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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.

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY
AT HARVARD COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

DIRECTOR'S ROOM

November 24, 1939

Dear Pop:

Yes, I know Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Kay very well indeed and they are most intimate friends of the Fairchilds. David has stayed with them for weeks on end at their farm at Chester, New Jersey and they visit back and forth all the time in Florida. Indeed Elizabeth Kay was the one who was the financial backer of Nancy Bell's musical education, between you and me and the lamp post. So do anything you can for them. They are very responsive and very nice people and this would please David more than anything else in the world.

She was discussed as President of the Fairchild Tropical Garden organization but it was decided that we should have a man to head everything up and Merrill is now the President.

With warmest regards to both of you,

Affectionately,

Tom B.

Doctor Wilson Popenoe
United Fruit Company
Guatemala City, Guatemala

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY
AT HARVARD COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

DIRECTOR'S ROOM

January 25, 1940

Doctor Wilson Popenoe
c/o Cia. Bananera de Costa Rica
San José, Costa Rica

Dear Pop:

My friend Pottinger in the University Press
writes me:

"The stock of Mrs. Popenoe's 'Santiago de los Caballeros' was suddenly exhausted and, in view of the excellent sales record, we have taken the liberty of reprinting.

"You will remember that on the second edition of this book, you paid the printing costs and are to receive net proceeds after our handling charge has been deducted; or at any rate, the proceeds are to be paid over to the Peabody Museum for work in Guatemala. On this arrangement, we shall send the Peabody Museum, at the close of our financial year, a check for \$86.00."

You might let me know how you want this \$86.00 used.

I will probably find it on my desk by the time I come back from Cuba. I am leaving in a couple of days to go down to the Dedication of the new library and museum building of the Fairchild Tropical Garden, February 7.

Affectionately yours,

Tom

Doctor Barbour dictated this letter in town where he is recovering from his cold in order to be able to go south this weekend. He asked me to type the letter and sign it for him. This gives me an opportunity to send you both my regards and best good wishes for the New Year.

William M. Robinson

San José, Costa Rica, 4 Feb. 1940

Dr. Thomas Barbour,
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Tom:

Thanks for your letter, asking for suggestions re use of the \$86 which have accrued from the sale of Dorothy's little book. If Professor Tozzer has no better plan, what do you say to this: Hold the money against the time when I may be able to pick up some more specimens in Honduras, Colombia, or elsewhere? While I havent been able to get hold of any worthwhile stuff this past year, I shall probably be doing so eventually.

We are going on to Panama next week, where I hope to see Don Santiago and other friends, then over to Jamaica for a few weeks. We have had a very pleasant stay here in C R, but the country lacks the dramatic quality of Guatemala. The Hunnewells are still here. We havent been able to do as much for them as we wanted to do, because I have been so infernally busy trying to help G P on a little job, but we have been out with them a couple of times and hope to go again before we and they check out. They are grand people.

I trust you enjoy your stay in the Land of Sunshine, Fruit and Flowers. If you would like to buy a lot on North Miami, a real bargain, just drop me a line.

Ever yours

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY
AT HARVARD COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

DIRECTOR'S ROOM

May 11, 1940

Dear Pop:

Just got back, a few days ago, after the longest and coldest winter in the South which I have ever known. We actually had definite frost damage at Soledad and people in Coconut Grove were paying fifteen cents a stick for firewood, small sticks at that. However, I had a great winter. I installed and labelled the Palm Products Museum at Fairchild Garden. This is now attractive and instructive. Then went to Soledad with Merrill. Then went up to Gainesville and opened a very fruitful Miocene paleontological site which is full of badly preserved but very instructive Miocene mammals, many of which are new. Then I motored up and met the family in Virginia where we spent a few days together and are now back here.

Frank Hunnewell came to see me yesterday afternoon and gave me the news of his trip, including the welcome information that you were both extremely well and going strong. I am glad you are to be in Guatemala for a good long sojourn. Elizabeth Bigelow said that her stay in your house was the greatest experience of her life. It is nice to be able to give so many people so quite extraordinary an experience.

I am bitterly disappointed that you did not come north for the Congress. I sort of hoped you might. I'm going down for a couple of days, though I loathe such parties and they amount to nothing, unless giving Spigs a good time is an object in itself.

It is terrible to think how long it will be before I see you again. Give my best to the Kidders whom you are probably by way of seeing from time to time and with lots of love to you both, I am

Most sincerely,

Tom B.

