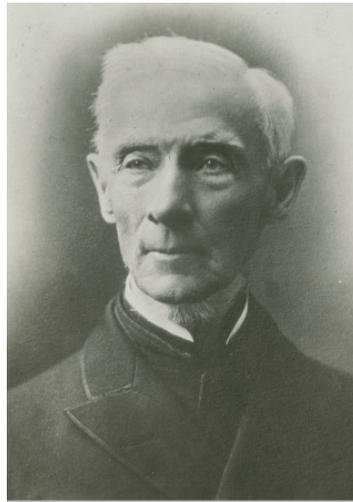


PURDUE

UNIVERSITY



FINDING AID TO THE RICHARD OWEN PAPERS, 1866-1878

**Purdue University Libraries
Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives and Special Collections
Research Center
504 West State Street
West Lafayette, Indiana 47907-2058
(765) 494-2839**

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Descriptive Summary

Creator Information	Owen, Richard (1810-1890)
Title	Richard Owen papers
Collection Identifier	MSP 59
Date Span	1866-1878
Abstract	Books and papers documenting the life and career of Richard Owen as Indiana University faculty and Purdue University President.
Extent	0.2 cubic feet (1 folder)
Finding Aid Author	Michael Maune
Languages	English
Repository	Virginia Kelly Karnes Archives and Special Collections Research Center, Purdue University Libraries

Administrative Information

Location Information:	ASC
Access Restrictions:	Collection is open for research.
Acquisition Information:	Richard Owen diary transferred from ASC Indiana Collection; Letter purchased from M. Benjamin Katz Fine Books, July 27, 2012; Library purchased from R.E. Banta, circa 1933
Accession Number:	Richard Owen letter #20120727
Preferred Citation:	MSP 59, Richard Owen papers, Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries
Copyright Notice:	Purdue University © 2012
Related Materials Information:	President's Report to Purdue Trustees original is located at Indiana University Archives. MSP 145, New Harmony collection, 1845-1890

Subjects and Genres

Persons

Owen, Richard, 1810-1890
College presidents United States

Organizations

Purdue University

Topics

Geology
Putnam County (Ind.)
Travel

Form and Genre Types

Correspondence
Reports

Biography of Richard Owen

“Richard Owen, born January 6, 1810 in New Lanark, Scotland,...traveled to New Harmony with his father in 1827. After serving in the Mexican War, he returned to New Harmony to assist his brother David in the geological survey of parts of the Northwest Territory. In 1849, Richard accepted a position as chair of natural science at the Western Military Institute of Kentucky, a position he held for 8 years. In 1858, Owen received his M.D. at the Nashville (Tennessee) Medical College. After his brother David's death in 1860, Richard became the State Geologist of Indiana and in 1861, a member of the Indiana University faculty. Dr. Owen was called from this position, however, at the outbreak of the Civil War. He returned to his duties as professor at the University in 1864, a position he held until 1879” (Biographical Note).

Owen “became Purdue's first president in 1872. At the time, there were no buildings, no faculty, and no students on the West Lafayette campus, and Owen never actually occupied an office there...Through his belief in hard work and invention, Owen brought the Morrill Act's idea of an ‘Indiana Agricultural College’ to reality. He resigned the day before the first class met” (Past Purdue Presidents).

“After his retirement, Owen continued his scientific studies in New Harmony. It was in New Harmony that he died on March 24, 1890, after mistakenly drinking embalming fluid” (Biographical Note).

Sources:

Biographical Note, Owen family collection, Collection C89, Office of University Archives and Records Management, Indiana University, Bloomington.

"Past Purdue Presidents." *Purdue University website*. Purdue University, 2012. Web. 16 August 2012

Collection Description

Scope

The Richard Owen papers (1866-1878; 0.2 cubic feet) document the life and career of Richard Owen, his correspondence, and his administrative recommendations to the Purdue University Trustees. They include materials from Owen's time at Indiana University and Owen's tenure as President of Purdue. They also show Owen's various professions as geologist, professor, and administrator. Types of materials include: reports, letters, and a diary. Owen's diary records his daily affairs from 1873-1878. Events and topics recorded include faculty meetings, payments, travel, and correspondence. The diary also includes a chart of Owen's laundry washing practices. A letter records communication between Richard Owen and Dr. Blackwell of the Literary Society of Bedford. The letter, written during Owen's tenure at Indiana University, details Owen's geological studies and confirms his intention to meet with Blackwell on May 25, 1866. Also included is a photocopy of the first Presidential report to the Purdue University Trustees, where Owen provides recommendations regarding faculty and staff, the plan of education, and general administrative affairs.

