



# Smithsonian Institution Archives

## Egbert Hamilton Walker Papers, 1938-1961

by Smithsonian Institution Archives

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Washington, D.C.  
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## Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <a href="mailto:osiaref@si.edu">osiaref@si.edu</a>
Creator:	Walker, Egbert H, (Egbert Hamilton), 1899-
Title:	Egbert Hamilton Walker Papers
Dates:	1938-1961
Quantity:	7.375 cu. ft. (14 document boxes) (3 6x9x12 card boxes)

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7270, Walker, Egbert H, (Egbert Hamilton), 1899-, Egbert Hamilton Walker Papers

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## Historical Note

Egbert Hamilton Walker (1899-1991), botanist, was born in Chicago, Illinois. At age two and a half, Walker was diagnosed with polio. His illness, which had been left untreated for so many years, left him with one good arm and a slightly damaged left leg.

After receiving his B.A. degree from the University of Michigan in 1922, he spent four years as an instructor at Canton Christian College (Lingnan University) in Canton, China. In 1926, with the help of Professor Harley Harris Bartlett of the University of Michigan, Walker entered the University of Wisconsin. He received a M.S. degree in botany in 1928 for his paper, *Fifty-one common ornamental trees of the Lingnan University campus*.

After leaving Wisconsin in 1928, Walker began work in the Division of Plants, United States National Museum at the Smithsonian Institution. Walker spent much of his time reorganizing the neglected, Old World collections and prepared reports on his progress in 1934, 1941, and 1943. Walker became the department's Assistant Curator in 1942 and Associate Curator in 1947. When the Division was reorganized into the Department of Botany in 1947, he was assigned to the Division of Phanerogams.

In 1928, Walker began work with Elmer Drew Merrill to compile a comprehensive bibliography on the literature of Chinese botany. The project was officially recognized as a joint effort between the Smithsonian Institution and the New York Botanical Garden in 1931 when Merrill was Director of the latter institution. The resulting publication was *A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany*, published in 1938. *A Revision of the Eastern Asiatic Myrsinaceae* eventually became Walker's dissertation for which he received his Ph.D. in botany from Johns Hopkins University in 1940.

During World War II, Walker and the staff at the United States National Herbarium became involved in various wartime efforts such as the preparation of survival manuals, pamphlets and articles for the army. Another wartime effort was a Servicemen's Collecting Program, proposed by Harley Harris Bartlett and

developed by Walker. As the primary contact for the project, Walker received many plant specimens, primarily from servicemen stationed in Guam, the Aleutian Islands, and Okinawa, Japan.

When the Scientific Investigation of the Ryukyu Islands (SIRI) botanical program was developed by the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council, Walker was selected to implement the program. In 1951, he left for Okinawa to conduct field work there and the surrounding islands. Walker would make three additional research trips to the area in 1953, 1957, and 1966. This led to the publication of *Important Trees of the Ryukyu Islands* in 1954 and later, the *Flora of Okinawa and the Southern Ryukyu Islands* in 1976.

Walker retired from the Smithsonian staff in June 1959 after 30 years. He continued his research on a supplemental edition to *A Bibliography of Eastern Asian Botany* as a consultant with the American Institute of Biological Sciences in Washington D.C. from 1959 to 1960. The supplement, along with the first volume is considered his most important contribution to botany, was eventually published in 1960.

Beginning in 1961, Walker spent the majority of his time writing and revising the *Flora of Okinawa and the Southern Ryukyu Islands* supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation to the Pacific Science Board of the National Academy of Science. He returned to the Smithsonian staff in 1965 as a Research Associate to the Department of Botany, National Museum of Natural History and continued his work there until 1987.

Walker conducted botanical field work specifically in Okinawa and the Ryukyu Islands, but also in New Zealand, Japan, the Philippine Islands, Hawaii, the Johnston Islands, Guam, Thailand, and Vietnam. He was vice president (1944) and president (1949-1950) of the Botanical Society of Washington and a member of the Botanical Society of Japan.

