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University of Richmond Herbarium

The Department of Biology at the University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia, maintains an herbarium of approximately 15,000 specimens. Although recently assigned the acronym URV, this collection has not yet been included in *Index Herbariorum* and, consequently, few botanists outside of Virginia are aware of its existence. This note provides a brief account of the history of URV, a summary of its contents, and a short bibliography of works pertaining to the collection.

The first herbarium collection at the University of Richmond was that of Paul R. Merriman, who assembled a set of vouchers for his *Flora of Richmond and Vicinity*. Unfortunately, his collections were lost in a fire which destroyed the Science Building on 20 October 1925. Despondent, Merriman died shortly thereafter. His manuscript and a set of illustrations prepared by Mary S. Lynn survived the blaze, and from these the Flora Committee of the Virginia Academy of Science published Merriman's florula posthumously in 1930. This work excluded grasses, sedges, and trees; nevertheless, it has been widely used in the Richmond area for the identification of wildflowers.

In essence, the extant herbarium collection at the University of Richmond was founded by Robert F. Smart, who joined the staff of the Department of Biology in 1929. Smart was responsible for the early growth of the herbarium by his own collections (primarily myxomycetes and fungi), the collections of his students, and by his contacts with botanists at Harvard University where he did his graduate work. Through this Harvard connection, David H. Linder and Merritt L. Fernald deposited many specimens from their collecting trips in Virginia in the University of Richmond Herbarium. Ultimately, Fernald conducted some 44 field trips in Virginia on which he was accompanied variously by Bayard Long, Ludlow Griscom, Robert Smart, John M. Fogg, Everett Luttrell, and others. On several of these trips, Fernald used Maryland Hall, which then housed the Department of Biology, as base camp for his collecting forays. Fernald's accounts of these excursions are published in *Rhodora*, the first installment appearing in volume 37. Virginia plants collected by Fernald form the nucleus of the vascular plant specimens in the University of Richmond Herbarium.

Curatorship of the herbarium succeeded to John C. Strickland when Smart became engaged in administrative duties during the 1940's. Strickland concentrated primarily on Myxophyceae (blue-green algae) during his tenure as curator. In 1977 the herbarium was moved to its present location in the Gottwald Science Center and, since 1980, the author has curated the collection.

Current curatorial improvements are bringing the collection to an acceptable condition of usefulness. These activities have also permitted making accurate counts of specimens in the collection. Estimates of holdings for major groups of plants in the University of Richmond Herbarium, with notes on the most important collectors, are as follows: *Algae*: ca 2000 specimens, primarily freshwater Myxophyceae of Virginia and Jamaica collected by J. C. Strickland; *Lichens*: ca 1450 specimens, mostly Virginia Cladoniaceae collected by E. S. Luttrell; *Myxomycetes*: ca 1400 specimens, primarily collections of R. F. Smart from Virginia and other regions in the southeastern U.S.; *Fungi*: ca 1000 specimens, primarily Virginia collections of R. F. Smart and D. H. Linder; *Bryophytes*: ca 450 specimens; *Vascular Plants*: ca 8500 specimens, major collectors include M. L. Fernald and E. S. Luttrell.

Works of a floristic nature based largely upon the collections in URV include the following: Hayden, W. J. 1983. Jamaican blue-green algae collections of J. C. Strickland. *Rhodora* 85: 381-384; Luttrell, E. S. 1954. The Cladoniaceae of Virginia. *Lloydia* 17: 275-306; Puckett, R. N. 1936. The myxomycetes of Richmond and vicinity. Master's thesis, University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia; Smith, E. R. 1981. The vascular flora of the Kersey-Crump Creek watershed, Hanover County, Virginia. Master's thesis, University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia; Strickland, J. C. The Oscillatoriaceae of Virginia. *Amer. J. Bot.* 27: 628-633; Walton, H. M. 1937. A critical study of the plants deposited in the University of Richmond Herbarium with notes on their geographical distribution. Master's thesis, University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia.

Inquiries regarding loans, exchanges, or further information on the collection are welcome. [W. John Hayden, Department of Biology, University of Richmond, Richmond, Virginia 23173, U.S.A.]