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Dear Mado (& other Cousins)

Thank you very much for the generous donation towards the Economic Botany Collection. This will be used to support conservation work on objects in the collection - a never-ending task, but well worth it in view of the way that these old collections take on new meanings as time goes on.

In fact we are at present working on a proposal for a PhD student to look at British exploitation of natural resources in Latin America in the 19th century from the point of view of cultural and empire history - in which cinchona will feature prominently.

We are delighted to have such a wide range of Howard material here, and it was a pleasure to host your group and make the connection with John Eliot Howard's descendants. I am glad the day was blessed by good weather (and good organisation on your part), which makes such a big difference to this kind of event. I had excellent feedback from the Library, which had 1000 visitors to the Open House display on Howard & quinine; both the staff and visitors seem to have really appreciated the breadth of material on display.

I apologise for the delay in responding; my time since September has been bound up with our wood collections and much writing, but I am again returning to cinchona matters. I also plan to visit Tony Howard, but this is probably not possible until early 2008.

If any smaller groups of Howard descendants would like a close-up view of the Collections at Kew, they need only contact me. I am aware that some missed the meeting; on a weekday it would be straightforward to show small groups some of the Library and Collection material.

Best wishes

Mark
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