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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.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

October 19, 1939.

Dr. Wilson Popenoe,  
La Lima, Honduras.

My dear Popenoe:

It is my sincere pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of an earthenware vase from northeastern Honduras and presented by you to the joint Smithsonian-Harvard University Expedition of 1936. The specimen is unique in our collections and makes a most desirable addition to our material.

The disposal of this specimen in sharing the joint collections obtained by this expedition presented something of a problem but as Harvard had a somewhat similar example we made an equitable exchange for a series of potsherds collected by Dr. Duncan Strong in 1923 from various mainland and Bay Island sites, and also made a replica of the vase which went to Harvard.

I wish to thank you on behalf of the Museum for this accession, particularly since this allows us to add your name to the list of donors to our archeological collections. I hope that you are coming up this winter and that we shall see you here in Washington.

Sincerely yours,

*A. Wetmore*  
Assistant Secretary.

lp

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 7, 1939.

Dr. Wilson Popenoe,  
La Lima, Honduras.

Dear Pop:

Dr. L. H. Adams, who is President of the Cosmos Club this year and in charge of the Geophysical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution, told me Monday evening that he was to be in Guatemala this winter for a short time, leaving Washington, January 8, on business for the Carnegie.

He is much interested in Antigua and it occurs to me that he is one of those who you might care to have spend a few days in the Casa Popenoe unless it is otherwise engaged. Dr. Adams will be around Antigua for about a week beginning approximately January 24. He may be addressed care of the Carnegie Institution in Guatemala City. I have known him a good many years and he is a good scout all around. He knows enough Spanish to get along with Maria <sup>and is</sup> simpatico in every way. I give you this merely as a suggestion for whatever decision you may want to make. Possibly the house will be otherwise occupied at this time.

Appropriation hearings are on now and the usual activities for the winter are going forward. The Department of State has made me Secretary General for the Eighth American Scientific Congress that will meet here from May 10 to May 18, 1940. Bennett head of the Soil Conservation Service of the Department of Agriculture will be Chairman of the Section on Agriculture and Conservation. I hope that you can be here for the meetings as we expect a great show with representatives from all of the American Republics. Ryerson was here recently. Matt Stirling goes to Mexico again at the end of this month.

My best regards to you.

Sincerely yours,

*A. Wetmore*

Assistant Secretary.

lp



# EIGHTH AMERICAN SCIENTIFIC CONGRESS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
WASHINGTON, MAY 10-18, 1940

Hon. Sumner Welles  
Chairman of the Organizing Committee

Dr. Warren Kelchner  
Vice Chairman of the Organizing Committee

Dr. Alexander Wetmore  
Secretary General

February 28, 1940.

## THE SECTIONS

- I. *Anthropological Sciences*  
Dr. Herbert J. Spinden  
Chairman
- II. *Biological Sciences*  
Dr. Edwin G. Conklin  
Chairman  
Mr. James A. G. Rehn  
Secretary
- III. *Geological Sciences*  
Dr. T. Wayland Vaughan  
Chairman  
Dr. Wendell P. Woodring  
Secretary
- IV. *Agriculture and Conservation*  
Dr. Hugh H. Bennett  
Chairman  
Mr. Ernest G. Holt  
Secretary
- V. *Public Health and Medicine*  
Dr. Thomas Parran  
Chairman  
Dr. A. M. Stimson  
Secretary
- VI. *Physical and Chemical Sciences*  
Dr. Lyman J. Briggs  
Chairman  
Mr. Eugene C. Crittenden  
Secretary
- VII. *Statistics*  
Dr. Stuart A. Rice  
Chairman  
Dr. Halbert L. Dunn  
Secretary
- VIII. *History and Geography*  
Dr. Clarence H. Haring  
Chairman  
Dr. Robert C. Smith  
Secretary
- IX. *International Law, Public Law,  
and Jurisprudence*  
Dr. James Brown Scott  
Chairman  
Mr. George A. Finch  
Secretary
- X. *Economics and Sociology*  
Dr. Harold G. Moulton  
Chairman  
Mr. Benjamin Colby  
Secretary
- XI. *Education*  
Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler  
Chairman  
Dr. I. L. Kandel  
Vice Chairman

Dear "Pop":

Dr. Conklin and Mr. James A. G. Rehn, Chairman and Secretary, respectively, for the Section on the Biological Sciences, have wanted to include your name in the membership of their Committee in connection with the Eighth American Scientific Congress. In view of our own correspondence on this matter, I have had no hesitation in indicating that this was excellent and that a letter of appointment could go to you without waiting for the formality of a definite acceptance from you. I am sure that you will be here, if your duties permit, and, at any rate, we want the pleasure of associating your name with the work.

The brochure describing the Congress is now out in editions in English and in Spanish. The translation in Portuguese is now on the press. I am sending you two copies of the Spanish edition at this time, and others can go to you later, if you want them.

