



Newsletter of the **FRIENDS**
OF THE
FARLOW

Number 60

Fall 2012

G. Lewis-Gentry
Interim Editor

Mycologist, Photographer, Teacher, and Friend: The Many Faces of “Cap” Weston

Lisa DeCesare, Head of Public Services and Archives at Harvard University Botany Libraries

William H. Weston, Jr. was born in New York, N.Y. in 1890. He received a B.A. degree from Dartmouth College in 1911. It was during this time at Dartmouth that he obtained the nickname “Cap”. According to one account, his position as captain of the skiing team earned him this title. According to a second account he was involved in a school play and there earned the name. Whatever the source, Weston was fond of the name and was a bit unhappy when his graduate students did not use it. Charles Wilson, a student of Cap’s, recalls “...some of the new graduate students were hesitant to use his nickname. I was one of them. After a while he complained to one of the other graduate students that he could not understand why Margarita Silva and I did not call him “Cap”. Soon afterwards we did and it was an honor none of us will ever forget.” (Wilson, 1979)

Cap was called to Harvard and studied under the great mycologist, Roland Thaxter (1858-1932). He received his M.A. in 1912 and his Ph.D. in 1915. Cap then spent two years working at Western Reserve University as an Instructor of Biology.

Cap left Western Reserve after accepting a position with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. During the four years he worked there he served as Pathologist for the Office of Cereal Investigation in addition to investigating plant disease in Guam and Hawaii, and spent two years in the Philippines studying *Sclerospora*, a downy mildew.

When he returned to Harvard in 1921, as



Banahao, Phillipines. 1919.
Photo courtesy of the Archives of the Farlow Library and Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany

an Assistant Professor of Botany, Cap quickly attracted a group of students with varied interests. This was in part due to his own diverse

FoF Annual Meeting!
Saturday November 3, 2012 see page 7

Heading photo: Shackleton's Hut in Antarctica. Courtesy of Dr. Robert Blanchette.

pursuits, the fact that he continued to be active in the field and was willing to share his experiences, and not least of all, his tremendous teaching ability.



Unidentified people with a coconut treater. 1925
Photo courtesy of the Archives of the Farlow Library and Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany

Cap was beloved by his graduate students as a humorous and inspiring teacher. “All of Weston’s lectures were lively and stimulating....Cap Weston had a sparkling sense of humor and a manner of presentation that enthralled his audience.” (Pfeister, 1980)

Cap took advantage of the technology available to him at the time. He used lantern slides based on the myriad images he took in the field during his lectures. As early as 1929 Cap brought a movie camera into the field and made movies of the plants and animals found at the field station at Barro Colorado Island, Panama. Copies of these movies are in the Farlow Library collection and are a treat to view.

Cap’s skill as a teacher went well beyond his tremendous ability as a lecturer. He helped all of his 54 graduate students write their first papers, but would not have his name listed as an author. “It is the duty of the Professor to help his students, but he must not build his career on their backs.” he was heard to say quite often. (Sequeira, 1993)

He always had time to talk with his students. He scheduled weekly check-in times to discuss

their progress, but was always available beyond these sessions. “...but also the innumerable requests, ‘May I see you a minute, Cap?’ and your invariable reply ‘Come right in, my boy,’ even though you knew full well that the minute requested would probably last thirty.” (letter from Peter Mazur to Weston, 1956)

Cap also held afternoon coffee sessions for his laboratory. This was a place where his students could gather with him and talk about many different topics in a relaxed atmosphere. The conversation was usually begun by some new find or recent article but “the entire period was punctuated by his witty remarks and puns, which he spewed out continuously and sometimes required considerable mental contortions to decipher.” (Sequeira, 1993) Many of Cap’s students reported this atmosphere of excitement and sharing of ideas was more important to them than many other aspects of their schooling. “It wasn’t the stuff we got out of lectures and books as much



