

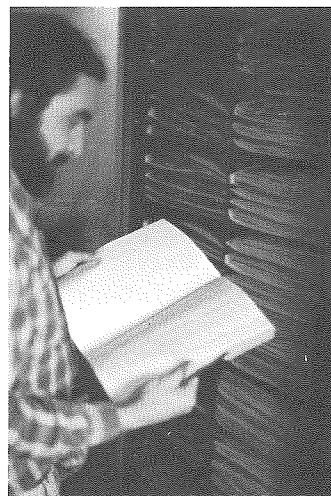
A DECADE OF CHANGE: THE FARLOW HERBARIUM IN THE 1970's

Carolyn Hesterberg

It is a commonplace that there is an ebb and flow in the fortunes and affairs of men. The same holds true for institutions and for none more so than the Farlow Library and Herbarium. The year 1972 saw the following state of affairs at 20 Divinity Avenue:

"The Farlow was without question in the poorest condition of all the botanical collections at Harvard The staff consisted of one professional cryptogamist, one curatorial assistant, a part-time clerk-typist, and a part-time librarian. The institution was closed for one month of the year, and throughout the year the library was only open half of most days. Acquisition of books and journals had been curtailed and a charge for loans had been imposed." [from NSF report, 1972-1975, describing conditions as of the beginning of the grant]

The "one curatorial assistant" referred to in this 3-year NSF report is the current Farlow staff member of longest standing, Gennaro Cacavio. Hired under the first National Science Foundation grant, Jerry was to be particularly involved in the rehabilitation of the algal herbarium, an unorganized jumble of specimens, many of which had never even been packeted. In addition to taking on this ambitious task, Jerry was also to oversee the revamping of the loan service, bringing it under the guidelines set by the other Harvard herbaria and, in particular, to call in the many overdue loans, some of which had been out for over fifteen years.

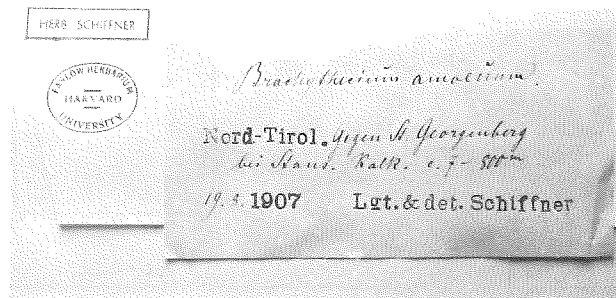


Jerry Cacavio

The year in which all this began, 1972, Richard Young was personal assistant to Dr. Ivan Lamb, then Director of the Farlow. In his cursory tour of the herbarium, Young pointed out to his new curatorial assistant the various conditions of the different herbaria now under his charge. After the algae, the bryophytes were probably in the worst state. The Schiffner and Fleischer Herbaria were more or less in their original conditions -- loose packets stuck in folders. The fungi were in the best shape, though the Patouillard Herbarium had never been thoroughly curated, and the Bartholomew Herbarium was separate and unindexed. Its specimens were contained in deteriorating packets pasted to sheets. As Ivan Lamb was a lichenologist, the lichens were, taxonomically, in good condition.

Those who are familiar with the physical appearance of the Farlow today -- its eclectic "charm" has been noted by many outside observers -- would, if they could step back in time, be surprised by its neglected state in the early 1970's. The main office with all its now-vital equipment -- from kitchenette to computer -- then resembled the room over it, called, "the smut room" (referring to the Ustilaginales housed there). The office walls were painted a "cheerful" institutional green; linoleum covered the hardwood floors (this, unfortunately, is still true in the main hall), and antique light fixtures, worked by chains, provided spotty illumination. Any change could only have been an improvement.

