

HISTORY OF SCIENCE

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A Brief History of the Herbarium of Indiana University

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In 1892 the *Botanical Gazette* announced: "The Herbarium of Indiana University was established upon the election last April of Professor John M. Coulter, as President. In addition to private material already in the possession of Professor Coulter, a liberal appropriation for the purchase of plants was made. All the well-known collectors of phanerogams and pteridophytes were asked to furnish as complete sets of their collections as possible, and these purchases now amount to over 15,000 species of North American plants."

After only two years at Indiana University, Coulter left to assume the presidency of Lake Forest College and in June of 1893 he wrote to J. N. Rose, "I am just getting over the strain of my inauguration ceremonies and am almost too tired to move. All of the herbarium at Bloomington comes to me here, cases and all." In November he wrote, "My herbarium has just begun to get into working shape again, and I find much more time for my botanical work than I expected." (2:pp. 106, 126-127.)

Thus the herbarium at Indiana, founded only two years earlier, started again from scratch in 1895. For the next forty years the collection gradually grew, but there was no systematic effort to build a herbarium. Funds were limited, and moreover no one member of the staff had taxonomy as his central interest. Various persons, mostly students and staff members, however, contributed so that by 1931 nearly 10,000 sheets had accumulated. The principal contributors were Flora Anderson, Edna Banta, Frances Beede, Stanley Cain, Wilbur Duncan, Madeline A. Gullion, D. M. Mottier, John Potzger, Gladys Price, J. M. VanHook, Paul Weatherwax, Winona Welch, and William J. Woodburn (3). In addition to these the collection of A. H. Young, who had been a student with Coulter at Hanover, was brought to the University by Edna Banta.

In 1931 a contract was drawn up with C. C. Deam by D. M. Mottier, then chairman of the department. Deam's specimens, all mounted, were to be bought at ten cents a sheet and in addition his herbarium cases and library were to be purchased. Since many universities had sought the Deam collection, which was probably the finest collection of a state flora in existence, the university considered itself fortunate in acquiring his herbarium. Deam felt that his specimens belonged in the state and this played no small part in his decision to sell his herbarium to Indiana University.

Deam's collection served as the basis for his many books on the flora of Indiana, culminating in the *Flora of Indiana* (1). His botanical study in the state had begun in 1893 as a hobby, and from 1914-1938 he traveled over 125,000 miles by car in the state, collecting approximately 60,000 plants from his visits to all 1,016 townships. In addition to his

activity in Indiana he also made a number of collections in Florida, Mexico, and Guatemala. His collections from the last two areas went to the University of Michigan.

At the time the contract was signed Deam was busily engaged upon his Flora of Indiana and needed his specimens for study, so no specimens came to Indiana until 1938 when 12,000 sheets arrived. Adequate facilities and room were not available for the collection at this time. However, under the chairmanship of Ralph Cleland beginning in 1938, the importance of the herbarium was recognized and more adequate support was provided. In 1940 a large room in Science Hall was made available and served to house the herbarium until 1955. During the early 1940's Weatherwax was responsible for bringing about the reorganization of the herbarium with student help. From 1944 to 1947 Dr. Martha Springer served as instructor and was instrumental in initiating an active exchange program with a number of institutions. The writer came to Indiana University in 1947 and has been in charge of the herbarium since that time. In 1959 Miss Zoe Ellis became the first full-time employee specifically designated to curate the herbarium.

In 1953 after the death of Deam the last of his herbarium came to the university. Although most of his collection had been brought to the university before that time he had retained a number of specimens at Bluffton with the hope that he would be able to revise some of the more difficult groups. In 1955 with the completion of Jordan Hall, the herbarium was moved to its present quarters, where in addition to a three floor herbarium with space adequate to hold over 200,000 specimens, a large herbarium mounting and fumigating room is provided. Although the majority of the specimens are housed in new steel cases, the wooden cases purchased from Deam are used on the second floor. Deam's desk and microscope are also housed in the herbarium, along with his reprints and collecting books. His library is now incorporated into the Biology Library also in Jordan Hall.

At present the herbarium contains 104,987 accessioned sheets of vascular plants. Of this number, more than 73,000 came from Deam, most of them collected by him. In addition there are special research collections of *Helianthus*, *Capsicum*, *Oenothera*, and grasses. These with the unmounted material now on hand give a total holding of over 130,000 specimens of vascular plants. The herbarium is provided with offices for graduate students, and it seems most appropriate that students actively engaged in taxonomic research should have their headquarters in the Deam Herbarium.

Literature Cited

1. DEAM, C. C. 1940. Flora of Indiana. Dept. of Conservation, Indianapolis.
2. RODGERS, ANDREW DENNY, III. 1944. John Merle Coulter, Princeton University Press.
3. WEATHERWAX, PAUL. 1941. (Unpub.) Notes on the history of the herbarium at Indiana University in Accession Book of herbarium of Indiana University.

(For brief biographical sketches of C. C. Deam see Proc. Ind. Acad. 63:29-32. 232-229. 1954.)