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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.

8. November. 1955
Amman - Jordan

Professor Lincoln Constance
Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences
University of California
Berkeley 4, California
U. S. A.

Dear Dr. Constance,

It has been a long time since I haven't written to you. Many changes have taken place in my life recently. I married in Istanbul while I was on my summer vacation. Now I live with my wife Elisabeth in Amman.

We went to Teheran to attend the first meeting of the Near East Forestry Commission during last month and we took part in a study tour following the conference which gave us a nice opportunity to see the forests along the Caspian coasts of Iran. There we also saw tea-plantations which are rather new, but developing rapidly. We enjoyed black-caviar obtained from sturgeons of the Caspian Sea, but we suffered from dust and lack of clean water. Nevertheless the whole trip was quite instructive to me. We feel as we are living in a civilized country after returning from Iran to Jordan.

F.A.O. extended my assignment for another year. On the other hand the University of Ankara refused to extend my one year release from the University. I decided to resign from my job at the University since I was never satisfied there. F.A.O. does not offer contracts longer than a year, but renews contracts when funds are available since the organization is running on annual budgets based on the contributions of the member countries. There is a possibility to remain in F.A.O. for the following year also, but of course an expert would be assigned to work in another underdeveloped country which is not a fun to spend the whole life under difficult living conditions. Besides I feel that I shouldn't be away from academic life for a long time which gives me higher satisfaction than other jobs although it doesn't pay much. So it is most possible that I rather will return to University life next year although I don't know yet where?

I sent a parcel containing herbarium specimens from Jordan to Miss Anetta Carter about six weeks ago. I presume that the shipment reached her safely by now. The parcel contains 142 specimens of general collections, all identified and labeled. There is also a small package containing 22 specimens from Umbelliferae in the same box. This package belongs to you. They are also labeled, but only 9 specimens are identified and 13 specimens remain unidentified. I realize that your present job as a dean would keep you overoccupied, however I hope that you will be able to spare sometime for the identification of my 13 specimens which may be familiar plants to you. I wish that you can also check my identifications of other 9 specimens. I shall be very obliged if you kindly let me know the results of your namings according to my collecting numbers.

Enclosed I am sending you a list of my collections shipped to U.C. Herbarium. I shall forward another copy of this list to Miss Carter. The collecting numbers listed are also shown on the labels as well as on the newspaper files containing the specimens.

My wife joins me in sending you and Mrs. Constance our best wishes and regards. Please say hello to Bill from me.

Sincerely yours

Baki Kasapligil
Forest Botanist of F.A.O.
Department of Forests
Amman - Jordan