Weston in his lab in Barro Colorado Island. 1929.
Image courtesy of the Archives of the Farlow Library and Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany

as the stuff that rubbed off on us and the atmosphere we soaked up that has proven of value since leaving your laboratories. As I am sure it is with the rest of your ex-students, I feel no uncertain pride when on being introduced to someone I hear ‘...one of Cap’s students, you know!’” (letter from Reginald Haskins to Weston, 1956)



Weston with camera, undated
Photo courtesy of the Archives of
the Farlow Library and Herbarium
of Cryptogamic Botany

After his retirement in 1960, Weston continued teaching. He worked for several years with the Elementary Science Study of Educational Services (a program for grade-school children), and also hosted a science television program for children called *Exploring Nature*. Starting in 1962 he also was involved in bringing the Elementary Science Study teaching program to

Africa.

Cap also continued to give academic presentations. He was known far and wide for his lecture on presenting a paper variously titled, "How to give a scientific paper," "On the presentation of scientific papers," or "How not to give a lecture." During the course of this lecture he explained in a humorous fashion the trials and tribulations any author could face. Glass slides would break, note cards get scattered, and even the lectern would crash to the floor! Cap also underscored the importance of tone and he illustrated various poor speaking styles, among them a fabulous rendition of the dull, ponderous, monotone used by many scientific speakers. This lecture became famous nationwide and he was asked to give this presentation repeatedly.

Although Cap died in 1978, his influence is still felt. Many of his students took what they learned and went on to inspire students of their own. Cap's skill in teaching is also honored with the Mycological Society of America's William H. Weston Award for excellence in teaching, established in 1979, a year after his death.

References:

Quotes from letters taken from Commemorative volume presented to Weston by his former students in 1956. Farlow Archives

Pfister, Donald H. "Who was Cap Weston?" *Inoculum* 51, no. 6 (2000)

Pfister, Donald H., Rolla M. Tryon, Ralph E. Wetmore, Carroll M. Williams, and Reed C. Rollins. "William H. Weston." *Harvard Gazette*, (16 January 1981): 7.

Sequeira, Luis. "William H. Weston (1890-1978): Tribute and Remembrance". *Annual Review Phytopathology* 31 (1993) :43-52

Wilson, Charles M. "William H. Weston (1890-1978)." *Mycologia* 71, no. 6 (1979): 1103-1106.

The Anna Reid Bryophytes

In the last newsletter we noted the passing of Anna (Nancy) Reid. Elsewhere in this newsletter Judith Warnement writes about the gift of her books and archives by her family. Here we report on the specimens donated to the Farlow Herbarium by Nancy's family.



The Reid collections just out of
the freezer

Nancy had extensive collections of bryophytes from all over the world. In addition to specimens from local spots there are collections from all over the U.S., Hawaii, Japan, and other international locales. Her collection also contains the herbarium of Ethel Hutchinson.

We are still processing all of Nancy's specimens and at this point we only have a rough count of how many were in her herbarium but it's safe to say she had nearly 12,000 specimens.

We will continue processing this generous gift and to integrate it into the Farlow holdings.

Farlow Reading Room Undergoes Major Restoration

by *Judith Warnement, Librarian of Harvard University Botany Libraries*



Surveying the work area.
Photo courtesy of the Archives of the Farlow Library and Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany

Friends who attend the annual meeting in November will be delighted to see major improvements in the Farlow Library Reading Room. The first project, cleaning the sky light, was accomplished in July. Two men worked overhead to vacuum debris and clean dust and stains from the many panes of glass.

The additional light flooding into the room was a wonderful surprise, but it also illuminated the dusty woodwork and splotchy walls. A painter was the next tradesman to arrive with a very tall ladder and color-matched paint to make the room even brighter.

The week of September 10 marked the arrival of a team of woodworkers to restore all of the beautiful woodwork from top to bottom. The challenging task of hand-sanding columns, beams, and baseboards was conducted by Mike Crowley-Beale and John Cantillon of Paul Forde Finishing, South Boston. The two-week conservation project resulted in the restoration of the room's most attractive feature.

