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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.

August 26, 1954

Mrs. David Fairchild
The Kampong
Coconut Grove, Florida

Dear Mrs. Fairchild:

The following resume will serve as a record of our recent conversations regarding my manuscript on the rainforests of Golfo Dulce, Costa Rica.

It seems inevitable in view of the darkening political situation in the Far East that we will need to exploit to their fullest the natural resources of our hemisphere.

The tropical forests to the south of us might be compared to a great warehouse bulging with construction materials, foodstuffs and drugs, but lacking an inventory for their intelligent selection and use. There is every indication that the tropical forests of the Americas will supply the United States with a very large part of its industrial raw material in the future, yet detailed information regarding these stands is so scanty as to be nearly useless for practical purposes.

Costa Rica, for example, has one of the richest floras in the world, yet no field manuals or keys have ever been previously attempted for the identification and utilization of the plants, largely because previous investigators have not had the prolonged residence and intimate personal acquaintance with the species needed for the work.

During my seventeen years residence in the American tropics dozens of individuals of widely diverse professions, including engineers, biologists, plant pathologists, foresters, ethnobotanists and even professional plant taxonomists have stressed the urgent need for a manual emphasizing field characters which could be used by intelligent but botanically untrained personnel.

In all of the vast area of hardwood rainforest from southern Mexico to northern South America the only comprehensive treatment of plants including keys is Standley's Flora of the Canal Zone. In spite of the fact that this is purely

a technical treatment, and includes neither field aids nor utilization lists it has enjoyed a steady sale since its first issuance in 1928. It would seem that a work such as the present, specifically designed to meet the needs of foresters and other field personnel and which emphasizes the economic aspects of the species should have wide acceptance.

The manuscript is at present in your hands, but I will be glad to answer any further questions.

Most sincerely yours,

Paul H. Allen

DAVID FAIRCHILD
THE KAMPONG, 4013 DOUGLAS ROAD
COCONUT GROVE, FLORIDA

June 25. 53

Dear Paul and Dorothy

Welcome to Florida and to
the "House among the Palms" from
Marian and from me. We expect
to be here all summer and you
have only to walk through
the large folding doors here to
find us

The palms you sent photographs
of are here on my desk. They are
new to Florida I think and just
the kinds for little one story
houses. Alas! Bob Montgomery
is not here to greet you. We
all miss him badly

As always affectionately D.F.

DAVID FAIRCHILD
THE KAMPONG, 4013 DOUGLAS ROAD
COCONUT GROVE, FLORIDA

June 6, 1953.

Dear Paul,

Among the clusters of palms in the Fairchild Garden I see piles of dirt and know that soon you and Dorothy will be living in the Garden and we are to see you once more. I often see you in the little house among the orchids in Panama where we were tasting the Peach Palms that Dorothy had cooked. You may recall those days, even though they were long ago.

You have heard of Colonel Montgomery's sudden death in his sleep, ~~and~~, and like you we both miss him very keenly. He was a man of great energy and generosity and he loved to collect plants and grow them around his house.

He has deeded his place in Cos Cob, Connecticut called "Wild Acres" to the community of Cos Cob and the residents there are proud to have such a wonderful place.

It is filled with conifers of great beauty and Mrs Montgomery is proud to have her husband dedicate such a place to such an appreciative community.

Marian and I expect to be here all summer gathering from the tropics all the interesting species we can get by correspondence.

We both send you our sincerest sympathy and shall be here to welcome you when you come. As always, yours

David Fairchild.

Zamorano, Honduras
June 11, 1953

Dear Dr. Fairchild:

Your good letter has just been received, with the welcome news of yourselves, the Montgomerys and developments at the Fairchild Garden. Our little mountain valley seems very far from the United States and Florida just now, but we expect to see you within the very near future.

Our project goes well, if somewhat slowly, which is my own fault, since I decided to add further keys after my arrival here. There are now keys to the families, genera and ecological associations, down to ridiculous things like keys to the common species of the hedge rows and second growth thickets! I don't know where we're going to be able to get this monstrosity published, but perhaps we can somewhere.

Since we obviously can't finish typing all of the descriptions within our deadline, we have decided to wind things up here about June 21 and start for Florida. We will have to spend a day in Tegucigalpa getting clearance papers to leave the country, and will have to come via New Orleans, since we are having a car delivered there. If all goes well, we should reach Miami about July first.

