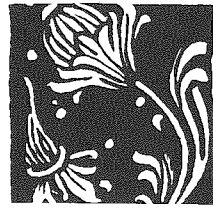


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Newsletter of the



FRIENDS OF THE FARLOW

Volume 1 Number 1, October 1982

INTRODUCING THE FARLOW...

Much of what makes the Farlow Reference Library and Herbarium special has to do with the people who have either been involved in the institution or who have, by virtue of their studies, contributed to the subject. In this introductory note we will mention some of the "founding fathers" of North American Cryptogamy, that is, the study of fungi, lichens, mosses, liverworts, and algae. These men assembled important research collections of North American cryptogams. Their collections were privately owned and are now, through the foresight of W. G. Farlow and Asa Gray, part of the Farlow Herbarium holdings. William G. Farlow himself can be considered one of these pioneers and, although he was active in more areas than just phycology, only this aspect of his career will be mentioned here.

We have drawn from materials in the Farlow archives to introduce these men and through a few quotations have tried to let them tell about themselves and each other.

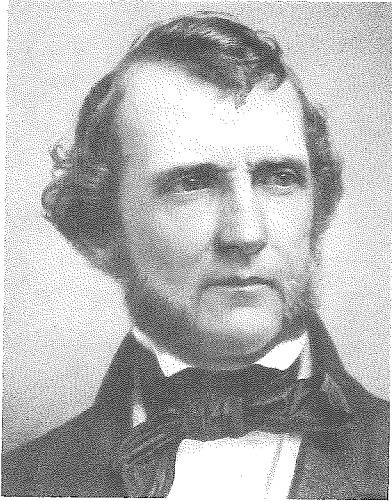


Rev. Moses Ashley Curtis (1808-1872), minister, Hillsboro, North Carolina and Society Hill, South Carolina

Curtis wrote to Asa Gray in 1851, "I have...exhausted the field around me, so far as Phanerogams are concerned ...and so I must needs look to Cryptogams for novelty... and have at last settled down upon Fungi upon which I have been engaged for five years." Farlow purchased the Curtis Herbarium in 1872 while still a student. He wrote to Gray that "It is something to possess the finest collection of fungi in America and I hope, before long, to have a good collection of algae, certainly the best in America..."

The Curtis fungus collection numbers about 16,000 specimens and is kept as a separate unit. It contains duplicates of most of the species Curtis sent to Rev. Miles Joseph Berkeley, British minister and describer of fungi, and which carry the citation "Berkeley & Curtis." Curtis

also kept up an exchange of specimens with most of the European workers of his day. His collection, for instance, contains many collections identified and sent by E. M. Fries.



William Starling Sullivant (1803-1873), businessman,
Columbus Ohio.

"A noble fellow is Sullivant and deserves all you say of him and his works. The more you get to know of him the better you will like him." This judgement by Asa Gray to W. J. Hooker was echoed by the foremost German bryologist of the time, Carl Müller, who said he "demonstrates to us in Europe the North American of modern times engaged in a vivid progress entirely at a par with scientific research in Europe. Indeed, we wonder whether a man like Sullivant could not be regarded as an example to European scientists especially with respect to magnanimity and nobleness of character."

Sullivant received a classical education at Yale College, where his popularity was attested to by his election as College Bully, and his scholarship by his election to Phi Beta Kappa (1823). But he willingly entered the family businesses in Ohio--mills, banks, railways--and greatly increased his inheritance. His purse was always available to needy botanists, among them Leo Lesquereux, C. F. Austin, and Charles Wright. And, to the ultimate advantage of the Farlow, he was able to purchase all available books and specimens. His own publications, notably *Icones muscorum* and the two sets of *Musci Boreali Americani*, have never been equaled in America in form or content.

When in 1864 Harvard University built a fireproof structure to house Asa Gray's herbarium and library, Sullivant wrote Gray that it would be "exactly what I have been looking round for--viz--a suitable depository for my Bryological Herbaria Books, Copper-plates &c, and to which I will bequeath them." Not least important among Sullivant's bequest was his correspondence, from which we see that his "nobility" was clothed in wit and humor and even a bit of good-natured malice.



Edward Tuckerman (1817-1886), Professor of Oriental
History and Botany at Amherst College, Amherst, Mass.