The library staff was busy moving books, busts, and furniture out of harm's way and the Harvard facilities crew helped with the heavy lifting by relocating file cabinets, tables, and three very heavy radiators. Special thanks are owed to OEB facilities staff, Irv Dumay and Phil Norton, for identifying the funds and hiring several skilled tradesmen to accomplish the work. And although the reading room was closed during the project,



Farlow library doors in progress.
Photo courtesy of the Archives of the Farlow Library and Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany

most of the collection could be accessed by the library staff for our very patient and supportive Farlow Library patrons.

Please drop by and see the results and celebrate with us at the Friends of the Farlow annual meeting reception on November 3.

Mary Strong Clemens: Botanical Explorer

by *Rosalind Gould, Student Assistant*

Mary Strong Clemens was a botanical explorer who dedicated her life to collecting rusts and lichens, especially in remote regions of the South Pacific. She was a plant fanatic, a devout Christian, a loyal friend, and a faithful correspondent. Recently, the Farlow received a gift of Clemens' papers from Mary Cobb, the daughter of



Clemens
Photo courtesy of the Archives of the Farlow Library and Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany

Harvard Mycologist, Lichenologist C.W. Dodge. The friendship between Clemens and Dodge spanned much of her life, throughout which they shared a close correspondence. The gift of this rich collection sheds new light on the history of Clemens' specimens at the Harvard Herbaria while sketching a portrait of a truly remarkable woman and collector.

The Mary Strong Clemens papers record



Clemens

Photo courtesy of the Archives of the Farlow Library and Herbarium of Cryptogamic Botany

with great detail, vibrancy, and wit Clemens' explorations, adventures, and musings. Spanning nearly five decades and four continents, the letters, postcards, pamphlets, photographs, and specimens contained in the collection portray an energetic and light-hearted woman with an insatiable desire for adventure. Unlike women of her time, Clemens

was most at home when scaling the granite slopes of the Sierras or ascending the heights of Mt. Kinabalu. In her view, "It is a joy to work at rusts under whatsoever adverse conditions." Often, she worked with near comic disregard for her own comfort. On one expedition, for instance, Clemens describes suffering a painful foot infection which she "judged to be a bit better than to expire for want of this last explore."

The Clemens papers also demonstrate her enduring connection with living things. Reading her letters, one sees that Clemens' devotion to people and to God was mediated, even strengthened, through an unbound love of the natural world. In an undated letter to Dodge, Clemens remarks, "Is it not one of the joys of our trade... the touch we have with those of like mind?" She memorialized her husband's death on a specimen label, saying, "It was under this tree that my soul companion for over 40 years of wedded life, bade me farewell for the higher life." (NYBG website) At the close of her collecting career, she marked her retirement with a simple, unaddressed note dated July 3, 1957 and reading, "My lichen collecting is finished. May their publication be to His glory who created them." The collections and recollections of Mary Strong Clemens are glori-

ous indeed.

References:

All quotes, unless otherwise indicated, are from the C.W. Dodge Archives, Clemens Correspondence. The Farlow Library of Cryptogamic Botany

The Mary Strong Clemens Papers (PP) website of the New York Botanical Garden. Accessed 10/12/2012. http://library.nybg.org/finding_guide/archv/clemens_ppb.html

The Benefits of Friends

by *Judith Warnement, Librarian of Harvard University Botany Libraries*

The 2012 annual book sale was quite a success thanks to gifts made in previous years, and the inventory continues to be replenished through the generosity of several friends. In addition to donating Anna (Nancy) Reid's extensive archives and specimens described elsewhere in the newsletter, the family donated Nancy and Bob's library of nearly 200 books on mycology, bryology, dendrology, and horticulture. Other items were donated by Amy Rossman, Geraldine (Gerry) Kaye and Lenore Dickinson. Jason Karakehian offered items deaccessioned from the Boston Mycological Club Library and Mrs. Eleanor Buchinski donated her late husband, Joseph's, pristine copy of *Icones Farlowiana*. Joseph was a very active member of the BMC for many years.