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## Chronology

<i>June 12, 1899</i>	born in Chicago, Illinois
<i>1922</i>	Bachelor of Arts, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
<i>1922-1926</i>	Instructor, Canton Christian College (Lingnan University), China
<i>1928</i>	Master of Science, University of Wisconsin
<i>1928</i>	Aid, United States National Museum, Division of Plants
<i>February 18, 1929</i>	married Elsie Howell
<i>November 8, 1930</i>	divorced Elsie Howell
<i>April 10, 1936</i>	married Dorothy Kemball
<i>1938</i>	published, <i>A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany</i>
<i>1939</i>	awarded Oberly Prize, administered by the National Library of Agriculture, for the <i>A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany</i>
<i>January 20, 1939</i>	birth of first child, William King
<i>1940</i>	Doctor of Philosophy, Johns Hopkins University
<i>March 11, 1941</i>	birth of second child, Jeanne Kemball
<i>1942</i>	Assistant Curator, United States National Museum, Department of Biology, Division of Plants
<i>1944</i>	Vice President, Botanical Society of Washington

1947	Associate Curator, United States National Museum, Department of Botany, Division of Phanerogams
1949	delegate for the Smithsonian Institution, Seventh Pacific Science Conference, New Zealand
1949	field work, New Zealand
1949	President, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
1950	President, Botanical Society of Washington
1951	Civilian Specialist, Scientific Investigation of the Ryukyu Islands (program of the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council)
1953	delegate for Scientific Investigation of the Ryukyu Islands, Eighth Pacific Science Conference, Philippines
1953	field work, Luzon Island in the Philippines, Hawaii, Johnston Island, Guam, and Okinawa, Japan
1954	published, <i>Important Trees of the Ryukyu Islands</i>
1957	delegate, Ninth Pacific Science Conference, Thailand
1957	speaker, Seventy-Fifth Annual Meeting of the Botanical Society of Japan
1957	field work, Okinawa, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines
1959	retired from Smithsonian Institution
1960	published, <i>A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany. Supplement</i>
1960	awarded the Oberly Award, administered by the National Library of Agriculture for the supplement to <i>A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany</i>
1965	Research Associate, National Museum of Natural History, Department of Botany
1966	lecturer, Eleventh Pacific Science Conference, Japan
1966	professional trip, Okinawa, Japan
1976	published, <i>Flora of Okinawa and the Southern Ryukyu Islands</i>
March 10, 1991	death

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## Introduction

The papers of Egbert Hamilton Walker were transferred to the Smithsonian Archives from the Hunt Institute in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1977. Subsequently, two additional transfers of papers were gifted by Egbert Walker in 1978 and 1979. In 1995, Walker's autobiographical notes were transferred from the Department of Botany, National Museum of Natural History. In 2002, the Smithsonian Institution Press project file for the *Flora of Okinawa and the Southern Ryukyu Islands* was duplicated and filed within the subject series of these papers.

The Archives would like to thank Priscilla Foley for conducting the preliminary processing of the Walker Papers in the Fall of 2000 as a part of a graduate internship with the University of Maryland.

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## Descriptive Entry

These papers document the career and life of Egbert Hamilton Walker, a Smithsonian Institution botanist whose taxonomic research centered on the *Myrsinaceae* of East Asia. Types of documentation include correspondence, reports, copies and drafts of manuscripts, bibliographic card files, and autobiographical notes.

The papers of Egbert Hamilton Walker primarily pertain to the research, funding, and preparation for the *Flora of Okinawa and the Southern Ryukyu Islands*. This publication was the result of over twenty years of research from Walker's time at the Department of Botany, United States National Museum to his time as Research Associate at the Department of Botany at the National Museum of Natural History. Primary correspondents with regards to this publication include Tetsuo Amano, Sumihiko Hatusima, Tetsuo Koyama and Shinjun Tawada.

Papers relating to the research, funding, and preparation for *A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany* and its supplement are also well represented. Reports on the Servicemen's Collecting Program developed by Walker during World War II, and the Scientific Investigations in the Ryukyu Islands botanical program initiated by the Pacific Science Board of the National Research Council and implemented by Walker are also documented in these papers.

Walker's primary correspondents from his early years at the Smithsonian until his retirement include botanists Harley Harris Bartlett of the University of Michigan, Elmer Drew Merrill of Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University and Joseph Francis Rock.

Walker's autobiographical notes were written around 1978. The appendices to his autobiography pertain to his experiences in China from 1923 to 1926; the Old World collections in the United States National Herbarium; Walker's field work, publications, and conferences he attended; the Walker family Christmas letters; and the editor of *A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany*.

For records documenting Bartlett and Walker's research on Sumatran plants, see accession T89024, from the Department of Botany, United States National Museum. In addition, record unit 7271 Rolla Kent Beattie Paper's, circa 1928-1947 include correspondence between Beattie and Walker concerning Japanese ferns and grasses.

Field notes pertaining to Walker's research in New Zealand, the Eastern United States, Japan, and the Philippines are included in the Collector's Field Books and Miscellaneous Notes of the Department of Botany, National Museum of Natural History.