Doctor Wilson Popenoe
c/o United Fruit Company
Guatemala City, Guatemala

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY
AT HARVARD COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

DIRECTOR'S ROOM

June 5, 1940

Dear Pop:

I have just received a check from the Harvard University Press for \$8.85 being the royalty from the sale of Dorothy's book during the last year. I have turned this over to the Peabody Museum to be applied to pottery restoration. I think this is what you asked me to do.

Young Alexander Northrup came to see me a day or two ago and said he had the pleasure of seeing you in Jamaica. He's to be married in a few days to a certain Miss Harriman of New York so that Axe, when he returns with his bride to Rabo de Puerco, he can buy out the Chiriqui Land Company to run it as an amusement center if he happens to take a fancy. This, of course, is all between you and me and the lamp post.

No recent news from the Fairchilds but I have a hunch that they may turn up here sometime in a month or two.

Very affectionately,

Tom

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY
AT HARVARD COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

August 1, 1940

DIRECTOR'S ROOM

Doctor Wilson Popenoe
c/o United Fruit Company
Guatemala City, Guatemala

Dear Pop:

Many thanks for yours of July 29, including the enclosure to Scott. You've no idea how often he speaks of you and how often we wish that you might turn up here.

I quite agree with what you say about agricultural education of the Latin-American youths. However they are coming up more and more and, what's more, their preparation is getting better so that they are not the problem to our colleges which they once were. This is all to the good.

Fairchild reaches Los Angeles August 17 and goes straight to Florida, so far as anybody knows. I have a hunch, reading between the lines a letter which he wrote me not long ago, that the expedition ended up with a display of fireworks on the part of Anne and Marion. Maybe David was in it too but I've always had a feeling that the ladies made up a pretty good flint and steel combination and that sparks were likely to fly, sooner or later.

He's got a lot of stuff that we may be able to grow in Cuba; less certainly in Florida; and a good deal more which I suspect cannot possibly be grown in either place.

I can't think of any product more vitally important at the moment than the production of quinine. If you can really get this growing in good shape you will have made a name for yourself of which all your friends will be everlastingly proud. I know you can do it.

With lots of love to you both from us all, I am

Sincerely,

T. Barbour

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOÖLOGY
AT HARVARD COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

DIRECTOR'S ROOM

October 15, 1941

Dear Pop:

I am delighted to hear from you. My last news was Teddie's report that he ran into you in Guayquil.

I am intrigued to think that you are going to run the school. The only thing I wonder is which school? Or are there to be two schools? I am writing Bressman today to say that I expect to be in Washington on November 13 and 14 to talk over plans for their Institute for Tropical Agriculture which I take it is the one you have been dodging about looking for sites for. I wonder, however, how this is intergraded with the project which you were talking about the last time we met and which had been put up to you by Zemurray.

That little souvenir from Bogotá, incidentally, came through safely, has been reset and Rosamond tells me that it looks like a million. I have not seen it yet and it goes into the hands of its new owner on her 21st birthday which, by a curious coincidence, is Guy Faukes day, November 5.

Sandy and his family are here and at last we've got him to clean up his thesis; all that stands between him and his doctor's degree. I suppose David and Marion are with you now. How I wish I could be with you too.

I never went to Bermuda though I wanted to very much for I have been writing a paper on pediculate fishes this summer and a number of interesting forms turn up in Bermuda. I am planning to go to Cuba for February.

If you can get David to bring us some seeds of Phyllocarpus tell him to drop them off in Havana on his way home. Also tell him that Mr. Henriquez is dead but his daughter Marion handles Harvard affairs and has her office in Edificio del Cable which is the cab driver's name for the Western Union Building on Obispo Street.

I will probably have more to write you that is better worth reading than this when I return from the agricultural meeting in Washington. The meeting of the National Parks Advisory Board takes place this month and the agricultural meeting in November.

I have got Mary B.'s diary under consideration by the Harvard Press. I think it will really make a very nice little book. I have the proposed illustrations before me. They are not too bad but not as good as the diary which, in spots, is extremely amusing. Unless plans change it will appear under the title of "Pots, Pans and Incas."

Love to David and Marion and Helen and yourself.

Affectionately,

Tom

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY
AT HARVARD COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

DIRECTOR'S ROOM

April 7, 1942

Dr. Wilson Popenoe,
Cosmos Club,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dr. Popenoe:

Miss Robinson is away for a few days and I am therefore answering your note of yesterday.

Dr. Barbour is still in Florida and probably won't be back until about the first of May, but I have just talked with Mrs. Barbour and she asked me to tell you that of course they want you to stay at 278 Clarendon Street and have been looking for you since the middle of March. I'm sorry you're going to miss seeing Dr. Barbour because I know how disappointed he will be.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth Grundy

Secretary to Dr. Barbour.