



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

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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.

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

March 24, 1959

Dr. Wilson Popenoe
Antigua
Guatemala

Dear Wilson:

My first reaction on reading your letter was one I have had many times before listening to you tell stories. I am getting impatient to know why in the hell you don't stop for long enough to write a book on Latin America. You have got the makings of a real killer of a book, and the ability to write it too; and I can't to save me see what the holdup is. Now that you're back, why not stay there for a spell and put down some of the things you know. There's nobody else who could do the sort of thing you could do.

The iris man was Percy Viosca, Jr. He still lives in New Orleans, at 2490 Dreux Avenue, N.O. 22. I don't know for sure that he still is interested in irises but doubt that he ever would have gotten rid of the bug.

I was in Malaga last summer when I believe you-all were there, not far away, but my trip was poorly planned and I didn't realize I would have three days there, and so failed to get your address before I went. But I know you'll be interested to hear that a gypsy shoeshine boy, a very wormy one, who polished my shoes, very skillfully cut off half the heel of one of them, while on my person, palmed the piece, commiserated with me over the hard rocks of Andalusia, and then sold me and installed a new heel which he happened to have in his pocket. I never felt so naive before.

Hugh has distinguished himself here. He is really a big asset to the place and I wish there were some way of persuading him to stay. I guess he'll be able to write his own ticket, though, and wouldn't look forward to a future here as too exciting.

Be sure to let me know if any plans to come to Florida should congeal. We would be delighted to have the chance to visit with you both and hope it will be soon.

Margie joins me in affectionate regards to both you and Helen.

Sincerely yours,

Archie Carr
Archie Carr

Professor of Biological Sciences

Antigua, 2 April 1959

Dear Archie:

Many thanks for yours of 24 pxmo ppdo. I will write don Percy and if he doesnt deal in Louisiana irises any more, I have found a guy in California who does, for a consideration. I want to make another try with those beautiful things.

I have always had a reasonably high regard for your intelligence, Archia, but this regard has gone up about 99.4% on the basis of your story about the Malaga bootblack. Of course, I shall have to reduce the 99.4% to 44.99% when I reflect that you were in Malaga, practically our home town, though if you had looked us up - Almuñecar is 85 kms East of Malaga - you would probably have been told "No está el señor, salió a la calle" the calle being the airplane between Madrid and Rome thence to Istanbul thence to Tel Aviv, and hombre, those Tel Aviv boys bust themselves to give you the most highly perfumed soap on any European airline and everything else to boot. They - not the airline boys - but Dr Chanan Oppenheimer (who was refused a passport for a time because he wouldnt change it to Ben Gurion or some other ben) are sure working me hard; they still want to know how we grow bananas in Honduras and I have told them but they think I am holding out on them, which I aint.

But that bootblack business, and why you are so much smarter than su humilde servidor. You only lost a heel, or half of one. Oh how easily you escaped. When I was in Madrid, I went out to get a shine; bought the morning paper, started to read it and the bright young Castellano set to work on my dirty shoes. Rap, rap, rap. I thought he was knocking off the mud. He finished, and said "The new rubber half soles are 70 pesetas" And I said, What new half soles, and he said there they are. Spiked on with two tiny nails each. So I said, "Now wait a minute, brother, there is a guy right down here on the Gran Via, in a fine blue uniform and a white helmet, who knows about these things". Whereupon the boy began to talk about his dead grandmother, his sick mother, and his crippled sister, so I gave him 20 pesetas, went back to our Hotel Lope de Vega, pulled off the half soles (no job at all) and threw them into the basurer. This is the only racket I ever ran into over there. As a whole, those Spaniards are just about the most honest, friendly, and pleasant people in the world. The only time we were deliberately jipped was when the hotel keeper at Estepona added 15 cents to our bill. Ask Hugh about it; I believe he was there and probably the one who picked it up; it takes an intellectual giant to get an extra 15 cents out of Hugh.

