



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

The Hunt Institute is committed to making its collections accessible for research. We are pleased to offer this digitized version of an item from our Archives.

Usage guidelines

We have provided this low-resolution, digitized version for research purposes. To inquire about publishing any images from this item, please contact the Institute.

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.

enroute, Wilson Place,
Putney, Vermont, 05346
April 14, 1969

My dear Dr. Popenoe:

Recently United Fruit asked me to presently prepare a brochure of commemoration of our late and beloved friend, V.C. Dunlap. I have been trying to get in touch with several of the "older legion" who knew Vining and to see if each would be so kind as to contribute any episodes, reflections, experiences, or other remembrances of Dr. Dunlap. Tom McCann feels that the family would very much appreciate the preparation of this brochure for the memorial services which will be held at the Dunlap homestead later this spring.

Earlier, I had written Dave Cloward, alas, showing my lack of updated information, since, as you know, dear Dave also passed away a little more than a year ago. Anyway, I've been spending the past five months working at books at this old and much lost Florida port. I'd wanted to gain a finalized confirmation of Company plans before doing too much pestering, but am now finally advised that the memorial brochure is indeed wanted and will be properly published, presumably during the coming six to eight weeks.

R.P. Armour favored me with a very fine letter under date of April 1, in which he suggested that I get in touch with you, which, of course, I'd planned to do. Should you already have written me care of my Florida (Cedar Key, c/o Wilder the letter will be forwarded.

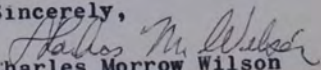
What we all want, I believe, is a fairly informal tribute of friends who knew Dr. Dunlap and each in his own light adjudged and appreciated him. I know you knew Vining longer than most and as a fellow scientist and professional. I also recall that you recall and write quite lucidly.

If you have already done so, my most cordial thanks, and if you have not yet had time, please do send along any thoughts, episodes, vignettes, fellow scientist's or, indeed, any of the kind of perceptive notes and remembrances at which you excel.

We shall all be deeply appreciative and I am certain that the family will be. I am, of course, greatly honored by the invitation, but although I knew our dear friend intermittently from 1937 through 1968 there is so much of great consequence I do not know. This, of course, is not limited to our great friend; what I don't know appears to fill most of the libraries of the world.

Anyway, thanks again and accept my most cordial regards.

Sincerely,


Charles Morrow Wilson

Antigua, Guatemala, 28 April 1969

Mr Charles Morrow Wilson
Wilson Place,
Putney, Vermont 05346 USA

Dear Charley:

Your letter of the 14th has been delayed by my absence in northern Guatemala. I hope the enclosed note is not too late - and I further hope that it is the sort of thing you need. I feel sure it is long enough - I did not feel like making it any shorter.

I am not at all pleased with the picture of Doc which was published in Unifruitco, issue of 28 February. I think you would find it hard to get a better one than the enclosed, if you could cut out and enlarge it. I feel sure the printer could do this. This picture was taken at Lancetilla about 1 December 1967 and I suspect it is one of the last which was taken of him in the field. Lydia was there and she would know.

Cordially yours,

Wilson Popenoe

If anything was needed to add to his popularity, it was his marriage to Lydia Jewett, a member of the Cloward family. Lydia's brother Dave was an old-timer and a high official in the Company. "Dad" Cloward, who spent his last years at La Lima, added to the joys of living in that happy colony.

Doc was modest. Though a scientist of international repute, granted an honorary D.Sc. by his Alma Mater long before he reached the end of his career, he shunned the limelight and thought only of what he could do to improve banana culture, and to further the diversification program which was launched by United Fruit about the time of World War II. He was one of the men our old boss G.P. Chittenden had in mind when he made the classic remark, "You boys brought the banana out of the jungle and put ~~it~~ it on the farm."

One day in 1940 I received a telephone call from Boston. I was in Guatemala, and I knew that this meant something important. Arthur Pollan was my Chief at that time. He said "The jefe wants to build an agricultural school in Honduras, and he wants you to run it." This was rather sudden. I pulled myself together and replied: "Allright, but what about the Tropical Research Department?" The answer: "Doc Dunlap will take over."

Doc, as everyone called him (I doubt that most of the boys ever knew that his first name was Vining) had been with the United Fruit Company three years longer than myself. He was a pathologist, and I believe was originally employed to take part in the fight against Panama disease, but like most of the scientific men employed in those early days (Doc joined in 1922) he was soon involved in many problems which were by no means pathological. The world-wide search for good banana lands was one of his major activities. When he sat around one of the Company mess halls in the evenings and recounted his experiences in Africa, where he and N.E. Sanderson had spent a lot of time, he always had an interested audience. Perhaps it was not their exploits which were so interesting, as it was Doc's personality. He was an inimitable raconteur, with a sense of humor unsurpassed.

In the 1930s he led the successful fight against Sigatoka disease, which hit the Honduran Divisions so hard that Company wives began packing up their sewing machines and getting ready to go home. As head of Tropical Research he became so popular at every level of Company life that the splendid laboratory at La Lima was named in his honor.

One day in 1940 I received a telephone call from Boston. I was in Guatemala, and I knew this meant something ~~pretty~~ important. ~~My Chief~~ Arthur Pollan was my Chief at that time. He was on the phone. He said "The jefe (Sam Zemurray) wants to build an agricultural school in Honduras, and he wants you to run it". This was rather sudden, I pulled myself together and replied "Allright, but what about the ~~Research~~ Tropical Research Department?" "Doc Dunlap will take over."