Descriptive Rules Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Processing Information

This collection was created by Archives and Special Collections staff. All materials were transferred from existing collections related to Richard Owen. All materials have been housed in polyester sleeves, acid-free folders, and acid-free boxes.

Owen's books have been cataloged and placed in the Special Collections General book collection. A list of the titles is below.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

1 **Box** *Diary and Papers, 1866-1878*

Folder

1. Richard Owen diary, 1873-1878
2. Richard Owen letter to Dr. Blackwell, 1866
Transcription of letter:
Dr. Blackwell
Pres. Lit. Soc. Bedford.
Dear sir,
On returning from a geological examination in Putnam County, I graciously(?), found your favor awaiting me and obtained today the consent of the faculty to the arrangement proposed.
You may therefore expect me, unless some unavoidable accident occurs, on Frid. 25 inst.
Wishing your Literary Society much success, I am, with kind remembrances to Capt. Friedley.
My truly.....
Rich. Owen
3. Photocopy of Report to Purdue Trustees, 1873

Richard Owen Library Book List (*The books have been removed from the collection and cataloged in the general Purdue Libraries collection. Please visit the Libraries Online Public Access Catalog to view detailed bibliographic records <http://catalog.lib.purdue.edu/Find/>*)

Item

1. The Natural History of Remarkable Birds. With their habits and instincts. Dublin, Wm. Espy, 1821.
2. The Natural History of Animals. Dublin, Smith & Son, 1822.
3. The Discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. Dublin, A. O'Neil, 1821.
4. The Life of Captain James Cook. Dublin, Richard Grace, 1821.
5. Travels in Northern Asia compiled from Authentic Sources. Dublin, Christopher Bentham, 1823.
6. Travels in the Interior of Africa by Mungo Park. Dublin, Wm. Espy, 1821.
7. The Cabinet of Useful Arts and Manufactures: Designed for the Perusal of Young Persons. Dublin, Thomas Courtney, 1821.
8. The Shipwreck of the Alceste, an English Frigate, in the Straits of Gaspar; also the Shipwreck of the Medusa, a French Frigate, on the Coast of Africa. Dublin, E. Tote, 1822.
9. Baldwin. Edwin (pseud.) William Godwin
Fables ancient and modern. Adapted for the use of children. 5th edition. London, Printed for M.J. Godwin, at the Juvenile Library, 1812.

- (Brown leather binding 4 ½" x 6 ½" Inscription: Rich. Owen)
10. Johnson's Lives of the English poets, abridged with notes and illustrations by the editor. London, E. Newberry, 1797.
- (Brown leather and green cloth binding. 4 ½"x 6 ½" Inscription: Rich.Owen)
11. Bingley, Rev. W.
Animal biography, or, popular zoology; illustrated by authentic anecdotes of the economy, habits of life, instincts, and sagacity, of the animal creation. Vol.I&II. London, C. and J. Rivington, Jeffery and Son, et al, 1824.
- (Brown and green leather binding 4 ½" x 6 ½" Inscription Rich. Owen)
12. Fenelon, Francois Salignac de la Moth.
Las Aventuras de telemaco. Nuev edicion. Paris, Baudry, Liberia Europea., (Black and mottled leather binding 4 ½"x 6 ½". Inscription Rich. Owen)
13. Molina, J.I.
The geographical, natural and civil history of Chili. Middletown, Conn., I. Riley, 1808. Vol. I&II.
- (Brown leather binding 5 ½" x 8 ½" Inscription Rich. Owen)
14. Gay, John and Edward Moore
Fables by John Gay, in two parts; to which are added fables by Edward Moore.
Paris. P. Didot the elder and F. Didot, 1813.
(Brown leather binding 3 ½" 5 ½" Inscription. Richard Owen to Martha)