I have a sneaking suspicion that we shall be showing up at Gainesville again one of these days, asking for more corn bread at the White House. Mientras tanto, with affectionate regards to all of you in which Helen joins,

Siempre tu amigo y servidor, QBSM

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

August 19, 1959

Dr. and Mrs. Wilson Popenoe
Antigua,
Guatemala

Dear Wilson and Helen:

The bearers, Dr. Lewis Marchand of Gainesville and his wife Norma, are old friends of ours and such confirmed hispanophiles that they have imported five Yucateco masons to build a house for them here. The house is nearing completion and Lewis and Norma are on their way to Honduras to try to hire a carpenter who can make colonial style furniture.

I hope you-all will let them look at your house and give them the benefit of any suggestions concerning the furnishing of theirs that might occur to you.

We are looking forward with pleasure to your coming up here, as Hugh says you are planning to do this fall.

With affectionate regards from us all,

Sincerely yours,

Archie Carr
Archie Carr

*P.S. A note of introduction to Paco from
you would be a big help to them.*

Dear Wilson:

May 10, 1961

We want to send you our deep sympathy. We were stunned by the news.

Hugh says you might possibly come here for awhile. We certainly hope you do. It would be wonderful to see you.

Just today I found some recordings of Julius and Peco that my mother had had put away. They bring back some grand

memories — and Helen is
part of those good memories.

Due to a confusion on
my part I didn't realize
until now that you sent
the gorgeous quilt. I
have unsewed it and
the two pieces make beautiful
tapestries. They are in the
living room and we
enjoy them constantly.
Thank you very very much.

Audie leaves for Aue
Island the end of this
month and then late
in June we will all

go to Boulder, Colo. for
the rest of the summer.
Audrie is going to help
out in the Biological Science
project the A.S.B.S. is
sponsoring.

We are moving back
to Mienopy a few days before
we leave for the West and
my feelings are mixed
at this moment.

Hope you are doing
something that is entertaining
these days. I bet you are.
Hope to see you in the
near future.
Affectionately
Margie

Margie Carr
813 NW 22nd St.
Gainesville
Fla.
U.S.A.

Antigua, Guatemala, 17 May 1961

Dear Margie:

Many thanks for your letter of the tenth. I was up on Lake Izabal last week with Hugh and we were talking a good deal about the work there, in which Hugh is finding a great deal of pleasure. He gets up at four in the morning and gets back from Marcielago at six in the evening. I expect him down here for a few days next week because Nixon Smiley of the Miami Herald, a great friend of mine, is coming with his wife, and wants to talk with Hugh about tropical land management. Doesn't think the "family farm plan" which the Point Four boys are advocating for Latin America is perhaps the right thing. Tell that to Archie and hear him snort.

I have told Hugh to go ahead and line up a little apartment in Gainesville and I will join him there in September. Stay maybe thru the winter, unless and until Hugh gets married and throws me out in the street when I shall move to the White House. I would like to go back to Spain to do some more work but I cannot go, as yet, without Helen.

Do you want any more huipiles for yourself or friends? If so, just write me and I will send them up with Hugh. I have got a real racket in this huipil business. When my Indian friends in San Antonio Aguas Calientes run out of corn and tourists, they bring me well-worn huipiles, museum pieces, at one third the tourist prices.

Affectionate regards to all of you, and looking forward to dining with you at Cedar Key one of these days.

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE, 32603

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY

February 9, 1965

Mr. Allston Jenkins
President, Philadelphia Conservationists, Inc.
1500 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Jenkins:

I am glad to hear that your fund-raising project has gone through, and that Philadelphia Conservationists, Inc. is now prepared to seek perpetual protection for the El Cabo Reserve on the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica.