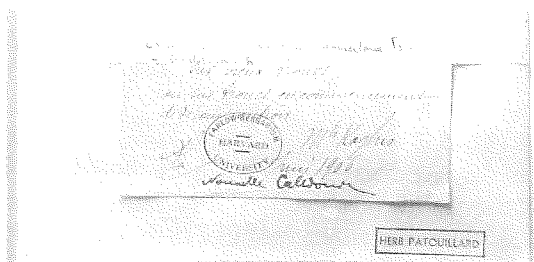
However, despite the somewhat "hard times" atmosphere at the Farlow, a few traditions -- still in place today -- were already being established, including the "little teas", staff get-togethers which often drew people such as then-Harvard Herbaria supervisor Lorin Nevling from next door; or which served to welcome visitors to the Farlow, including a young member of the faculty of the University of Puerto Rico, Donald Pfister.



Dr. Lamb retired in 1973 and Richard Young left about the same time. Upon Lamb's retirement, the position of Director was eliminated. When Don Pfister came in 1974, he was given the title of Assistant Professor and Assistant Curator. He immediately set the priorities at the Farlow, one of which was rehabilitating the Patouillard Fungus Herbarium. The "Patouillard", purchased by Roland Thaxter, was both very important in itself and played a significant role in Prof. Pfister's research. This focus on the Patouillard led to the production of the "Index to the Patouillard Collection," a 2-year project vastly facilitated by the efforts of the curatorial assistants on the staff.

About this time, also, there began a series of building renovations, a few with unpredicted results. For example, when the smut room over the main office was rearranged to create more storage space, the weight of the cabinets created enough stress to endanger the ceiling below. A steel I-beam had to be installed to prevent the collapse of the floor. There was also general painting and floor refinishing and other cosmetic touches. (These are soon again to be done after ten years wear.)

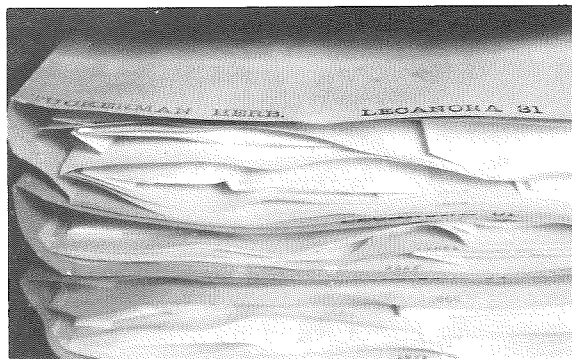
Many other changes and staff additions were taking place, too, of which space will allow only a brief mention. Dr. Geneva Sayre came to the Farlow about the same time as Jerry and oversaw the updating of the nomenclature, according to the Index Muscorum, throughout the entire moss herbarium. Curatorial assistants under her direction rehabilitated the Fleischer, Schiffner, and Sullivant Herbaria (collections which she referred to as "the authors' herbaria") and produced a species index to each one.



Current FOF president Robert Edgar came for a library visit in 1976 and unsuspectingly discovered during his stay the large and historically important diatom collections of Jacob W. Bailey and the Boston Society of Natural History, which had been donated to the Farlow in the early 1940's. Their existence was not generally known among diatomists; their contents were wholly unknown, and they were a shambles. With the encouragement of Reed Rollins, Dr. Edgar retired to the basement and emerged a few years later with catalogs and indexes to the several thousand slides in both collections. Stimulated further by Geneva Sayre's work on cryptogamic exsiccatae, he soon thereafter began an inventory of diatoms in published exsiccatae held by the Farlow - those results were published last year.