Doc, as ~~was always~~ everyone called him (I doubt that most of the boys ~~know~~ ever knew his first name was Vining) had been with the ~~Company~~ United Fruit Company three years longer than myself. He was a pathologist, and I have the feeling that he was employed primarily to take part in the fight against Panama disease, but like most of the scientific men hired ⁱⁿ those early days (Doc joined in 1922) he was soon involved in ~~these~~ many problems which were by no means pathological. The world-wide ~~investix~~ search for good banana lands was one of his major activities. When he sat around the mess hall in the evenings and recounted his experiences in Africa, where he and N E Sanderson spent a lot of time, he always had an interested audience. Perhaps it was not ~~his~~ their exploits which were so interesting, as it was ~~these~~ Doc's personality. He ^{was} an inimitable raconteur, with a sense of humor unsurpassed.

In the 1930s he led the successful fight against Sigatoka disease, which hit the Honduran divisions so hard that Company wives began packing up their sewing machines and getting everything in readiness to go home. As head of the ~~Research~~ Tropical Research Department, he became so popular at every level of Company life, that the splendid laboratory at La Lima was named in his honor.

If anything was needed to increase his popularity, it was his marriage to Lydia Jewett, a member of the Cloward family. Lydia's brother Dave was an old timer and high official in the Company, and "Dad" Cloward, who spent his last years at La Lima, ~~xxxxxxx~~ added to the joys of living in that happy colony.

Doc was modest. Though a scientist of international repute, granted an honorary D.Sc. by his Alma Mater long before he reached the end of his career, he shunned the limelight and thought only of what he could do to ~~growxxxxxxxbananasxxxxxxxlessxxxxxxxatxxxxxxx~~ improve banana culture, and to further the diversification program in which United Fruit developed a keen interest abbut the time of World War II. He was one of the men ^{our} old old boss G.P.Chittenden had in mind when he made the classic remark, "You boys brought the banana out of the jungle and put in on the farm."

CHARLES MORROW WILSON
WILSON PLACE
PUTNEY, VERMONT 05346

May 6, 1969

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

I am deeply appreciative of your letter of April 28 and the photograph which reached me in perfect time. I've just sent in the copy and the picture. Tom McCann has a man who is a photography expert and I think he can do a good job of making the blowup. That is the best likeness of Doc Dunlap I have ever seen; like myself and many others he never reacted well to posed "portraits."

All of what you say is most helpful. I'm doing my best with an admitted feeling of inadequacy: Who, other than God, could deal adequately with our beloved friend, in a few hundred words? This reminds me that the Story of Creation is told in 667 words (King James Version) but the authorship there is way out of my league.

Anyway, I've done my best and will see that copies are sent you. The Memorial Service will be held at Bowdoinham, Maine, May 24, and I'm definitely going if my wife's condition permits. Martha has had a rough siege with phlebitis and her situation is momentarily unpredictable. However, the general indications are good and if she improves I am planning on bringing her with me on a Central America trip in the fall. Mr. Fox and the Rockefeller Foundation have both asked me to go down and do some errands. I am not working regularly for either organization but the occasional chores plus my private book publishing are keeping me extremely busy.

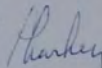
Incidentally, I feel very deeply that we ought to put together a creditable volume dealing not only with the great career work of Doc Dunlap, but of your own. The volume should include a competent bibliography and do a great deal of correlating of the broadly significant developments, including Lancitilla, the School and the great concept of tropics research which you have done so much to foal. This is my thinking. This brief statement sounds loose but there is a need and responsibility involved.

Anyway, let's think about it. George Harrar, now president of the Rockefeller foundation, knows and admires Doc Dunlap, and, of course, yourself. He came down to Florida to talk with me about the work I did with Triticale and conversationally mentioned his great respect for you and Doc. As you know, Dr. Harrar is a master of understatement.

All the best,

Wilson Popenoe, esq.

Cordially,



CHARLES MORROW WILSON
WILSON PLACE
PUTNEY, VERMONT 05846

September 4, 1969

Dear Wilson:

Your letter is appreciated. I'll ask Tom McCann to send you copies of the Memorial Letter for dear Vining Dunlap. He handled the detail and didn't remember to send me copies. It is a brief tribute along lines that I thought Doc would have approved.

We must keep in touch. I may be able to get to Guatemala about the end of the year, ^{or early next year} and to Colombia. Mama Frutos has favored with a dim suggestion about some "special chores" but during recent months I haven't been in touch with "Boston." As you may have heard Herb Cornuelle is shortly stepping out of the presidency. He asked me to come over and talk with him but has been so tied up that I haven't yet a specific date. Mr. Fox is no less preoccupied. Personally, I've been swamped in, too. My wife was ill for some weeks and I had to keep an eye on her here. She is much improved, but the work load is "fantastic" and I'm getting old.

By this I merely mean it takes me about fourteen hours to do eight hours of work. Next week I am being conscripted for a duty tour with Ellsworth Bunker the American Ambassador to Viet Nam. Just why me is unexplained. Mr. Bunker, who is 75, tried to retire but Mr. Nixon said ~~no~~. He wants me to compile a record volume of Mr. Bunker's ambassadorial services and this, of course, is a pretty vast job. I sometimes wish I knew something-- as I grow old I grow more ignorant and what I don't know fills most of the libraries everywhere.

I can be reached at this address and will probably make only one brief trip to Saigon--one, I gather, will be plenty. After this fiesta I want to get back to my most liked subject--"Middle America" and to dear old Colombia.

I am always interested in your doings and hope you will write again soon. We ought to get together and talk over some plans. Seriously, too, I might be able to help Guatemala with the turistas, etc. Those things are conjectural but when the dice fall right one can sometimes to good by and with publishing. And speaking most honestly there is no country I'd rather try to help, *i.e. than Guatemala*

As soon as the Fruterros make up their minds, I'll let you know.

All the best to you and yours,

Dr. Wilson Popenoe