



**A GUIDE TO
THE JOSEPH C. ARTHUR PAPERS**

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Revised: June 24, 2005

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Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Arthur, Joseph Charles, 1850-1942
Title:	The Joseph C. Arthur Papers
Dates:	1872-1968 [bulk 1872-1936]
Abstract:	Writings, biographical information, and other materials documenting the life and career of botanist Joseph C. Arthur, professor at Purdue University. Although the bulk of the collection is comprised of Arthur's professional publications, numerous reports and printed material from Purdue's Agricultural Experiment Station and some information on the Joseph C. Arthur Herbarium at Purdue are also included in the papers.
Quantity:	1.5 cubic ft.
Repository:	Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries
Location:	Stacks, Faculty Papers
Preferred Citation:	The Joseph C. Arthur Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries
Processed by:	Sammie Morris, 2005

Restrictions

Access:	Collection is open for research.
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Biographical Sketch

Dr. Joseph C. Arthur, world renowned botanist and educator, was born in Lowville, New York, on January 11, 1850. He was the only son of Charles and Ann Arthur. Arthur's family moved to Charles City, Iowa, when he was a young boy. Arthur graduated from Iowa Agricultural College (Iowa State University) with a B.S. in botany in 1872, becoming a member of the college's first graduating class. He later received his M.S. degree in botany from Iowa in 1877, the first M.S. degree conferred by the college. He went on to receive his doctorate (Sc.D.) in plant pathology and mycology from Cornell University in 1886. Arthur studied at Johns Hopkins University, Harvard University, and Bonn in Germany.

In 1876, Arthur won a major award at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition for his physiological apparatus. He later won prizes at the Columbian and Centennial of Progress world fairs in Chicago. Arthur went on to become a professor at the universities of Minnesota and Wisconsin, and wrote a famous book on plant dissection.

He became an Instructor at the University of Wisconsin in 1879, and in 1882 he became an Instructor at the University of Minnesota. Arthur served as botanist at the Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, New York, from 1884 to 1886. In 1887, Arthur joined Purdue University as a Professor of Botany, and under his leadership the Department of Botany and Plant Pathology was formed at Purdue. Arthur was the first botanist of Purdue's Agricultural Experiment Station.

In 1901, Arthur married Emily Stiles Potter. In 1905, he served as delegate to the international botanical congress in Vienna. He was also delegate to the 1910 botanical congress in Brussels and the 1930 botanical congress in Cambridge. Arthur devoted the majority his career to the study of plant rust fungi, writing numerous articles and several books on the subject. Selected works include *The Plant Rusts* (1929) and *Manual of the Rusts in the United States and Canada* (1934). Considered by some to be the "Dean of American Plant Pathologists," Arthur won international recognition for his discoveries in plant rusts and his many other botanical achievements. He was an outstanding contributor to the knowledge of plant diseases, and his work helped increase food supplies. Of special importance was his discovery of the use of formaldehyde as a fungicide, particularly for treating oats smut and potato scab.

Arthur retired from Purdue in 1915, and was subsequently named Emeritus Professor of Botany. In 1918, he formally donated the herbarium he had founded for the university, which documented his groundbreaking research in plant rust, to Purdue. The Arthur Herbarium is comprised of approximately 60,000 specimens, and includes Arthur's working notes, drawings, and photographs. The Herbarium still exists today as a leading resource for research in the study of plant rust fungi.

Several institutions awarded honorary degrees to Arthur, including the University of Iowa (1916), Iowa State College (1920), and Purdue University (1931). Arthur was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a charter member and president of the Indiana Academy of Science (president, 1893), a two-time president of the Botanical Society of

America (1902; 1910), and president of the American Phytopathological Society (1933). He died on April 30, 1942 in Brook, Indiana, at 92 years of age.

Scope and Content Note

The Joseph C. Arthur Papers (1.5 cubic ft.; 1872-1968) document the life and career of botanist Joseph C. Arthur. Types of materials in the collection include writings by Arthur, biographical information, printed material, photographic material, and correspondence. Although the bulk of the collection is comprised of Arthur's published scientific articles (1872-1936), numerous reports and printed material from Purdue's Agricultural Experiment Station and some information on the Joseph C. Arthur Herbarium at Purdue are also included in the papers.

The Papers are divided into five series:

1. Writings by Joseph C. Arthur, 1872-1936

The series documents Arthur's scientific writings, primarily published articles and article reprints relating to his areas of research in botany and plant rusts.

2. Biographical Information, 1942-1968

The series includes obituaries, biographical information, and an autobiographical essay by Arthur on why he chose to be a botanist.

3. Joseph C. Arthur Herbarium, 1918-1961

The series documents the Arthur Herbarium at Purdue University, and ownership of the Herbarium following Arthur's departure from Purdue.

4. Printed Material, 1912-1922; n.d.

The series includes a notebook, possibly lab notes from a class of Arthur's, relating to wood. The notebook includes accompanying photographs of wood.

5. Photographic Material, n.d.

The series includes one undated photograph of Joseph C. Arthur.

INVENTORY

SERIES ONE: WRITINGS BY JOSEPH C. ARTHUR, 1872-1936

Box Folder

- 1 Bibliographical Lists of Arthur's Scientific Writings, 1872-1922
- 1 Published Scientific Writings by Joseph C. Arthur, 1872-1897
- 2 Published Scientific Writings by Joseph C. Arthur, 1889-1916
- 3 Published Scientific Writings by Joseph C. Arthur, 1887-1936

SERIES TWO: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION, 1942-1968

Box Folder

- 1 Obituaries and Biographical Information on Arthur, 1942-1968
- 1 Writings, "Why A Botanist," [autobiographical article by Arthur], n.d.

SERIES THREE: JOSEPH C. ARTHUR HERBARIUM, 1918-1961

Box Folder

- 1 Arthur Herbarium at Purdue University, 1918-1961

SERIES FOUR: PRINTED MATERIAL, 1912-1922; N.D.

Box Folder

- 1 "Structure of Wood," [notes with photographs], n.d.
- 1 *The Indiana Weed Book* by W.S. Blatchley, 1912 [Arthur's personal copy of book; includes letter dated 1922]

SERIES FIVE: PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIAL, N.D.

Box Folder

1 Photograph of Joseph C. Arthur, n.d.