My best regards and, by all means, be sure to make your plans to be with us.

Sincerely yours,

*A. Wetmore*  
A. Wetmore  
Secretary General.

Enclosures:  
Two brochures.

Dr. Wilson Popenoe,  
C/o United Fruit Company,  
Guatemala, Guatemala.



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

March 29, 1940.

Dr. Wilson Popenoe,  
c/o United Fruit Company,  
Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Dear Pop:

The information in yours of March 22 from Caracas regarding the Goagira is exactly what I need. I thank you for your trouble.

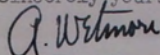
Since writing you I have secured a report by a German geologist, who was through that region a few years ago, studying water possibilities for the Colombian government. His dope checks with yours that October and November are the rainy months and that field work there should be done in the spring. I think it would be foolish, under the circumstances, to plan a fall trip so shall lay this aside with the hope that I can go to the Goagira in March and April next year or, if not, I may send some one in there to do some work for us. Your offer of facilities at Carrasquero was most kind and I shall keep this in mind with the idea of doing something about it next year! It would hardly be worth while to make any arrangements now until we have certain dates to go on.

Ventura Barnés, the young chap that you met with me in Caracas in 1937, has now gone into the service of Mr. William Phelps of Caracas as an ornithologist, and is working actively all over Venezuela in making collections. I had a letter from him a few days ago written from the Goagira but as I understand it he is restricting his investigations to the narrow line along the gulf side of the peninsula on the southeast that is claimed by Venezuela. Confidentially the section in which I have most interest is that on the slopes of certain mountains at the extreme eastern point. While these are arid there is said to be some forest above a Franciscan school, which is a place called Navarate, which is reached through Puerto Estrella. I am putting your letter with my notes on this region to see what I can work up a little later about it.

The matter of the Congress is moving along about as usual and is now taking practically all of my time. I am looking forward

to your own presence here though for a real visit we will have to get together again somewhere down south. When this thing is all over it is going to be a great relief to me. It is cutting me out of field work this spring but I do expect to get off somewhere in October and November. Now that the Goagira proposition is postponed I shall have to figure out some place in Latin America where the rains will not prevent work at that time. Perhaps I can take up some area not too well known that is being opened by the development of the International Highway. If you have any suggestions let me know.

Sincerely yours,



A. Wetmore,  
Assistant Secretary.

lp

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

April 24, 1940

Dr. Wilson Popenoe,  
Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Dear Pop:

The organizational work for the Congress is now boiling for fair, and I am doing little else except to try to keep things moving. Response from Latin America is far more favorable than I had anticipated, and it looks now as though we would have between 250 and 300 Latins here and possibly more. In fact, the boys in the State Department are beginning to worry over the growing list, because of the expense of entertainment, but that is their trouble, and not mine. My own difficulties at present center around the program, and the papers that are being submitted.

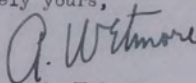
As you can imagine, some of these are pretty fruity, and it is a little hard on the Secretary General to know just what to do in some instances. Most of them we can list by title and then forget, but in some cases I feel the author is going to be present!

I have not heard from you since Venezuela, and write now to tell you that we are counting on you as one of those to be here to help greet the distinguished Latins. Don't let us down on this.

Stadelman was here recently and I am making arrangements to put him on as an interpreter during the Congress, which will give him enough money to pay his expenses and let him see the show. Bill Mann landed in Liberia on March 10 and since then we have heard nothing from him. I have Carriker still working in Mexico, to return, sailing from Vera Cruz May 20. Stirling will be home in time for the Congress. He made another ten-strike in Tabasco where he found five more of these huge stone heads.

My best regards go to you.

Sincerely yours,



A. Wetmore  
Assistant Secretary

rt



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

September 17, 1940.

AIR MAIL

Dr. Wilson Popone,  
c/o The United Fruit Company,  
Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Dear Pop:

Si Dios quiere I shall be on the good ship Jamaica on my way to Costa Rica leaving New York October 5. This should give me a day in Cristobal where I hope to have Zetek take me out to Barro Colorado Island. I will be due in Puerto Limón on October 11 and shall have until November 23 to disport myself in that country. My general plan is to go to San José for a few days to visit the National Museum and to look into a question of a vertebrate fossil deposit that Valerio, Director of the Museum, has had under discussion with me for some time.

Following that, I expect to duck out for Guanacaste where in the words of the natives there should be some birds that need killing. The National Museum here in Washington has a long series of Costa Rican birds but all from the east, eastern central and southern parts of the country. Nobody has much from the northwest and I hope to make a base at Liberia and work up toward the Nicaraguan frontier. My friend, Don Juvenal Valerio, informs me that he has been instructed to meet me on the dock at Limón to extend a hand of friendship and that he will be with me for most of the time. I hope that this does not mean too much entertainment as I am longing for the same type of life that we had at Maracay three years ago, possibly with an occasional remedio to help me along the way. I also hear from C. F. Underwood that he wants to horn in on the party some way, but will take up that problem later when I am down there.

