



Smithsonian

National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center

Guide to the Richard Adlard Collection

NMAH.AC.0692

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	Richard Adlard Collection
Date:	1936 - 1998
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0692
Creator:	Adlard, Richard (Ithel Richard), 1915-1997
Extent:	2 Cubic feet (3 boxes)
Language:	English .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Collection donated by Julia Needham in 1998.

Provenance

Collection transferred from Pete Daniels, curator, Division of History of Technology (now known as the Division of Work and Industry), Agriculture Collections in January 2001.

Processing Information

Processed by Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., September 2002.

Preferred Citation

Richard Adlard Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Biographical / Historical

Ithel Richard Adlard (1915-1997) was born to Walter and Elizabeth Burrows Adlard on October 14th, 1915 in Condon, Oregon. His interest in agriculture was formed early on and continued into his highschool years. The following is an autobiographical note assembled by Julia Needham, editor of the Troy-Built Owner News and a long time correspondent of Adlard, from several of Adlard's letters. This biography was corrected and approved by him in 1995.

"As a high-school student during the Depression days in Salem, Oregon, I operated a five-acre fruit and vegetable garden on shares. I raised my own plants, using horse manure for heat and a cover made

of cheap muslin impregnated with wax. The vegetables were sold house to house and I netted virtually nothing, but kept busy.

At a Methodist youth meeting, I heard a missionary from Allahabad, India, and set my sights on becoming an agricultural missionary. This idea was further reinforced when I studied biology and learned of Mendel's Law. I had a most inspirational biology teacher, Martin Elle, who encouraged me, even though I had little financially.

I got to Oregon State University (then college) where I worked part-time in the greenhouse through a government program for students. This was part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, intended to help college students during the national Depression. We had meaningful jobs at 25 cents per hour.

One morning my roommate read about an opening for an exchange student to Canton, China. I didn't know where Canton was, but checked it out and submitted my application along with several written recommendations. Much to my surprise, I won the Phi Kappa Phi scholarship and in 1937, at age 21, became a student at Lingnan University.

I was the first exchange student in agriculture; the others over the preceding three years had been in the social science and humanities. I was fortunate enough to study under Dr. Floyd A. McClure, a Rhodes scholar and world authority on bamboo, with whom I had biweekly conferences or field trips by bicycle to observe the methods used by local farmers. My textbook was *Farmers of Forty Centuries* by F.H. King (1848-1911), now available from Rodale Press.

In 1937, the year of my arrival, the Japanese bombed our university, thus disrupting our studies. Four exchange students stayed on while seventeen returned home.

When the American ship on which we sailed docked at Yokohama in 1938, the Japanese authorities came into my stateroom looking for pictures. They had probably seen my article predicting that Japan would take over the Philippines, which my roommate had translated for the Canton paper. Anticipating trouble while at sea, however, I had hidden my bamboo basket of negatives and other materials in a lifeboat along with a broadsword used in executions. After leaving Yokohama, I was relieved to find my belongings still in the boat.

After returning from China, I worked for Oregon State Department of Agriculture when not attending intermittent terms at Oregon State, thus prolonging the completion of my degree in crop science. I devoted all my spare time to the national, "stop war supplies to Japan", movement under the leadership of Dr. Walter Judd, former missionary to China and Senator for Minnesota, whom I met on the boat-trip home. In fact, I spent too much time on this effort and became quite bitter over Americans' "not our business" attitude and the reluctance of colleges and churches to take a stand.

When the draft for one-year training began, I drew Number 17 locally, one year short of finishing college. No draft board appeal process had yet been set up, so I was drafted into the Army in March, 1941, and discharged in August, 1945. I finished my senior year at OSC after returning home. Thereafter, I went to work for the US Soil Conservation Service, and later became an Extension Agent.

What I had learned of traditional Chinese agriculture was all but forgotten during many years of my working life. In the late 1960s, however, the environmental movement and the growing interest in organic food production recalled them to my mind, and I realized that much of modern organic practice was what I had observed in China under an agricultural system that has been used for 4,000 years.

With my interest reawakened, I began to undertake some of the traditional Chinese techniques in my own garden in Stevenson, Washington, located in the Columbia River Gorge about 30 miles east of Vancouver, Washington. I have continued to experiment in retirement, as time and health permit."