Your letter was of particular interest because it touched upon what appears to be a major obstacle to wilderness protection in Central America: the lack of any sure legal means of protecting lands acquired through the efforts of conservationists, either foreign or domestic, against the possibility of future expropriation. An article by Maria Buchinger in the current issue of BioScience suggests that the Nature Conservancy may soon have a chapter in each of the Latin American countries. Perhaps they will make an effort to work out the legal problems involved, but this has not yet happened in Costa Rica I believe. The recently formed Organization for Tropical Studies, with headquarters in San José, may also have done something in this respect that I have not heard of. Dr. T.H. Hubbell (see list below) can tell you about this.

The acquisition of the Green Turtle Station property by the Caribbean Conservation Corporation is an atypical case, and not likely to serve as a useful prototype for such arrangements. To begin with, the tract of land involved there lies in the Milla Marítima, the government-owned coastal strip in which property cannot be bought, but only leased. What was needed in our case was an extension of the lease that would provide at least a ten-year period of stability for our operations there, and a local representative who could legally hold such a lease. We found that the Institute of Lands and Colonization had no objection to extending the lease, and a lifelong personal Costa Rican friend of mine, Sr. Guillermo Cruz Bolaños of San José was designated our legal representative in the country. Mr. Phipps merely sent the money to Sr. Cruz, and he took over the contract from the previous lessee and had it extended.

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As you know, Costa Rica is an extraordinarily progressive and enlightened country, and a sense of the tragic loss of biological landscapes there is growing--not just among intellectuals but among government and industrial people as well. From the beginning of my work at Tortuguero in 1954 I have had nothing but the most whole hearted cooperation from both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Office of Fish and Wildlife. On the other hand, there is a strong national motivation toward development and exploitation, and when this collides with conservation ideals it is generally to the detriment of the natural landscape, as is usual in other countries also.

But I am pretty sure the time is opportune for such overtures as your organization intends to make, and I wish I could guide you in some specifically useful way. About all I can do, however, is give you the following list of people who in different ways may be willing to help or advise.

In Costa Rica:

1. Dr. Gerardo Budowski, Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agrícolas Turrialba, Costa Rica
2. Sr. Guillermo Cruz B., Republic Tobacco Company, San José, Costa Rica
3. Dr. Rafael Lucas Rodríguez, Departamento de Biología, Facultad de Ciencias y Letras, Ciudad Universitaria, San Pedro de Montes de Oca, Costa Rica

Elsewhere:

4. Dr. T.H. Hubbell, Director, University Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Michigan
5. Dr. Wilson Popenoe, Antigua, Guatemala
6. Dr. Hugh Popenoe, Department of Soils, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida
7. Sr. Francisco de Sola, H. de Sola e Hijos, San Salvador, El Salvador, Central America

According to my wife, some of these people are members of the Florida Audubon Society and have expressed interest in the development of such

Letter to Mr. Jenkins - page 3

movements in Central America. Dr. Wilson Popenoe has for years been concerned with the problem of finding mechanisms for the sound legal gazetting of wilderness-reserve lands in the Central American countries. I believe he is convinced that any successful development of this sort will have to come from separate efforts arising in each country, and not through the transplantation of chapters of outside organizations. He believes that the Audubon Society model might be used, but that each group ought to have complete autonomy, both in genesis and in operation.

In any case, Philadelphia Conservationists is in a strong position because you are asking nothing more than to be allowed to make, and to protect the perpetual value of, a magnificent gift to Costa Rica. I am hoping that your move may stimulate other similar moves, and that arrangements for receiving and insuring the permanent safety of such gifts can be quickly worked out. I only regret that I don't know the formula for doing this.

Sincerely yours,

Archie Carr
Archie Carr

AC:bh

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE, 32601

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY

26 September 1974

Dear Alice and Wilson:

This is just to let you know how much we all appreciate your marvelous hospitality during our quick base in Guatemala. My heart sinks when I think how close I came to substituting a little note for the chance to be with Popover in Casa Popover, to get acquainted with Alice, to see Sally again, and to visit ruins with the best of all possible Antiquistas.

We are all extremely grateful to you both and only wish we could do it all over again next week.

With affectionate regards.

Alice