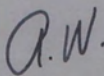
All this is preliminary to asking you if I am liable to see you down there at any time? You can always find out where I am through the American Consul in San José if you do get over that way.



Jim Kempton told me that you were expected here Labor Day but you ran out on us. Bill Mann is back from Liberia somewhat run down from malaria and dysentery, but after three weeks in the Naval Hospital is around as usual and in good shape. He was as yellow as a chinaman when he first landed.

Here's hoping that I will see you or that if not, you will be here in Washington this winter. I have to be home December 1.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A.W.' with a stylized flourish.

A. Wetmore,  
Assistant Secretary.

kb

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 6, 1940.

Dr. Wilson Popenoe,  
c/o United Fruit Company,  
Guatemala City, Guatemala.

Dear Pop:

Yours of November 4 came to me in Liberia, Costa Rica in due course and I was happy to hear from you though disappointed to learn that you were not to be in Costa Rica soon. I had a grand trip down there and made some excellent collections in the northwest, an area from which we have had no birds previously. In spite of considerable croaking on the part of friends who said that I would not be able to work there during the rainy season I got along very well. You know yourself how erratic the rains can be and it is drier in the north of Guanacaste than in the south. I made a base in Liberia and worked also on the volcano Rincon de la Vieja.

Don Juvenal went over with me but returned after a day or so to San José. I had with me his assistant in zoology, Carlos Aguilar, a young chap who has much enthusiasm and to whom I gave a good stiff month of training in field work. He took it like a man and I think will do something with the experience. In the mountains I lived on an old cattle estate that has not been used for a number of years, and where I found about as wild conditions as I have ever seen.

We have had a dinner of the Explorers Club since I got back and the group seems to be going strong. Bill Mann is back to usual health again. Stirling is preparing to leave Washington after Christmas for another trip into Mexico.

My best regards for the holidays.

Sincerely yours,

*Alexandro*  
A. Wetmore,  
Assistant Secretary.

lp

UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM  
BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY  
ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY  
NATIONAL AIR MUSEUM  
NATIONAL ZOOLOGICAL PARK



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Washington 25, D.C.  
U.S.A.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART  
NATIONAL COLLECTION OF FINE ARTS  
FREER GALLERY OF ART  
INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE SERVICE  
CANAL ZONE BIOLOGICAL AREA

June 7, 1957

Dr. Wilson Popenoe  
Calle de la Nobleza No. 2  
Antigua, Guatemala

Dear Pop:

I have been intrigued to receive your card of May 23 with the information that you are now Director Emeritus and that you are returning to live in Antigua. I have had varying reports in the last few years regarding the Casa Colonial but hope that you are returning to this as a home, unless it has been taken over in some way by the Guatemalan Government. I remember vividly the great pleasure I had living in the house 20 years ago. I have never been more content anywhere in my life outside of my own home.

Whenever you come up this way, please be sure to let me know as we would very much like to have you as our guest. Bea and I live quietly and I think you might enjoy our house and our little yard with its lily pool and its birds.

My own retirement has consisted in dropping all those administrative duties with which I had become considerably fed up, and continuing with what energy I have in my ornithological work. I am finding this completely rewarding and enjoyable in every way. May I wish that you may find equally interesting occupations. You must have bottled up inside you somewhere a tremendous lot of information that you will now wish to get down on paper for the benefit of the rest of us.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

A. Wetmore  
Research Associate



San Salvador, 7 July 1957

Dr Alexander Wetmore  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington D C

Dear Alex:

Many thanks for your good letter of 7 June - just a month ago. Helen and I spent most of June getting four truckloads of junk from Honduras to Guatemala and fixing up the old house in Antigua, and now I am here in Salvador on a two months contract with the government, to see if I can help in improving fruit production in this country. After which I go back to Antigua, where we are indeed living in the old house which you have loved long since and lost awhile. I don't know why the talk about expropriation went so far; I even here it was mentioned on the floor of Congress in Washington at one time, but nothing was really done by the communists and I hope we are now in the house to stay. Though I plan to move around a bit, working in my favorite field of plant introduction and perhaps trying to help some of the agricultural schools here in tropical America which have been planned more or less along the lines of EAP.

I hear that George Darrow has just retired from the BPI. Just about my last contact with members of the ancien regime. I am glad you are finding plenty to do in your retirement - I don't like that word, I think the Latins have it figured out more pleasantly, when they call it jubilation. At least we don't know just what jubilation means so it doesn't hurt our feelings. We may be going to Washington one of these days, since I now have 3 grandchildren there, and if we do we will most certainly drop in on you to talk about those dear dead days beyond recall.

Ever yours,