

Harper, Robert A., Collection

Robert A. Harper Collection
c.1910-c.1930



Title Statement

Harper, Robert A., Collection Robert A. Harper Collection, c.1910-c.1930 Ms.2003.010

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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

Ms.2003.010

Unit ID

/repositories/2/resources/2243

Unit Date

c.1910-c.1930

Language

The materials in the collection are in English.

Abstract

This collection consists of approximately 200 photographs of orchid specimens, together with a small number of various botanical notes and other materials belonging to Robert Almer Harper, head of Columbia University's botany department from 1911 to 1930.

Creator

Harper, Robert Almer, 1862-1946

Extent

0.2 Cubic Feet 1 box

Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

Administrative Information

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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Source of Acquisition

The Robert A. Harper Collection was transferred to the Special Collections from the Virginia Tech Biology Department in 1993.

Processing Information

The processing, arrangement and description of the Robert A. Harper Collection commenced and was completed in May 2003.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], Robert A. Harper Collection, Ms2003-010, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

Biographical Note

Robert Almer Harper, botanist, was born in Le Claire, Iowa, on January 21, 1862. After earning his bachelor's degree at Oberlin College in 1886, Harper taught at Gates College (1886-1888) and Lake Forest Academy (1888-1891). He earned his M. A. from Oberlin in 1891 and was appointed professor of botany at Lake Forest College. From 1894 to 1896, Harper took a sabbatical from teaching to pursue his doctoral degree in Germany, studying with Strasburger Brefeld. In 1898, he was appointed professor and head of botany at the University of Wisconsin, a position he would hold until 1911, when he was appointed head of the botany department at Columbia University.

During the 1920s, Harper also served as chief of the board of scientific directors of the New York Botanical Garden. He belonged to a number of scientific organizations, including the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society and the Botanical Society of America.

Harper married twice: first, in 1899, to Alice Jean McQueen (died 1909); and to Helen Sherman (1879-1973) in 1918. He retired in 1930, moving to Bedford, Virginia, where he died on May 12, 1946.

Scope and Content

This collection contains photographs and papers belonging to Robert Almer Harper, head of the Columbia University Botany Department from 1911 to 1930. The collection contains approximately 200 photographs of orchid specimens--some attributed to Hicks Arnold--and a few notes and personal papers belonging to Harper.

Separated Materials

The following items were transferred to the Rare Book Collection:

James Veitch & Sons *A manual of orchidaceous plants cultivated under glass in Great Britain*. 9 vols. London: Veitch & Sons, 1887. Parts 3-4 are also available online at the Biodiversity Heritage Library. Parts 5-10 are also available online at the Biodiversity Heritage Library.

QK495.O64 V44 1887 Spec Large.

Keywords

Botany

Science and Technology

Rights Statement for Archival Description

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Description of Subordinate Components

"Hicks Arnold Collection of Orchid Photographs"

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/50228

Album 1

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/50229

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Album 2

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/50230

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 2 (2 folders) (folder)

Genus cyripedium and Genus cattleya specimen photos

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/50231

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Miscellaneous orchid specimen photos

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/50232

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

General materials

Unit ID /repositories/2/archival_objects/50233

Unit Date n.d.

box-folder 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)