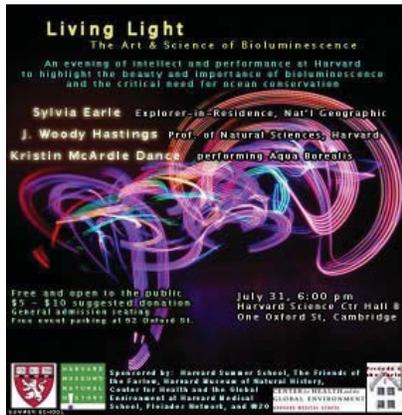
Mrs. Mary Cobb, continues to discover and donate files that document the career of her father, Carroll W. Dodge (1895-1988). The most recent gift includes several letters that he wrote to his mother from 1920 through 1930 that chronicle his travels, research, and daily life in Woods Hole, Mass., British Columbia, Quebec's Gaspé Peninsula, Cuba, Panama, and Costa Rica. These enhance the C.W. Dodge Archive available in the in the Farlow Library.

<http://www.huh.harvard.edu/libraries/archives/Dodgeman.html>

Bioluminescence with a little help from the Friends

On the 31st of July the lecture hall at the Science Center was packed full of people attending the event **Living Light**. There were Summer School students, FoF members, researchers, graduate students, people from the local community, Harvard staff, and even children with their parents all there to learn about bioluminescence. This event took place with help, in part, from the Friends of the Farlow.

Dr. Donald Pfister introduced the program, highlighting the importance of the research of bioluminescence, the oceans, and conservation. This led into the short talk by **Dr. Woody Hastings** on bioluminescence research and was elegantly followed by an explanation of the need for art to help in the understanding of science by **Kathleen Firth**. The dance Aqua Borealis was



performed by **Kristin McArdle Dance**, leaving the audience in both darkness and light. This finally led to **Dr. Sylvia Earle** presenting on the

need to preserve the oceans.

It was a memorable evening of science and dance all to highlight bioluminescence and our oceans.

The following is the introduction to the event given by Donald Pfister.

“Good evening, I am Don Pfister the Dean of the Harvard Summer School. It is my pleasure to welcome you to tonight’s very special presentation. Luminescence – in this case biological light is our theme. Fireflies flash, tiny plants and animals blink in the sea, fungi can illuminate

night-time walks, bacteria can fill tubes with light, and the fish of the sea find each other and build their societies with the light they create. In other words this is a phenomenon across the living world. How do these organisms do this? How is this great diversity of living light imperiled? How can art inform science and science art? Our quest tonight will take up some of these ideas. As in many wonderful things the origin of this night came about incidentally. Kathleen Frith, who you will meet soon, provided the spark when we were discussing an entirely different topic – the Harvard Community Garden. The conversation turned to our friend Sylvia Earle then to dance and Aqua Borealis and here we are before our Summer School students and the community.

To begin tonight we will hear from biology Professor Woody Hastings. Hastings has studied the mechanisms and the biochemistry of bioluminescence particularly in the marine dinoflagellates. Then Kristin McArdle and company will perform Aqua Borealis. McArdle will take us to the special place where the grace of water and of light mingle. Dr. Sylvia Earle, explorer in residence at National Geographic, “Her Deepness,” “Living Legend” and “Hero for the Planet” will narrate the performance. She has seen the sea in a way that none of us have --- up-close, personal and at great depth. She is an aquanaut, has logged more than 6,000 hours underwater and has made a record setting solo dive to 1,000 meters. We will then have the opportunity to hear from Dr. Earle and have questions answered by this amazing panel.

