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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.

February 8, 1958

Dr. William C. Steere, Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Stanford University
Stanford, California

Dear Dr. Steere:

This is just a note to wish you every success in your new venture as Director of the New York Botanical Garden, which has come

to our attention through the pages of a recent issue of Science.

So far as I can tell, from my present seat in the hinterlands, you will have the almost unique satisfaction, in our times, of presiding over the affairs of a solvent botanical institution which still operates on the traditional basis of display, exploration, research and publication. I am sure that every botanist will join me in a sigh of relief that this fine garden is to be in such competent hands.

Most sincerely,

Paul H. Allen

W. C. Steere
Dept. of Biological Sciences
Stanford University
Stanford, California
U.S.A.



AIR LETTER

AVICHO NOCTURNO

**VIA AIR MAIL
PAR AVION**

Mr. Paul H. Allen
Escuela Agrícola Panamericana
Apartado 93
Tegucigalpa
Honduras, Central America

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WILL BE SENT BY ORDINARY MAIL



FIRST FOLD

SECOND FOLD

Department of
Biological Sciences
Stanford University
Stanford, California

October 28, 1957

Mr. Paul H. Allen
Escuela Agricola Panamericana
Apartado 93
Tegucigalpa
Honduras, Central America

Dear Paul:

I have read your letter of October 6th with a good deal of interest and thought about it at some length. Your problem is not a unique one as many people get seriously into professional work before acquiring an academic degree that will be of use to them at some later date.

I have a feeling that a man of your status and with your fine publication record would be considered to have achieved at least the level of the bachelor's degree in some institutions, but would then have to go ahead for some advanced work, for example the master's degree or the doctorate if you had time for this. I think that you could get with ease letters from your colleagues certifying that your experience and publications are easily the equivalent of the bachelor's degree. This would not give you the degree itself, of course, but it would enable you to start in on work toward a masters, the attainment of which would solve your problem.

I would be happy indeed to help you get admitted here but I don't believe it would be too advisable since this is a Department of Biological Sciences and you might find yourself under an unnecessary burden of taking courses that did not interest you specifically. I am sending this letter on to Ira Wiggins in view of his long experience and deep sympathy with the sort of work you have been doing.

I would suggest writing to several of the strong botany departments around the country where systematic work on tropical plants is going on. I would suggest, for example, writing to Rogers McVaugh at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; to Lincoln Constance, University of California, Berkeley; to Bassett Maguire, New York Botanical Garden (the Garden does the taxonomic teaching for Columbia); Ted Just at the Chicago Natural History Museum; and perhaps others.

It will not hurt to take the most unlikely chance and to write to Woodson or whomever else you are most acquainted with at Missouri Botanical Garden to see if they cannot certify that you have fulfilled the requirements for the bachelor's degree. There is some remote possibility, I would think, that they could do this in view of your long association with them. Actually it would seem to me that when they sent you to the Introduction Garden in Panama they in a sense kept you from fulfilling the formal requirements for your degree.

Actually, most of your colleagues assume that you do have the bachelor's degree as I know how surprised I was when working on your NSF proposal for help with your book, "Rain Forests of Golfo Dulce." I think that letters to the people I have suggested will bring them rallying around with helpful suggestions. Let me know what more I can do to help.

Most sincerely,

Bill

William C. Steere

WCS:gz

October 6, 1957

Dr. William C. Steere
Department of Botany
Stanford University
Stanford, California

Dear Dr. Steere:

I am taking the liberty of writing to you in regard to a personal problem that would seem to be within your province, and on which your advice would be greatly appreciated.

As you may know, I hold no formal degree, and increasingly find opportunities closed to me for that reason. Some more or less serious consideration has been given, during the course of the last year, to the idea of trying to come back and make a bid for something on even the undergraduate level, but I lack specific information as to the best ways and means.

My background to date, after graduation from High School in 1929 includes four years training in horticulture and botany at the Missouri Botanical Garden, followed by approximately twenty two years experience in the American tropics in the fields of plant introduction, exploration, research, teaching and administration, with a fair number of publications such as the Orchidaceae of Panama and the Rain Forests of Golfe Dulce.

It is at least my impression that some universities have adult education programs and that some credit might be allowed me for the above. I have several major projects, such as a comprehensive survey of the timber resources of Panama in various stages of completion that might be offered as thesis material, but most of these would involve some additional field work, and in consequence outside funds from some source or other.

To come to the point, I would appreciate any comments or suggestions that you might be able to offer, either in regard to entrance at Stanford University or other institutions with which you have had personal experience.

With most sincere regards,

Paul H. Allen

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

April 6, 1955

Dr. Paul H. Allen
Escuela Agrícola Panamericana
Apartado 93
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Central America

Dear Paul:

You will be relieved to know that we are making a grant to the University of Florida Press so that your book can be published this fall. I have talked to Dr. Lewis F. Haines about this and the whole thing looks quite encouraging. He understands that we cannot be expected to pay for the full cost of production since, undoubtedly there will be some sales, and I am sure that you as an author would be hurt if there weren't! Consequently, we will subsidize your work to such an extent that the Press is willing to take the gamble of publishing it.

I hope that your work is going well and will be looking forward to seeing you next time you visit the states.

Sincerely yours,

Bill

William C. Steere
Program Director for
Systematic Biology

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

December 17, 1954

Dr. Paul H. Allen
Escuela Agricola Panamericana
Apartado 93
Tegucigalpa, Honduras, C. A.

Dear Paul:

On my arrival at the National Science Foundation in September, I found your proposal for the publication of your book entitled "The Rainforests of Golfo Dulce" in the Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden. I can tell you unofficially that this proposal was presented to the advisory panel of the program for Systematic Biology and its scientific merits approved. However, the Office of Scientific Information wishes to have a good deal more data before funds could be released.

By a curious coincidence, I wrote to my brother-in-law, who is Director of the University of Florida Press, with the suggestion that your book would be a natural for their series on Latin America--and he tells me that your manuscript is now under consideration there. Consequently, I find myself puzzled as to the status of your work and just what your plans are. Please let me know just where your proposal to us stands and if there are any other Presses that are considering publication of your work.

Please give my very best regards to Dr. Popence.

Most sincerely,

Bill

William C. Steere
Program Director for
Systematic Biology