We haven't had much time for anything but work since our arrival here, but we have managed to pick up a few plants of a truly spectacular terrestrial bromeliad, Pitcairnia Calderonii with brilliant scarlet flowers, which we hope we may be able to bring through with us. When we came to the States with our household things we brought in a fair sized wine hamper filled with orchids, which I trust have reached the Garden long before this. Before leaving Costa Rica we were able to pick up seeds of a few palms, notable among which were two of my favorites from the Esquinas Forest, a snapshot of which is enclosed. The taller of the two, under which Hal Moore stands is probably Geonoma congesta while the elegant little fellow with the entire, bifid fronds is Asterogyne Martiana. I hope that they will grow in Florida.

Dorothy is hard at it making preliminary sketches for a plate of Caryocar costaricense, one of our huge trees that has never been illustrated before. She joins me in the hope that this finds both of you well, and our most sincere regards.

As ever,

Palmar, Costa Rica
March 24, 1953

Dear Dr. Fairchild:

Enclosed you will find two small packets of seeds of things that should do well at the Fairchild Garden. You will note that Cassia moschata already appears in your catalog, but the only plant I saw there so labeled was a small specimen of Caesalpinia sappan up near the end of the Hibiscus collection. Cassia moschata is common on the dry lands of the Pacific slope in Panama, and lends a very distinctive aspect to the countryside when it is in bloom. Sandy knows it well, and we used to look forward to the time of its flowering when we lived there. The Isertia seems to thrive under a variety of situations, and will flower profusely in shade or sun, and in wet or dry places. It only lasts about three months in perfection, but is so showy that it should be in cultivation.

This morning's mail has brought a note from Hal Moore saying that the packet of seeds we collected together while he was with us in Palmar has been started your way via PAA. Most of that lot are palms, including two of our best from the Esquinas Forest. These are Asterogyne Martiana, a relatively small, single-stemmed species with very decorative entire, bifid fronds, and an unknown species of Geonoma, which forms extremely handsome clumps of up to about 12-20 canes twelve or more feet in height. This last may be a new species, but whether or no, it should be in Florida. We have sent a lot of seeds of both, so I would suggest it might be a good idea to pass a few to other gardens, just to be on the safe side. In the lot are also Welfia Georgii, Astrocaryum alatum, Astrocaryum Standleyanum, Scheelea rostrata and several others. I would suggest cracking the seeds of Astrocaryum Standleyanum carefully with a hammer, since the outer coating is quite as hard as a coconut, and quite impervious to water. I hope they all grow, since they are from sea level, and should do well in Florida. I am somewhat less optimistic about importing things from the cool, wet highlands, but even some of those may surprise us if grown in lath houses.

Hal Moore and I had a wonderful time collecting and photographing palms, and I was particularly glad to get the stilt palms straight in my little mind. We seem to have Iriartea gigantea and Socratea durissima in our forests, and the keys and descriptions in the literature imply that they can be separated ONLY on the basis of staminate flowers. There are striking vegetative and fruiting differences as well, as we discovered, so that either may be distinguished at a glance as far as they can be seen. Seeds are about 2/3 mature, but neither of us could persuade ourselves that they would grow. I do have good photographs that I can show you however, and maybe we'll get them some day.

Day before yesterday I had the chance to take a last long look at the coastline of Golfo Dulce, spending a day with a launch between the port of Golfito and Banco point, crossing to the foot of the barren, rocky cape of Matapalo, and then skirting the low sandy beach back to Puerto Jimenez, and so home. I never

tire of seeing the beautiful groves of coconuts, and the silvery mist above the surf, and the long, blue, receding lines of rocky headlands fading into the distance. Many of the little beaches are guarded by rough, black volcanic rocks over which the sea roars, cascading down in white foam, and inhabited only by the man-o-war birds and boobies. There is one such place in Pavon Bay, completely wild and uninhabited, with stately groves of flat-topped specimens of Bombax harrison just back of the coconuts, and with an unbroken forested backdrop that looks like paradise. I spent a full day in such a place, but nearer the delta of the Rio Esquinas some two years past, and it is one of my fondest memories. The forest on the ridges is tremendous, and relatively clear beneath, and one can climb to open spots where the sea spreads out below, all silvery or blue, depending on the light, and wonderful. But I know you must have seen hundreds of such places, and in much more exotic surroundings. Now we've got to get down to cases (packing cases, to be exact) or we'll never get to Florida. Yesterday I finally finished making up bundles, all properly dosed with naphthalene, of my herbarium, and today they get packed (I hope.) We rather expect to be in Miami by early June, and will be looking forward to seeing both of you. Dorothy joins me in best regards, and the hope that this finds both of you well.