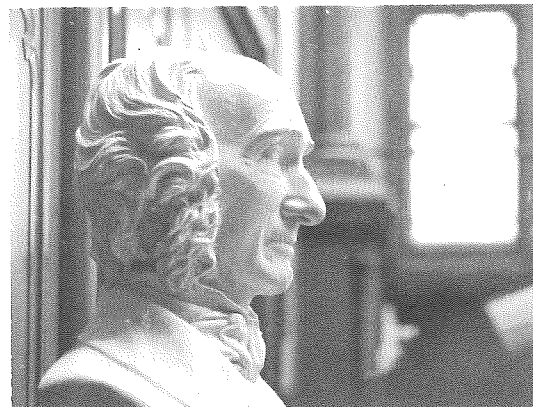
These, and many other changes, have taken place in the fifteen years of Jerry Cacavio's work at the Farlow as a Curatorial Assistant. He can certainly look back over these years with a great deal of satisfaction over what has been accomplished. The current Friends of the Farlow, established in 1982, can also feel pride in their active role in the continued improvement and expansion of this most remarkable collection.

Carolyn Hesterberg received her B.A. in English and German from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1975. She has worked at the Farlow since 1979 and has been involved with the Friends of the Farlow since its inception. The author wishes to thank Jerry Cacavio for graciously agreeing to be "interviewed" about his memories of his fifteen years at the Farlow.



NEW FOF MEMBERS

FOF welcomes five recently joined members: Anthony Boutard (New Haven, CT), Catherine Farlow Hitchings (Arlington, MA), Alfred D. Hoch (Lincoln, MA), Jenny Stricker (Cambridge, MA), and Dr. Gabor Tasnaki (Budapest, Hungary).



FARLOW VISITORS

Visitors to the Farlow since the fall of 1987: A. Aproot (Utrecht), S. Beattie (Cambridge), R. Berliner (Petersham), R. Boise (Shirley, AZ), H. G. Brotzman (North Adams), D. Breyan (Weston), W. R. Buck (New York), F. Chen (Medford), L. C. Colt (North Dartmouth), G. C. Compeau (Boston), D. E. Desjardin (Knoxville, TN), S. Ducker (Melbourne), J. Dwyer (Westwood), S. Edgington (Cambridge), M. Erbafine (Cambridge), D. Eveleigh (New Brunswick, NJ), D. Fillingham (Boston), Z. Guo (Durham, NH), M. Hale (Washington, DC), T. C. Harrington & his advanced mycology class (Durham, NH), R. Harris (New York), S. Hensey (CFS), S. Kammer (San Francisco), S. Kim (Worcester), E. Kneiper (West Newton), V. Lapuzynski (Derby, VT), S. M. Lewis (Cambridge), S. Masuda (Tokyo), G. Mathiassen (Tromsø, Norway), W. O'Brien (Boston), A. O'Neil (Hingham), A. Pringle (Boston), A. Reyes (Chile), K. Rodrigues (New York), M. Simonds (Jamaica Plain), J. B. Sloe (Lawrence, KS), A. Sondheim (Buckfield, ME), B. Tan (Laguna, Phillipines), H. Teeuwen (Utrecht), M. Thayer (Chicago), J. Trueheart (Cambridge), University of Massachusetts Cranberry Station Staff (Wareham), M. J. Wynne (Ann Arbor) and Z. Yaseen (Brookline).

FARLOW LIBRARIAN

The Harvard Botanical Libraries have undergone a shift in personnel. Geraldine Kaye, the Farlow Librarian since 1978 and a prime-mover of FOF from its inception, has been appointed Botany Librarian and given charge of all Harvard Botanical Libraries: Arnold Arboretum, Economic Botany Library of Oakes Ames, the Farlow Reference Library of Cryptogamic Botany and the Gray Herbarium Library. Although Gerry's office is now in the Gray Library and she finds only fleeting moments to visit the Farlow, we trust the decade of care she provided the Farlow leaves it in a special corner of her heart. Certainly, she left a lot of herself in the Farlow.

