

The Kriebel Herbarium at Purdue University

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The Ralph M. Kriebel Herbarium of Purdue University was formally dedicated on August 29, 1961, at the annual banquet of the American Society of Plant Taxonomists (during the A. I. B. S. meetings at Purdue). A bronze plaque with the title of the herbarium, donated by the Kriebel family, was accepted on behalf of Purdue by Vice-President Chenea and shortly thereafter was installed on the east wall of the herbarium room in the Lilly Hall of Life Sciences. However, despite the newness of the herbarium as an integrated whole, it includes many older collections. It is the purpose of this article to trace the history of the present herbarium as well as can be determined.

The Purdue University Herbarium was officially founded concomitantly with the University in 1874 under the direction of the Rev. John Hussey, Professor of Botany and Horticulture, who had been a chaplain in the Union forces during the Civil War. Hussey appears to have made a number of botanizing trips, with emphasis on collecting ferns, to various areas (particularly Edmonson Co., Kentucky). At the time of the Fourth Annual Report of the university of 1878, the herbarium was described as containing 1,500 specimens ("species") of the flora of the United States. The next year, in 1879, it was augmented by a shipment of 1,200 specimens from George W. Clinton of Albany, New York. In this same year Hussey was disabled by an attack of paralysis and his place was taken by Charles R. Barnes, who brought his private collection of 1,500 specimens to Purdue. Barnes' collections were eventually added to the herbarium, which grew to 5,000 specimens by 1892 and to 7,000 by 1902.

Stanley Coulter, who became a professor at Purdue in 1887, soon took over botanical activities and was active in the work of the Indiana Biological Survey which began in 1893. However, although a prolific writer on the flora of Indiana, he appears to have collected few specimens; most of those collected during his tenure were by students or correspondents such as Alida Cunningham, H. B. Dorner, and W. B. Van Gorder. After the erection of Coulter Hall, the herbarium was stored in the basement for some years, and suffered considerably through neglect. However, Coulter's recommendation (made when he was nearing retirement) that the herbarium be renovated was eventually followed up and in 1930 C. L. and J. N. Porter (3) were able to report that the specimens were filed in the proper order in the cases and thus were once more available for study.

The Porters list in considerable detail the more important collections in the herbarium at this time. Some of the most interesting were those made by Dr. Clapp in the "Knobs" region of southern Indiana in 1838 and 1839. C. C. Deam had donated a large series of Indiana specimens over a number of years. Other interesting collections not mentioned previously include those of McOwen from South Africa, Steinitz and Wenzel from Hungary, and A. H. Curtiss from Virginia. This herbarium in Stanley Coulter Hall unfortunately became inactive because of the lack of professional taxonomist. Later, Dr. A. T. Guard, who taught the elementary course in taxonomy, began adding specimens to the herbarium.

In 1953 the west wing of the Lilly Hall of Life Sciences was completed, and the rust fungi of the Arthur Herbarium were moved to their

present location. The vascular plant collections of Arthur were placed in a separate room together with the Coulter collection and the private herbarium of Ralph M. Kriebel. The Kriebel collection, which had been purchased for a nominal sum by the University after his death in 1946, was by far the largest component of the amalgamated phanerogamic herbarium; it consisted of more than 10,000 mounted sheets of his own collections plus additional sets and many unmounted duplicates. It is the largest collection of Indiana plants made by one person next to that of C. C. Deam, who had originally encouraged Kriebel to begin collecting in 1933. Kriebel made probably the most thorough sampling of the flora of an Indiana county in his botanizing in Lawrence County, but he later collected extensively throughout the state as well. At first he was especially interested in ferns, and he reported several rare *Asplenium* hybrids (1, 2). He was also interested in oaks and made very extensive collections, including a number of hybrids, many of which have still not been critically studied. It seemed appropriate, therefore, to associate his name with the combined vascular plant herbarium, to which he had contributed so much.

Beginning in 1958, the writer began a program of reorganizing the herbarium which lasted for about three years. The Arthur, Coulter, and Kriebel collections have been intercalated and arranged in the Engler-Prantl sequence, the specimens placed in new genus covers color-coded for geographical origin, and a set of the Gray Card Index has been installed. The total number of mounted specimens of vascular plants is now approximately 35,000, of which over one-half are from Indiana. The collection is especially rich in grasses, partly due to the interest of Dr. George Cummins in collecting hosts for grass rusts. At the present time the emphasis in adding to the collections is on plants from the Midwest, Gulf Coastal Plain, and American tropics. Recent additions to the herbarium since 1958 include Alton Lindsey's collections from a number of interesting areas (Canadian Arctic, New Zealand, Mount Rainier, etc.), the T. E. Eaton collection of native and exotic ferns (donated by Dr. Lindsey), Alaskan plants collected by B. E. Montgomery, many plants of the western U. S. donated by George Cummins, Ekman collections from Hispaniola, and West Indian and Himalayan plants collected by the writer. A fairly large collection of bryophytes (the hepatics annotated by C. E. Bonner and H. A. Miller) is presently stored in another room but will eventually be made available for study.

Literature Cited

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