As ever,

* I made a mistake. The Cactus note
was from Paul Standley, not from you.

DAVID FAIRCHILD
THE KAMPONG, 4513 DOUGLAS ROAD
COCONUT GROVE, FLORIDA

March 17, 53.

Dear Paul

Thank you for the note about
Hylocereus undatus. * I have wonder-
ed about those scales but this
puzzle has not prevented me from
planting a dozen cuttings in 4 inch
pots. Most of them have sprouted
already and I hope will make
fine fruiting plants. Merian and I
found the flavor of the single small
fruit which formed on our plant here
delicious and believe the species is
worthy of distribution by the B.T. Garden.
our large clumps of the same sort
(if it really is H. undatus and not H. trigonus)
have never borne fruit and I am
inclined to your belief that the flowers
lack insect Pteridi pollination.
I have seen the long hedge in Hawaii
but although I have been in Honolulu a

on the long ledge of the Cactus there

DAVID FAIRCHILD
THE KAMPONG, 4013 DOUGLAS ROAD
COCONUT GROVE, FLORIDA

number of times, from 1907 until 1939, I never saw one of these gorge-ous fruits. Rock is now in Honolulu and his letter has just come in with seeds of the almost extinct tree cottons Kokia Rockii + K. drybarioides. I'll write him a note about this Cactus matter.

Marian and I are waiting for the arrival of both of you dear people and hope the house you want will be finished and you can move in when you get here. When do you think you can leave Costa Rica? I hope we both shall be here in time for the mango crop which promise to be a good one this summer.

With old time regards as always
yours very sincerely
David Fairchild.

Palmar, Costa Rica
February 27, 1953

Dear Dr. Fairchild:

Many thanks for your good letter, which is the first word that I have had as to the decision of the Board of Managers. If it is confirmed, I hope we can live up to your expectations. It is a wonderful opportunity.

As I may have told you, I have had a copy of your "Exploring for Plants" ever since I was a student at the Missouri Botanical Garden. In those days I used to dream of seeing the East Indies, and their fascinating plants, but as things have turned out my field experience has been almost entirely in Central and northern South America, though I have had the pleasure of working with many of your early introductions at Summit and at Iancetilla. Did I tell you that the Mangosteen crop at Iancetilla last August was over SIXTY TONS? It is a shame some sort of arrangement can't be worked out to market them in the Miami area. We know a young English chap here who became fond of them in Ceylon during the war years, and was delighted when a tray of them were offered to him for sale in a London nightclub. He bought two, and was horrified to find that the price was one guinea EACH. They must fly them out in refrigerated boxes.

Perhaps this is an over-simplification, but as I see it now, the Directors job will be to build up the collection as rapidly as possible, to distribute promising things as widely as possible, and to secure for the Institution the recognition it deserves as the largest and finest tropical Botanic Garden in the United States. I think we should work toward an adequate endowment, but I am confident that this can be accomplished best by publicising the collections obvious merits. We both hope that this finds you much improved.

Sincerely yours,

Paul

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MAILING ADDRESS
BOX 407, COCONUT GROVE
FLORIDA

FAIRCHILD TROPICAL GARDEN

INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF FLORIDA

IN CORAL GABLES

ADJOINING MATHESON PARK, 12 MILES SOUTH OF MIAMI

WILLIAM LYMAN PHILLIPS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

HARRY DUNAWAY
HORTICULTURIST

Feb. 26. 53.

Dear Paul

I was too ill to be present
when the Board elected you to
be the Director of this Garden.

I assume the Secretary
has informed you.

The whole Fairchild Family
- those who know you and
they compose it completely -
misses over the idea that the
prospect is bright of your
joining this community of
men + women who are interested
in the fascinating plants of
the tropical jungles and intend
to have some of them at least
from ~~available~~ destruction
forever.

In reading your short paper
on the Costa Rica Palms + other
plants, I am impressed by
your acquaintance with a wide
range of species which should
some day brighten the Garden.

Give Maria's my love to your
artist friend who happens to be your
wife. Her sketches are fine!! ^{at least} ~~at least~~

Arakam will be
perfectly delighted!
I am writing him
today. D.F.