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Botany  
Myrsinaceae

Names:

Amano, Tetsuo, 1912-  
American Institute of Biological Sciences.

Bartlett, Harley Harris, 1886-1960  
Botanical Society of Washington (Washington, D.C.)  
Koyama, Tetsuo  
National Museum of Natural History (U.S.). Dept. of Botany  
Nihon Shokubutsu Gakkai  
Rock, Joseph Francis Charles, 1884-1962  
Tawada, Shinjun, 1907-  
United States National Museum. Dept. of Botany  
United States National Museum. Division of Phanerogams.  
United States National Museum. Division of Plants  
United States. National Herbarium

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: CORRESPONDENCE, 1938-1987. ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY.

This series is comprised of incoming and outgoing correspondence concerning the research, funding, and publication of the *Flora of Okinawa and the Southern Ryukyu Islands*. Primary correspondents include Tetsuo Amano, Sumihiko Hatusima, Tetsuo Koyama, and Shinjun Tawada.

Close, professional relationships with Elmer Drew Merrill and Harley Harris Bartlett are also evidenced in this series. Elmer Drew Merrill correspondence pertains to Merrill's work on the bibliographies and determinations of the plants of Polynesia and the Pacific; joint work on the *A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany*; Merrill's disapproval of Walker's attempt to write a manual on the emergency food plants and poisonous plants of the Pacific; and Walker's work on a supplement to the *A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany*. Harley Harris Bartlett correspondence pertains to Bartlett's Sumatra collections; the flora of China; Walker's work on the flora of Okinawa; the *Important Trees of the Ryukyu Islands*; and the Servicemen's Collecting Program.

Correspondence with Joseph Francis Rock pertains to Rock's collecting expeditions, writings, and determinations made on Asian plants. General correspondence is related primarily to Walker's botanical research, publications, and professional activities.

#### Box 1

Folder 1 Bartlett, Harley H., 1939-1950

Folder 2 Bartlett, Harley H., 1951-1958

Folder 3 Bartlett, Harley H., Correspondence regarding the Servicemen's Collecting program and collections handled by Walker, 1944-1946

Folder 4 Chang, Ching-en, 1973-1987

Folder 5 Flora of Okinawa, Amano, Tetsuo, 1964-1977

Folder 6 Flora of Okinawa, Amano, Tetsuo, 1950-1964

Folder 7 Flora of Okinawa, General Correspondence, A-B, 1963-1974

Folder 8 Flora of Okinawa, General Correspondence, C, 1955-1970

Folder 9 Flora of Okinawa, General Correspondence, D-G, 1954-1974

#### Box 2

Folders 1-2 Flora of Okinawa, General Correspondence, H-J, 1955-1973

Folder 3 Flora of Okinawa, General Correspondence, T, 1958-1969

Folder 4 Flora of Okinawa, General Correspondence, T-W, 1954-1971

Folder 5 Flora of Okinawa, General Correspondence, W-Y, 1955-1974

Folder 6 Flora of Okinawa, Hatusima, Sumihiko, 1957-1966



Folder 7 Flora of Okinawa, Koyama, Tetsuo, 1958-1976

Folder 8 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, A-G, 1956-1976

Folder 9 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, H-HA, 1956-1976

Box 3

Folder 1 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, H-HE, 1956-1976

Folder 2 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, I-J, 1956-1976

Folder 3 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, K-L, 1956-1976

Folders 4-5 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, M, 1956-1976

Folder 6 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, N, 1956-1976

Folder 7 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, O, 1956-1976

Box 4

Folder 1 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, P-R, 1956-1976

Folders 2-3 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, S, 1956-1976

Folder 4 Flora of Okinawa, Research, Review and Travel, T-Z, 1956-1976

Folder 5 Flora of Okinawa, Search for Funds, A-H, 1965-1971

Folder 6 Flora of Okinawa, Search for Funds, I, 1965-1971

Folder 7 Flora of Okinawa, Search for Funds, J-R, 1965-1971

Folder 8 Flora of Okinawa, Search for Funds, Ripley, S. Dillon, 1965-1971

Folder 9 Flora of Okinawa, Search for Funds, S-Z, 1965-1971

Folder 10 Flora of Okinawa, Tawada, Shinjun, 1961-1971

Box 5

Folder 1 General Correspondence, A-E, 1944-1962; 1979; 1983

Folder 2 General Correspondence, F-H, 1947-1969

Folder 3 General Correspondence, I-J, 1952-1953

Folder 4 General Correspondence, K, 1940-1958

Folder 5 General Correspondence, L, 1947-1974

Folder 6 General Correspondence, M-Z, 1941-1967

Folder 7 Hatusima, Sumihiko, 1947-1955

Folder 8 Koyama, Tetsuo, 1957-1963

Folder 9 Koyama, Tetsuo, 1963-1971

Folder 10 Merrill, Elmer D., 1939-1945

Folder 11 Merrill, Elmer D., 1945-1946

Box 6

Folder 1 Merrill, Elmer D., 1947-1949

Folder 2 Merrill, Elmer D., 1950-1955

Folders 3-4 Rock, Joseph F., 1938-1959

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## Series 2: SUBJECTS, 1938-1977. ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY.