Before I turn the program over to Professor Hastings I want to thank Tom Scanlon of the Harvard Museum of Natural History has been a valuable collaborator. We value the sponsorship of the Museum. I thank the volunteers helping out tonight, the Pleiades Network, and W2O. The Friends of the Farlow Library and Herbarium is also a sponsor and it is this wonderful Harvard institution that has a particularly close tie to Dr. Earle. She worked in the algal collec-

tion held by the Farlow and she has been a friend of the institution for a long time. And finally, let me recognize here Kathleen Frith, Managing Director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment and now President of Glynwood. Truly, Kathleen has been the spark that ignited this evening.

And now the show..."

News from the Farlow

The Farlow has a new intern from the Harvard University Extension School Museum Studies Masters Program. **Joe DeVeer** is now here in the Farlow 2 afternoons a week working with the algae collections.

Don Pfister, **Kathly LoBuglio** and **Danny Haelwaters** all were participants at the MSA meeting this year which took place at Yale. **Genevieve Lewis-Gentry** attended the SPNHC meeting this year, which was also at Yale.

In June Professor **Rui-Liang Zhu** and his students **Xu-Mei Wei** and **Qiong He** visited from East China Normal University to use the hepatic collections. **Laura Briscoe** from the Field Museum in Chicago visited the collections in July and worked with the hepatics. Also in July, **Lee Crane** from the Illinois Natural History Survey came and worked with many of the Farlow sets of exsiccatae. We had two former Farlowian visitors this year. **Scott LaGreca**, Curator of CUP at Cornell University, visited in May to continue his work on *Lecanora*. **Karen Hansen**, Senior Curator at Naturhistoriska riksmuseet in Stockholm visited in July.



Danny Haelwaters and Karen Hansen
Photo courtesy of D. Haelwaters

FoF Annual Meeting



Mold growing on explorers boot,
Scotts Cape, Evans Hut
Photo courtesy of Dr. Robert
Blanchette

The FoF Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, November 3rd beginning at 3:30 p.m. with a business meeting.

At 4 p.m. our distinguished speaker, **Robert A. Blanchette**, Professor in the Department of Plant Pathology at the University of Minnesota, St. Paul, will deliver a talk entitled "**Finding Feisty Fungi in Antarctica.**"

Parking for Annual Meeting

If you plan to park in the 52 Oxford Street Garage for the Annual Meeting, and you need assistance in obtaining a one-day Visitor Parking Permit, please contact Ingrid McDonough. She will walk you through the procedure you'll need to follow to get one.

e-mail: imcdonou@oeb.harvard.edu

phone: 617-496-3023

Walking Directions to the Herbaria from Harvard Square

Walk into Harvard Yard through Johnston Gate (as you do so you will be facing the statue of John Harvard directly across the quad) and take the walkway that goes off diagonally to your left. Follow this walkway to another gate at the north end of the yard. As you go through this gate you will be facing the Science Center; Memorial Hall will be to your right. Look beyond Memorial Hall for a tall, white building at the corner of Divinity Avenue and Kirkland Street. Walk up Divinity Avenue to the end. The Herbaria will be facing you. Walking time from the subway is about 10 minutes.

Join us!

Receive the FOF Newsletter, notification of the annual book sale, discount on Farlow publications and services, invitations to the annual meeting and other events, and a special welcome when visiting the Farlow.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip.Postal Code: _____

Country: _____

Telephone/Fax: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Membership Categories

Associate Member(\$10-15)
Full Member(\$25)
Sponsor(\$50-100)
Benefactor\$1000)

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: Friends of the Farlow

Applications should be sent to: Friends of the Farlow, Harvard University Herbaria
22 Divinity Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138 USA

22 Divinity Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138 USA
www.huh.harvard.edu/collections/fof/fof.html

Note: If you have changed your email address in the past year please update it with Ingrid McDonough so you don't miss any notices!
(imcdonou@oeb.harvard.edu)



FIRST CLASS