Palmer
February 26, 1953

Dear Mrs. Fairchild:

This may not be necessary, but it has occurred to me that it might be well to mention to someone on the ground the desirability, from the standpoint of Dorothy's general continued welfare of having a one story house. I rather hesitate writing to the Montgomerys direct, but I would like the information to reach them by some sort of osmosis before any plans are drawn up. Would you contact Mrs. Montgomery and put the idea across, in your own tactful way?

Dorothy is hard at it salting down the herbarium with naphthalene, prior to packing, and I am at the shag end of the field keys and descriptions of the ecological formations. We have sent up a few seeds and cuttings, notably Mussaenda erythrophylla, which I think is one of the most beautiful ornamental climbers ever to be brought into cultivation. You should have it at the Kampong. We rather plan to go to San Jose for a day or two early next week, and I hope to send two plants of Cyrtostachys (the Sealing Wax Palm) and various Heliconias, Kaemferias and Alpinias, none of which appear in your inventory. My vine of Passiflora vitifolia is in beautiful flower just outside my office door this morning, and I hope it will do equally well in Florida. Dorothy joins me in regards,

As ever,

Post Office Box 43,
Gamboa, Canal Zone
January 12, 1947

Dear Dr. Fairchild:

We were delighted to hear from both of you, although the news of Mrs. Fairchild's mishap in the pool wasn't pleasant. We hope that by this time the crutches are stored away behind the pantry door, or somewhere out of your sight & memory.

You ask about Royals in Colombia. We had rubber camps exploiting groves of Sapium in the various tributaries of the Rio Meta during the war, in the general area east and slightly south of Villavicencio. On one of my inspection trips I found huge groves of magnificent specimens of what appeared to be Boystonea oleracea growing along the Rio Meta intermixed with stands of our Sapium. The first specimens were seen in the neighborhood of Remolino, becoming increasingly common as we proceeded eastward. It was of some interest to find two specimens planted at the village of Cabuyaro, being at that time (August, 1945) about twenty feet tall. As you know, they are absolutely unknown in cultivation in the Villavicencio, San Martin, Puerto Lopez area. Wild trees were about eighty feet in height, and twenty four inches in diameter, breast height. I took a boy, and chopped one down for specimens, which was an absolute crime, but there seemed no other way to storm those ivory towers. Due to floods, rain, malaria etc., these rode the river for nearly two weeks in the bottom of my duffel bag, and emerged without doubt the world's worst herbarium specimens. These were sent to Dr. Bailey, who had then returned from collecting palms in Trinidad and Tobago. It was of no little interest that he had also seen from the air, what he took to be groves of Boystonea oleracea in the delta of the Orinoco! I understand that Marsten Bates believes the fauna of the West Indies to be a waif fauna. It is, in my opinion entirely possible that the orchids there, at least might also be waif mainland species, and perhaps we may find that other groups are as well. Wouldn't it be stranger than strange to find that the Royals have been native South American citizens all along, and are only touristing in the West Indies, so to speak? Gosh knows the valley of the Orinoco and its tributaries hasn't been crowded with botanical collectors, and even those who have been there might be perhaps pardoned for shying away from such gigantic specimens as these.

Indian tribes in the Vaupes area cultivated great numbers of an exceptionally fine large fruited variety of Guilielma. Many of the fruits are three inches in diameter, and some bunches show a fairly high percentage of seedless fruits. They are not used in the same way they are in Spanish speaking districts, but are boiled and grated, and made into a thick orange fermented drink, which is consumed in great quantity, accompanied by elaborate ceremonial dances. These are barbaric, colorful affairs, with

brilliant feather crowns, much paint, and music produced on drums, flutes, panpipes and whistles. As a slight digression, do you know that the crown bud of *Guilielma* makes excellent eating? I found one felled by the wind in front of an abandoned *Malcca* once, and cut out the crown, and I think it was if possible better than that of *Roystonea* or *Euterpe*.

Collecting goes on for the *Flora* here about as usual. Sandy and I, and sometimes others of the Lab. gang go out frequently together, each garnering in the yerbage or beasties of his interest. Sandy has an excellent eye for orchids, and we have a friendly rivalry in collecting and growing them. Just what we will do when the present job is done will depend somewhat on what the Garden is willing to do, but we are kind of hoping they might listen to another orchid and palm station somewhere. The only way taxonomic tangles are ever going to be ironed out on these vast groups is going to have to be by growing gobbles of them side by side, and studying them ALIVE.

Dorothy joins me in our most sincere best wishes to you both for the present new year.

Antigua Guatemala
C. Wilson Pope
Oct 28th 1941

Dear Paul.