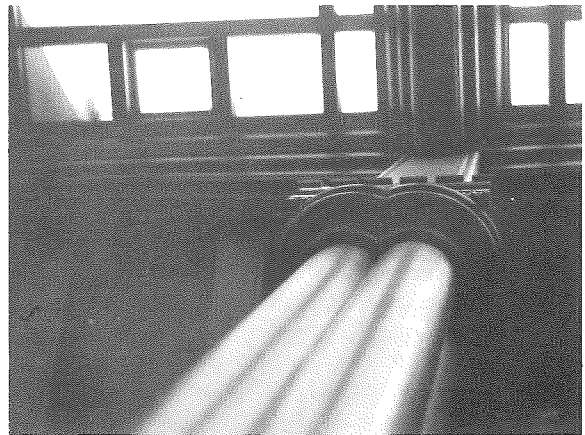
The task of supervising the Farlow Library has gone to Jean Boise, Library Assistant. Jean grew up in Farmington, Michigan, studied for her bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan, and earned her doctorate in mycology from Margaret Barr Bigelow at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in 1984. Her mycological focus has been ascomycete taxonomy. After a term as Museum Intern at the Cryptogamic Herbarium at the New York Botanical Garden, Jean came to the Farlow in 1985 as Research Bibliographer for the "Early Mycological Literature Project." She has recently been accepted for study for a Master of Library Science at Simmons College's Graduate Program in Library and Information Science. Users of the library will find her delightful.

LIBRARY PHOTOCOPIES FOR FOF MEMBERS

Limited free photocopying is now available at the Farlow Library to FOF members. No charge will be made for copies of a maximum of five titles of twenty or fewer pages each. Inquiries and orders can be made by contacting the Farlow librarian by phone (617-495-2369), mail or in person.

NEW AMBIANCE TO THE READING ROOM

There's a fresh new ambiance to the Farlow Library Reading Room these days. Thanks to FOF new brass lamps (purchased in a snow storm during a mid-winter sale) grace the alcove tables and the (recently refinished) great long table beneath the skylight (that has serviced many a FOF reception!). Contractors are submitting bids for the job of painting the walls and polishing up the woodwork this summer; "staging" will be assembled to reach the high ceiling. And though many banging noises and showers of plaster dust were suffered this winter during repairs, the Farlow's one-hundred-year-old roof is properly shedding spring rains again, and the buckets have been removed from atop the Reading Room shelves.



NEW FARLOW PUBLICATIONS LISTS

During the winter two updated price lists of publications available through the Farlow library were produced. One lists articles published in Farlowia: A Journal of Cryptogamic Botany (1943-1955) and in the Occasional Papers of the Farlow Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany (1969-1987). The other lists about 350 separates by workers in cryptogamic botany, many associated with the Farlow in one way or another. Both the "journals" and "separates" lists are available upon request from the Farlow librarian.

During March the Job Bicknell Ellis Fungus Collections received the special attention of our most recent FOF Graduate Fellow, Katia Rodrigues. Katia, a graduate student at the New York Botanical Garden, studied the Farlow's holdings of specimens and publications of this prolific 19th-century mycologist in search of type material and original descriptions of those species that Ellis named in the ascomycete family Xylariaceae and its allies. A native of Rio de Janeiro, Katia was pleased to discover the Brazilian collections of Johann Rick and Ernst Ule and made notes on the collections in anticipation of more detailed studies at a later date.

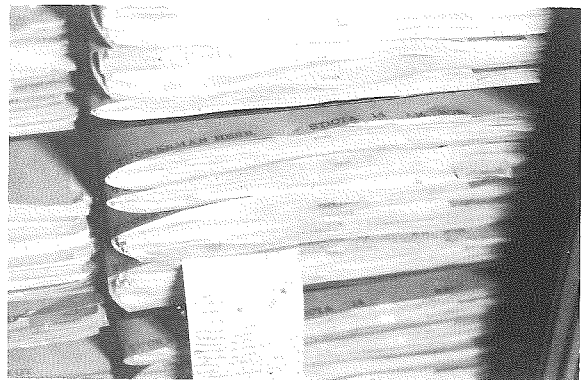
FOF still has funds available for graduate fellowships, so it will continue to entertain requests for support this year.