This series primarily concerns the publication of the *Flora of Okinawa and the Southern Ryukyu Islands* (1976) and *A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany* (1938) and its supplement (1960). Also included are papers documenting the Servicemen's Collecting Program, the Scientific Investigations in the Ryukyu Islands botanical program, and to a lesser extent, Walker's research on the plants of Guam, and Merrill's survival manual on the edible and poisonous plants of islands in the Pacific.

### Box 6

- Folder 5 Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany - Post Publication Correspondence, 1938-1946
- Folder 6 Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany - Reviews, 1938-1940
- Folder 7 Flora of Okinawa - Articles and Newspaper Clippings, 1966-1969
- Folder 8 Flora of Okinawa - Budget and Financial Statements, 1972-1975
- Folder 9 Flora of Okinawa - Funding, 1968-1974
- Folder 10 Flora of Okinawa - National Science Foundation Proposal and Contract, 1961-1972
- Folder 11 Flora of Okinawa - Post Publication Correspondence, 1976-1977

### Box 7

- Folder 1 Flora of Okinawa - Preparation and Review of Manuscript, 1961-1976.
- Folder 2 Flora of Okinawa - Printers and Publishers, 1961-1975
- Folder 3 Flora of Okinawa - Reports, 1966-1969
- Folder 4 Flora of Okinawa - Research Trip, 1966
- Folder 5 Flora of Okinawa - Search for Funds, 1969
- Folder 6 Flora of Okinawa - Smithsonian Institution Press Project File, 1967-1977
- Folders 7-8 Flora of Okinawa - Specimen Determinations and Loans, 1954-1971
- Folder 9 List of the Plants of Guam and Rota Island, 1946
- Folder 10 Scientific Investigations in the Ryukyu Islands - Reports, 1951, 1953
- Folder 11 Servicemen's Collecting Program, 1944-1946
- Folder 12 Servicemen's Collecting Program - Notes, 1945-1947
- Folder 13 Supplement to the Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany, 1947-1966

Box 8

Folder 1 Supplement to the Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany - Notes

Folder 2 Supplement to the Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany -  
Preparation and Publication, 1958-1961

Folder 3 Technical Manual - *Emergency Food Plants and Poisonous Plants  
of the Islands of the Pacific* by Elmer D. Merrill, 1943

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### Series 3: PUBLICATION MATERIAL, circa 1952-1965.

This series primarily consists of annotated drafts, pink and blue sets, for the preparation of the *Flora of Okinawa and the Southern Ryukyu Islands* published in 1976. Also, there is an annotated, mimeographed copy of the *Flora of Okinawa: An Enumeration of the Plants of Okinawa and Sakishima Archipelagos in the Ryukyu Islands* compiled by Sakuya Sonohara, Shinjun Tawada, and Tetsuo Amano and edited by Walker in 1952. Subsequent revisions of this manuscript prepared by Walker are also included.

#### Box 8

Volumes 1-2: *Flora of Okinawa: An Enumeration of the Plants of Okinawa and Sakishima Archipelagos in the Ryukyu Islands*, by Sakuya Sonohara, Shinjun Tawada, and Tetsuo Amano and edited by Egbert H. Walker.  
Volumes 1 and 2, 1952

#### Box 9

Volume 1: *Flora of Okinawa and the Southern Ryukyu Islands* - 1955  
Edited Version of 1952 Manuscript

Folder 1 *Flora of Okinawa* - 1965 Edited Version of the 1955 Manuscript  
(pink)

Folder 2 *Flora of Okinawa* - Preliminary Manuscript (pink)

Folder 3 Preface, General Keys to Major Groups and Families, and in  
Pteridophyta to Genera (pink)

Folder 4 Family 26. Cycadaceae to Family 41. Triuridaceae (pink)

#### Box 10

Folder 1 Family 42. Gramineae (pink)

Folder 2 Family 43. Cyperaceae (pink)