Few botanists have the distinction of having places named after them. One of these was Edward Tuckerman. Tuckerman explored in the White Mountains in the late 1830's and Tuckerman's Ravine is named after him. Farlow wrote to G. K. Merrill, "The most attractive photograph of Tuckerman is the last he had taken when he was an old man. It looked just like him as I saw him in his coffin for, although we had corresponded...I never saw him except at his funeral. Even then a very awkward circumstance occurred. I did not know that, while waiting for my carriage, the coffin had been placed behind me and open. A very rude man in front of me nearly punched my eyes out with his elbows [Farlow was a short man] and I had to turn round and, at the same time, stoop to save myself. To my

horror the movement brought my face within about a foot of Tuckerman's dead face, a terrible first meeting..."

Tuckerman has been called the "Father of American Lichenology." He was a graduate of Union College and attended Harvard. It was at Harvard that he began his lichenological and other botanical studies. His collection of lichens from Cambridge during his student days in the late 1830's and early 1840's give us a good impression of what the rural country side of Cambridge must have then been like. His collection of lichens, rich in both American and European species, was purchased by Farlow in 1886. It contains about 25,000 specimens.



William G. Farlow (1844-1919), Professor of Cryptogamic Botany, Harvard University

Farlow's first paper was on algae; then he did work on ferns and plant pathology. He was the first resident North American to write a seaweed flora and by the time it was published had indeed assembled a respectable collection--"the first good reference collections for algal study in this country," according to W. R. Taylor. He continued to work on algae throughout his career, but algae gradually became displaced by fungi as Farlow's organisms of central interest. His collection of algae contains materials from the prominent European phycologists of his day.

Farlow amassed collections of all cryptogams and books referring to them. The books and specimens were given to Harvard through the Farlow Bequest in 1919.

These are the foundations of the Farlow Reference Library and Herbarium.

THE FARLOW TODAY

The Farlow has grown from its 19th-century beginnings to the current complement of 1-1/4 million specimens, 60,000 books and reprints, and 7 fulltime staff members. We'd like to present a continuing series of reports on various aspects of the present-day Farlow operations and staff activities. Where better to begin than with our Curator?

Donald H. Pfister has had a busy year. In August/September he led a mycological foray to the Baltic regions. The 38 members of the group visited Leningrad, Vilnius (Lithuania), Riga (Latvia), and Tallin (Estonia) as well as surrounding collecting areas. They met local mycologists and toured historic sites. A memorable event for all.

Don teaches in two regular Harvard courses, Mycology and Diversity in the Plant Kingdom, and two extension courses, Introduction to Fungi and Biological Features of Plant Disease. He is continuing work on a research project on the Pezizales (Discomycetes). He edits the Occasional Papers of the Farlow Herbarium, co-edits the Mycological Society of America Newsletter, and publishes in various journals. Don and his wife Cathy were appointed Co-Masters of Kirkland House, an undergraduate college, and have just taken up residence there this fall.

Don holds a A.B. from Miami University in Ohio, Ph.D. from Cornell University, and taught at the University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez before coming to Harvard in 1974.

The Farlow Staff

Donald H. Pfister, Curator
Mycologist (Pezizales)

Geneva Sayre, Honorary Research
Associate, Bryology

Bob Edgar, Research Assistant
(Diatoms)

Roy Halling, Mycologist (Agaricales)

Geraldine Kaye, Librarian

Carolyn Hesterberg, Secretary

Jerry Cacavio, Senior Curatorial
Assistant

Marcy Abbott, Curatorial Assistant

Maria Abate, Curatorial Assistant

*As of October, Friends of the Farlow
has 132 members in 7 countries.*

FRIENDS of the FARLOW
Farlow Library and Herbarium
20 Divinity Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

FOUNDING MEETING AND DINNER

You are invited to the inaugural meeting of the *Friends of the Farlow*, November 6, 1982 at 4:30 p.m. in the meeting room at 22 Divinity Avenue, Cambridge. (This is the Harvard University Herbaria Building at the end of Divinity Avenue). At that time we shall discuss proposed by-laws and slate of officers, and make plans for the coming year. Following the meeting we will have a social hour in the Farlow Library.

A Charter Members' dinner will be held in the Cronkhite Graduate Center, Radcliffe College, 6 Ash Street beginning at 6:30 p.m. The cost of the dinner [which includes wine] will be \$18 per person. Join us for this about-to-be-historic occasion! But get your reservations in by return mail (see form below).

CHARTER MEMBERS' DINNER

Please make checks payable to Farlow Herbarium and return, by October 27th, to:
Farlow Herbarium, 20 Divinity Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138

Name _____ No. reservations at \$18 _____
Address _____ Total enclosed _____