Adlard Biographical Information, Adlard Collection, Archives Center

Adlard married his wife Evelyn in 1947, they had two sons. Adlard died on August 22, 1997 in Vancouver, Washington.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of some correspondence, extensive agricultural notes, photographs, maps and a scrapbook from Adlard's time as a student at Lingnan University. Adlard's photographs, commentary, and notes on rural life in both China and the Phillipines are extremely detailed and insightful. The collection includes articles written by Adlard, that were inspired by his time in the Orient, on Philippine cocoanut production, Chinese village life, the farmers of China, soybeans as food and pre-war China. The collection also includes Adlard's later articles for various publications and his correspondence with Julia Needham of the Troy-Bilt Owner News about Adlard's work with drip system irrigation and design as well as his use of Chinese farming practices in his own home garden. The collection also includes some brief biographical information on Adlard, some related gardening and agricultural pamphlets and two copies of the Garden Way Inc. publication, Gardening Beyond the Plow. This collection is valuable in its view of rural China and the Phillipines just prior to World War II and the domination of East Asia by Japan. The collection is arranged chronologically.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged chronologically.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Agriculture -- 1930-1940 -- United States
- Agriculture -- China
- Agriculture -- Phillipines

Types of Materials:

- Correspondence -- 1930-1940

Places:

- Japan -- 1930-1940

Container Listing

Map-folder 1	Complimentary map of the City of Manila, (on reverse are United States Military and Naval Stations in the Philippine Islands), 1935
Map-folder 1	Kwangsi Province, China-map, 1937
Map-folder 1	Map of the War District (Japanese), circa 1937-1938 Language: Japanese.
Box 1, Folder 1	Clippings and pamphlet, 1936-1988 and undated Language: English.
Box 2, Folder 1	Adlard Scrapbook, 1937 - 1938
Map-folder 1	List of Vegetable Crops Cultivated by the Vegetable Department, Lingnan University, Canton, China, 1937 - 1938
Map-folder 1	Trade of the Colony, 1938 January
Box 1, Folder 3	Agricultural notes with photographs, 1938
Box 1, Folder 4	The Coconut Industry of the Philippines, 1938
	<p>Figure 4. Coconut seedbed. Figure 5. Germinating coconuts on a pole. [black and white photoprints], [ca. 1930-1940] 1 Item (10.8" x 8.6".) Photographer: Adlard, Richard (Ithel Richard), 1915-1997 Language: English. Notes: 02069202.tif (AC Scan) Silver gelatin on paper. Unrestricted research use on site by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves. Two black and white photoprints pasted on typed page with "Seed Selection" heading.</p> <p>Topic: Coconuts Agriculture -- Philippines Place: Philippines Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1930-1940</p>
Box 1, Folder 5	Agricultural photographs, Chinese village life, 1938
Box 1, Folder 6	Village Farmers of China, 1938
Box 1, Folder 7	China's Farmers, 1939 - 1940

Map-folder 1	Gardener Employs 40-Century-Old Techniques, undated
Box 1, Folder 8	Drip Irrigation material and correspondence, 1985 - 1989
Map-folder 1	Managing Water: Too Much and Too Little, undated
Box 1, Folder 9	Notes on Chinese-Based Garden Practices, circa 1994
Box 1, Folder 10	The Soybean as Human Food, undated
Box 1, Folder 11	Pre-War China, undated
Box 1, Folder 12	Gardening Beyond the Plow, 50 Years of Rotary Tillage in American, 1981
Box 1, Folder 13	Garden photographs and slides, undated
Box 1, Folder 14	Adlard biographical information, undated
Map-folder 1	Adlard garden diagrams, undated
Box 3, Folder 1	Botanical sample: Glycyrrhiza (licorice) Botanical sample: Sedge: Cyperus Tegetiformis Botanical sample: Tree cotton Botanical sample: unidentified, undated
Box 3, Folder 2	Botanical sample: Sedge: Cyperus Tegetiformis, undated
Box 3, Folder 3	Botanical sample: Tree cotton, undated
Box 3, Folder 4	Botanical sample: unidentified, undated