edge of our vegetable garden so we could take good care of them. We will transfer them to the camp when it is safe.

Thanks for your interest. You are a busy man. We are too--it seems as though there are not enough hours in the day. We will spend Holy Week at our Regional Conference at San Marcos. I will teach a daily class on Health in the Home, and Bernard will teach a similar class to the men...a little bit on agriculture as our agriculture man will not be there this year.

Cordially yours, *Bernard & Wilma Richards*

1865-51st-Street

[1971] Sacramento, Calif, 95819

Dear Dr Popper,

It was such a delight to hear from you. Your letters are just like you, invigorating and full of interest. You will be surprised to hear from us from Miami. We are on our way to California and came this way so that we could do a little vacationing across the U.S. We bought a 69 Chevy from a dentist here, in good shape so hope to have a relaxing trip through the Everglades Key West, up the east coast to Washington and New York, then relatives in Chicago and on to our kids and grandkids in Nevada and Calif.

Your letter of Feb, found us in a hubbub getting the last ^{things} of the camp then in order and then our things sold and off home. Now that we can think more leisurely we will answer your kind letter.

We are so disappointed that we cannot be in Gracias this April when you were planning to visit us there. But please don't let that stop you from visiting Gracias. Our house is empty and we would be delighted for you to go in and make yourselves at home, and our people there would be terribly disappointed if you passed them up, both the missionaries and ~~the~~ Don Zenon Souto the caretaker at Camp Revilla. Our Miss Josephine still is holding down the mission home and work in Guatemala. She will be leaving Miami for

Honduras. Monday and I will tell her to be looking for you when you pass through there, then at San Marcos, an hour or up the Honduras road towards Gracias, Miss Virginia Miller is working. I will send word by Josephine to her as they work together a good deal. I am sure one or both of them ~~will~~ be going from time to time to Gracias and would be glad to go with you to visit the camp. I am so sorry that we ~~will~~ ^{will not} have the privilege of receiving you this time.

Now about the camp. I set the grape cuttings out in my yard. Most of them grew but some not too hardy. We later transplanted them near Zeron's house at Camp Revel.

They are still alive, but have not had as strong growth as the California grapes I brought down. The California grapes grew well at first but never bore and now they are dying off. I don't know why.

I was able to develop the spring, put in a receiving tank at the spring, and a large storage tank on top of the hill. An electric dynamo, diesel driven, powers the pump. All is functioning well and Zeron is using it to irrigate. We also have the beginnings of the chapel... (workable but not done) three bunk cabins (2 beds each), and a provisional kitchen and dining hall, in operation.

We have had several successful camps to date and are looking forward to an international camp in June and July, when a bunch of kids from the US will camp with a bunch of Hondurens. How I'd love to be there!

I have talked to our other missionaries of your kind interest in our work at Gracias and Zeno. Santa the caretaker is looking forward to receiving and caring for the plants you bring or send. Any technical help you can give him will be greatly appreciated by all of us. Please write either Miss Josephine Stoll, Ocotepeque or Miss Virginia Miller, San Marcos. and I can assure you that they will receive you gladly.

Please write us at our California address, and let us know how you are and what you think of our project. Thank you for writing and God bless you. Give our regards to your wife.

Sincerely yours,
Bernard and Alma Richards