Folder 3 Family 55. Liliaceae to Family 63. Burmanniaceae (pink)

Folder 4 Introduction to Pteridophyta and Family 65. Orchideaceae (pink)

Folder 5 Family 66. Casuarinaceae to Family 92. Basellaceae (pink)

Folder 6 Family 116. Saxifragaceae (pink and blue)

#### Box 11

Folder 1 Family 95. Nymphaeaceae to Family 120. Rosaceae (pink)

Folder 2 Family 122. Geraniaceae to Family 141. Icacinaceae (pink)

Folder 3 Family 142. Aceraceae to Family 173. Myrtaceae (pink)

Folder 4 Family 174. Melastomaceae to Family 196. Asclepiadaceae (pink)

Folder 5 Family 197. Convolvulaceae to Family 209. Lentibulariaceae (pink)

Box 12

Folder 1 Family 210. Acanthaceae to Family 219. Goodeniaceae (pink)

Folder 2 Family 220. Compositae (pink)

Folder 3 Glossary, Collectors, Abbreviations of Herbaria, Selected Bibliography, Special Bibliography (pink)

Folder 4 General Keys to Major Groups and Families, and in Pteridophyta to Genera (blue)

Folder 5 Flora of Okinawa - Preliminary Manuscript, 1960 (blue)

Folder 6 Pteridaceae (blue)

Folder 7 Pteridophyta (pink and blue)

Folder 8 Family 21. Cycadaceae to Family 41. Triuridaceae (blue)

Folder 9 Family 44. Palmae to Family 62. Marantaceae (blue)

Box 13

Folder 1 Family 66. Casuarinaceae to Family 106. Lauraceae (blue)

Folder 2 Family 107. Hernandiaceae to Family 116. Saxifragaceae (blue)

Folder 3 Family 122. Geraniaceae to Family 154. Theaceae (blue)

Folder 4 Family 155. Guthiferae to Family 191. Symplocaceae (blue)

Folder 5 Family 192. Oleaceae to Family 199. Boraginaceae (blue)

Folder 6 Family 202. Labiatae to Family 219. Goodeniaceae (blue)

Folder 7 Family 220. Compositae (blue)

Folder 8 Keys to Families, Glossary, and Selected Bibliography (blue)

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## Series 4: RESEARCH MATERIAL, circa 1936-1967.

Research material consists of annotated, bibliographic card files compiled for *A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany. Supplement* (1960). The accumulation of references for a supplement to *A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany* began in 1937 by Elmer Drew Merrill. Further references were compiled by Walker as a part of his work at the United States Herbarium until his retirement in 1958. Included in this series are a few correspondences. Six of the eight total groupings of cards are arranged alphabetically by publication or author.

Boxes 14-16

Bibliographic Card Files, c.1936-1967

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## Series 5: BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL, 1923-1985.

Biographical material consists of Walker's autobiographical notes and the corresponding appendices. These papers include letters and personal accounts of his experiences in China while he was an instructor at Canton Christian College from 1923 to 1926; his reports on the Old World collections in the National Herbarium during his time as an Assistant and Associate Curator at the United States National Museum; the Walker family Christmas letters; a few articles related to Walker's field work and the conferences he attended; a personal account by the editor of the supplement to *A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany*; and a list of Walker's publications.

### Box 17

Folder 1 Autobiography of Egbert H Walker, 1978

Folder 2 Appendices I to X- Correspondence and Newspaper Clippings from China, 1923-1925

Folder 3 Appendix XI - Supplement to Civil Service Job Application

Folder 4 Appendix XII - Reports on the Old World Collections in the United States National Herbarium, 1934, 1941, 1943

Folder 5 Appendix XIII - Background Information on the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 1976

Folder 6 Appendix XIV - "A New Zealand Flight," by Egbert H. Walker, 1949. Reprinted in the *Potomac Appalachian Trail Club Bulletin*.

Folder 7 Appendix XV - The Seventh Pacific Science Congress, 1949.

Folder 8 Appendix XVI - "Botanizing with the Okinawans" by Egbert H. Walker. From the Smithsonian Report for 1952, pages 359-383.

Folder 9 Appendix XVII - Christmas Letters, 1948-1985

Folder 10 Appendix XVIII - Ninth Pacific Science Congress, 1957

Folder 11 Appendix XIX - Translation of Yoshikazu Emoto's Memoirs on A Bibliography of Eastern Asiatic Botany Supplement, 1972

Folder 12 Appendix XX - List of Egbert H. Walker's Publications

Folder 13 Newspaper Clippings and Accounts of Experiences in China, 1924-26

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