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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.

March 19, 1967

Dear Doctor Popence:

I just re-read "The House in Antigua", it is the type of book that requires reading and re-reading, there is so much to absorb and in each reading one travels through the centuries. Mr. Adamic used very good judgment in including you, personally, in the book, that made the story complete, even though you do not agree---

A seventy foot square Courtyard! Doctor, I do believe my entire house would fit into that Courtyard.

Is Antigua still unspoiled and Natural? Are the revolutions, of which you spoke, connected with the changes in Government? Is Guadamala liberal, conservative, or down the middle?

You have opened a new world with your invitation to be a guest in your home. Europe did not have the necessary incentive- the Hawaiian Islands did seem interesting until acquaintances found they were so commercialized; South America was practically unknown to me, other than school and newspapers; your "House in Antigua", the history, the people, all of it, is like a dream, and that will be a dream come true. There are so many questions I want to ask, which will have to wait until June.

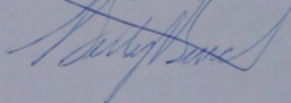
After tomorrow I'll be free from Court cases so will telephone Mrs. Ryerson and mail them a map to my home; this is necessary

in order to avoid sending out the proverbial St. Bernard, with all the trimmings.

Sunday and the sun is out again, after a siege of non-California weather. The week produced rain, hail, snow, ice and wild winds. Mt. Diablo is white-capped; the snow badly blighted the lovely spring flowers, especially Azaleas. The gales, on my mountain, rage through trees, howling, scolding, shouting---it is an exhilarating, turbulent sound, until the gravel commences to rattle off of the roof.

Again, thank you for your invitation to visit your home in Antigua, you cannot understand how much this means to me.

Sincerely yours,



P. S. Not a word from San Francisco?

April 2, 1967

Dear Doctor Popenoe:

Your letter was so interesting--I'm delighted to be "La Nina Betty", properly it should be "La Nina Marie-Isobel", but the former is certainly preferable. Indeed I am a convert and really anticipating Antigua, it is not so "easy", however, you are accustomed to coming and going at will, I have a few obstacles; tax deadline, April 17th, a trial April 21st and one in the middle of May, three estates to close, one in Martinez, California, which must set some kind of a record, three years, eight months and about fourteen days; also discovered one needs some type of a passport to leave the United States, and return home; I have a beautiful Bible of my Mother's family, must weigh about 15 pounds, just had a picture of luggage that around, but ascertained my Mother's affidavits would suffice; didn't know life held such problems---never thought I would have to prove I was born.

In checking Guadamala data, is the winter season between June and October? Was amused, a neighbor, Dr. Brown, commented he had been to Guadamala and there were REVOLUTIONS; told him I had read that Castro has bands of soldiers in your hills, I did too. Also read that 60% of the Indians are pure bred, which is more than we can say in this day and age.

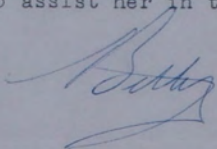
California is topsy-turvy, rain, snow, ice, on one day, sunshine the next; one wonders how the houses stay on the hillsides.

Dr. Popenoe, according to AAA travel book, one can take but six rolls of film into Mexico, is this also true regarding Guadamala? I use a polaroid camera, each pack holds but eight films; would you know if Polaroid film is available in Guadamala? I understand Guadamala City is extremely modern and rather imagine you have anything there that could be purchased in the United States.

Would like to get this out of the way; I am enclosing herein check in the sum of \$116.00, being refund on fee, together with unused court costs, re Halley divorce, as set forth in the enclosed work record. When you decide whether you want me to send you the \$200.00, which Mr. Halley deposited with me, on account of the divorce, and withdraw your offer to guarantee your daughter's bill, please advise me; Mr. Halley was informed several months ago that I needed a written note from him to turn the money over to his wife, and I have not heard from him.

"Casa del Oidor", house of the Judge, that book really is fascinating--reminded me of the sophisticated cruelty of the spaniards toward the Indians--I have been really selfish, have not loaned the book to anyone as yet.

I then called Dr. Myerson, he said he thought you should be here but I advised him this would be a mistake, in my opinion, it would be best if you were not here since you would be placed in the position of telling the prosecuting attorney you would not, or could not, any longer support your daughter. Somehow I believe you would be unable to do this and then things would be right back where they commenced. If Mrs. Halley has to take this step alone she may complete it, if not there is nothing to be done to assist her, unless she retains another attorney regarding separate maintenance. She was told if she filed with the prosecuting attorney's office, then backed out, certainly that office would not be inclined to assist her in the future.



May 2, 1967

Dear Doctor:

I do hope you like installment letters--this has been the weirdest month in history, the sun is out today but "more rain" forecast; the houses did not stay on the hillsides; roads dropped six to nine feet, highways caved in, houses buckled and slid, it has been fantastic. I have been very fortunate, the most I lost has been sleep. The pool is built within ten feet of the house and that is a great big body of water, 17' by 37'; the pool filled up day after day, night after night, which meant "backwashing" the overflow out of the pool, or letting the water flow over the coping, into the house, and since the latter is situated on the side of quite a hill, loss of sleep was the choice; the first installment of this letter was interrupted by thunder and lightening and the lights going out; since then too much has happened to think of other than the office and the house. The rain let up last week so decided to join some neighbors at Palm Springs for two days, then the rain commenced again and Palm Springs was hit with sand storms.

Now, however, this letter must be finished as there have been some developments here which concern you.

Your daughter telephoned last Thursday, stating her husband told her I have refused to send the \$200.00, which he paid on account of the divorce, to her; she was advised that you had paid for the divorce, with the understanding that you would be reimbursed for whatever monies Mr. Halley paid, if any, on account of the divorce; that subsequently Mr. Halley did pay \$200.00, then it was agreed this sum would be sent to her after Mr. Halley wrote a letter to the effect he wished to take advantage of your offer to pay for the divorce, but I had not heard from him. She was to see her husband that afternoon, as he wished to talk with her.

Do you want me to send you a check for the \$200.00, setting forth why this is done, and send her a copy of the letter ^{sent} to you? She seemed angry with Mr. Halley, and/or questionable about my motives. Saturday afternoon when I returned home the answering service called, stating Mrs. Halley had phoned, that it was an emergency, I did not call her.

Yesterday Dr. Myerson telephoned me, stating Mr. Halley told him she was going to contact me regarding court litigation. She did so, asking how she could make Mr. Halley support her. I advised her to contact the prosecuting attorney's office, Marin County, tell him the facts, including the fact you cannot any longer assume the responsibility of supporting Mr. Halley's family. She said she would take this step, but also asked about court action, other than a divorce. She was told about separate maintenance, that this is just as expensive as a divorce, that I would not be willing to represent her, since it would only mean more expense for you. Dr. Popenoe, there is no guarantee she would either cooperate or complete civil court action, if such were commenced.

[From Betty Bench]