I have had several
talks with Dr. Pope
about you and the
possibilities of your
joining him in the building
up of his new school in
Honduras.

My opinion
is that until he gets it
well started, building built
roads built etc etc it
would be no place for
you and you would
waste your time doing
the kind of things you
would not like to do
and are not especially,

equipped to do.

Furthermore the living conditions in Honduras would be very difficult at the start.

Late when he gets things going there might be a chance for you to lead in the formation of its ~~collections~~ ^{collections of plants} and the inspiring of its students with the love of collecting.

Keep in touch with Dr. Poppe for it may be that an opening would come in time there. For the present you have a great work before you in the finishing

of an Illustrated Manual of
the Plants of the Canal Zone
which is certainly much
needed.

We have found this
country incredibly lovely -
friendly & superbly beautiful
and as a place to live
in far the most attractive
we have visited in this
part of the world.

We sail on the 4th
for Cuba from Puerto Barrios
& will be home in
Coconut Grove on
the 7th. Do let us hear
from you both.

Our memories of our
last brief stay in Panama
are very lovely ones for
we felt rested & refreshed

by the quiet of your Orchid
garden - when the plagues
our head could not disturb
us.

Someday I may write
you for seeds of the Bacris
that thrives in the low
lands along the Pacific
coast; for spring as it
is, it would make these

near prairies along Biscayne

Bay far more interesting
than they now are with
their weeds + mangroves.

Could you gather a few
seeds for us someday?

In the meantime with
best regards from us both
I am as always

Very sincerely yours
David Fairchild

Rockefeller Foundation

"Apartado here"

3950

Bogota, Colombia

Sept. 19, 1941

Dear Paul Allen.

Nancy who is with us now says that you have suggested that Mrs Fairchild and I come to your charming nice clad house in the Orchid Garden when we arrive in Panama to take the S.S. Jamaica Oct 9th for Puerto Barrios. Are you sure you want to ^{both} ~~both~~ ^{with} ~~with~~ us for we shall only have a day or two there and you may have a trip planned or something important on hand.

The planes from Bogota or Medellin land in Albrook field. I understand and we plan to take a plane Oct 5th which will get us there about 3.30 P.M. of Oct 5th. We shall probably take this in Medellin.

The S.S. "Jamaica" for Puerto Barrios leaves on the 9th of October. We have to get visas from the Guatemalan Consul. The S.S. leaves from Cristobal + we shall plan to get across the isthmus by train or plane ^{under the circumstances} would you like to have us? Is it not perfectly

Convenient would you be good enough
to reserve a room with two single beds
for us in the Tivoli Hotel for the
evening of Oct 5th through until the
~~morning~~ ~~evening~~ of the 9th or such time as
we will have to stay there before
~~the~~ we have to go to Cristobal to the boat.

I hope you can let us have a
line from you by air mail at
once so that we can check this
whole arrangement before we
leave for Medellin by motor in
a few days.

I shall have a lot to tell
you about the Planes Orientales
when we meet again.

As always yours

David Fairchild

Manston Bates seems to be well
again. He arrives by the 22nd by
plane. Nancy is fine now and
she & the baby are here.

MRS. GRAHAM BELL FAIRCHILD

BOX 5025, ANCON

CANAL ZONE

July 4th 1941

Dear Paul

Here are some Quarantine
Permit Tags with which
you can if you find it
convenient send us a few

Digitized by Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation

seeds of ~~plants~~ ~~plants~~ ~~plants~~ ~~plants~~
interesting plants. They should
be all addressed to the

Fairchild Tropical Garden
Coconut Grove Florida.

If you send seeds they will be
allowed entry at the Miami
Airport. If you send plants
they will have to go to ~~to~~ Hoboken
& be inspected. Send small amounts
only and send by Air Express &
send me the bill.

we had a wonderful day up
in the Valle de Anton didn't
we? I shall keep wondering
about that pubescent palm
until I learn that there are
other fuzzy leaved ones in the
genus.

If you could get a few
buds of the beautiful Ardisia
with pink flowers that we saw
on the hillside near that palm

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I just heard from Mrs
Bombaré all about the Ceroxylon
palms that grow on the slopes
of the Quindío Pass near Bogotá
— 200 ft high they are. But I
fear they will be inaccessible to
me + my camera. No buds have ever
been tried on the Pacific coast. No
specimens are growing in cultivation
although they are wonders of the world.

I shall see you again when
we get back but want to get these
tags to you. Always yours David Fairchild