FIFTH ANNUAL FOF BOOK SALE

Spring means the FOF book sale, so we are again soliciting book donations. In past years the sale has been both profitable for FOF and a satisfying exchange for FOF members. We are currently collecting books and other published materials in the biological sciences, natural history and, as usual, especially cryptogamic botany. The deadline for receipt of donations is May 31st. Please mail them to the Farlow Library. Receipts for donations will be returned to contributors.

In past book sales about 10-15% of FOF members have contributed books annually, but about 30% have purchased them. In order to sustain the book sale and the support it renders to the FOF graduate fellowship, you are strongly encouraged to gather those books you are not likely ever to use again, or those that you think might much more profitably be used by another FOF member, and donate them to the sale. A compiled list of books available will be circulated to FOF members in early June.

Stimulated by the suggestion of Walter Litten, the FOF will hold its annual meeting this fall in association with the New England Mycologists. For two or so hours prior to the late afternoon FOF business meeting, members are invited to listen to and engage in a discussion exploring the impact of contemporary advances in molecular biology and genetics on the ideas and practice of mycology. Also, the relationship of the classic resources of mycology, as manifest in old books and herbaria, to these advances and contemporary mycology will be considered. The discussion will be introduced by Dr. James B. Anderson, Associate Professor of Botany at Erindale College (University of Toronto), who will lecture on the impact of molecular techniques on breeding and patenting of cultivated edible fungi and on our understanding of fungal life cycles and the connections among fungal morphs. Following the talk and discussion a reception for FOF members and their guests will be held in the Farlow Library. More details will be contained in the next newsletter, but you are urged to plan ahead for this event in late October or early November.

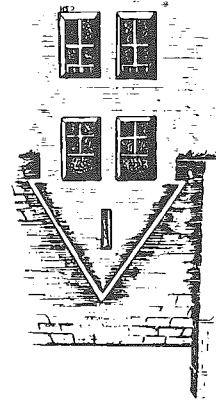


News and commentary for the FOF newsletter should be sent to its editor, R. Edgar, at the Farlow.

FIRST CLASS

FRIENDS of the FARLOW

BOTANY • HARVARD UNIVERSITY



FARLOW REFERENCE LIBRARY

OF CRYPTOGRAMIC

DARWIN AND FUNGI

I hope you have not thrown away the Fungi; but I believe we collected it rather too late. You can have no conception what magnificent insects some of these Fungiverous are.

... C. Darwin to William Fox, 1830*

I often laugh when I think of your very last [pre-Beagle] walk in the Forest, when you discovered & rooted up those horrible funguses, & bottled them for the Professors at Cambridge.

... Sara Williams to C. Darwin, 1832*

So we have probably two species, & closely allied species of Fungus, growing on two species of Fagus, at the distance of 1000(?) miles [Tierra del Fuego & Chile].

... C. Darwin to M. J. Berkeley, 1840*

... and Dr. Hooker informs me, that just lately a third species has been discovered on a third species of beech in Van Diemen's Land. How singular is this relationship between parasitical fungi and the trees on which they grow, in distant parts of the world!

... C. Darwin, Journal of Researches, 1845

[* In The Correspondence of Charles Darwin, vols. 1 (1985) & 2 (1986), F. Burkhardt & S. Smith, eds.]

Friends of the Farlow is an international group of amateur and professional botanists concerned with supporting the programs and resources of the Farlow Reference Library and Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany of Harvard University. Membership categories are: Associate member, \$5-15; Full member, \$25; Sponsor, \$50-\$1000; Benefactor, over \$1000. Membership year runs from 1 July to 30 June. (To join, please make check payable to Friends of the Farlow and send to address below.) Members receive a discount on Farlow publications, and participate in book sales and other events. This Newsletter is published twice a year. For more information please contact the Editor at the Farlow Reference Library, 20 Divinity Avenue, Cambridge MA, U.S.A. (tel. 617 - 495-2369).