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A Guide to the
Hui-lin Li Papers
1831-2002

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Prepared by Kaiyi Chen

2002

The University Archives and Records Center
3401 Market Street, Suite 210
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3358
215.898.7024
Fax: 215.573.2036
www.archives.upenn.edu
Mark Frazier Lloyd, Director

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PROVENANCE

Gift of Anne S. Li, on behalf of Hui-lin Li and Chih-ying Hsu Li, in July 2001.

ARRANGEMENT

This collection has been organized into five series: Correspondence Files (including family correspondence); General Files; Research Files; Reference Publications; and Photographs, Slides, Graphics and Scrapbooks. With the exception of the Correspondence Files, which are arranged chronologically, all series have been arranged alphabetically.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hui-lin Li was born in Soochow, a city close to Shanghai, China, in 1911. Li earned his B.S. in Biology in 1930 from Soochow University, an American supported institution of higher learning. He earned his M.S. in Biology in 1932 from Yenching University, also an American supported university, but located in Peking. He joined the faculty at Soochow University in 1932 as an

Instructor in Biology. He taught there for eight years. In 1940, he traveled to the United States, where he enrolled in the doctoral program in biology at Harvard University. He earned his Ph.D. in Biology from Harvard in 1942. A year later, Li won a Harrison Fellowship for Research at the University of Pennsylvania. From 1943 to 1946 Li studied at Penn under Francis Pennell of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia and J. R. Schramm, Chairman of the Department of Botany at Penn.

In 1946 Soochow University appointed Li to the faculty position of Professor of Biology. Just one year later, the National Taiwan University in Taipei appointed him to a professorship in its Department of Botany. He remained in Taipei until 1950. In that year he returned to the United States and accepted a fellowship at the Blandy Farm of Research of the University of Virginia at Boyce, Virginia. In the spring of 1951, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., appointed Li to the position of Research Associate.

In 1952, Li returned to Philadelphia to work on the cytotaxonomy of American azaleas. He was stationed at the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, which was headed by Dr. Schramm, his faculty director at Penn from 1943 to 1946. In 1958 the University of Pennsylvania promoted Li from Research Associate to Associate Professor and in 1963 promoted him again, this time to Professor of Botany. In 1971, Penn appointed him Acting Director of the Arboretum, and in 1972, promoted him to Director. He left the directorship in 1974, when Penn appointed him its first John Bartram Professor of Botany. He retired in 1979.

Li's research and publication spanned a period of more than fifty years. From 1932 to 1983, he published over 200 papers and nine books. Among the books were *The Garden Flowers of China* (1959), *Woody Flora of Taiwan* (1963), *The Origin and Cultivation of Shade and Ornamental Trees* (1964), *Alkaloid-bearing Plants and their Contained Alkaloids* (1970), *Trees of Pennsylvania, the Atlantic States, and the Lake States* (1972) and *Flora of Taiwan* (1975-1979). *Flora of Taiwan* was a six-volume work published by an editorial committee chaired by Li. This encyclopedia extends to the study of a total of 228 plant families, including 1,360 genera and 3,577 species.

Li was John S. Guggenheim Fellow in 1961, a Fulbright Fellow in 1968, and he won many other research grants from prestigious institutions, including the American Philosophical Society and the American Council of Learned Societies. From 1964 to 1965, he was visiting Professor of Biology and Director of University Biological Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He was elected a member of the Academia Sinica (Taiwan) in 1964. After the normalization of the relations between China and the United States in 1979, Li was also invited to lecture at many institutions in mainland China.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection documents the professional career and life of Dr. Hui-lin Li as a professor of botany and researcher.

The first series includes Li's correspondence related to both his professional activities and personal interest and spanning over nearly half a century from 1945 to 1994. The General Files concern institutions Li was affiliated with or subjects that interested him professionally and intellectually. This series includes an administrative file of the Morris Arboretum around his tenure as first Acting Director and then Director. The Research Files represent numerous projects Li undertook in botanical study. The forms of the material include manuscripts, drafts, notes, publishing correspondence, articles and books published, and reprints. Related to the Research Files is the series of Reference Publications, which cover a wide range of subjects, either directly related to his own research or appealing to him as a botanist with a global perspective as well as a multicultural background. The Photographs, Slides, Graphics and Scrapbooks series contains various forms of visual material which were gathered during Li's professional or research activities. This series includes a large collection of images, either in photograph prints or in slides, of plants from practically all parts of the world, but especially from North America and East Asia, the latter focusing on Taiwan, China, and Japan.

CONTROLLED ACCESS HEADINGS

Corporate Name(s)

- University of Pennsylvania. Morris Arboretum.

Subject(s)

- Botany--East Asia.
- Botany--North America.
- Botany.

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