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The Lyman Project

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COLLECTION DETAILS

Books

- American Entomology, vols. 1, 2 and 3
- Arcana Entomologica, vols 1 and 2
- De Locustis
- Fauna Boreali Americana IV
- Illustration of Exotic Entomology, vols 1, 2,and 3
- Insecta Lapponica
- North-American Orthoptera
- Phenomena Locustarum
- Systema Antliatorum

Manuscript material

- Accession Book
- Collection de Coléoptères, Catalogue no. 1 by Germain Beaulieu
- Field Manual nos 1 and 2
- Letters to Lyman 1909, 1910, 1911, and 1912
- Minutes of the Mount Royal Entomological Club
- Untitled Field Notebook

Photographs, Drawings and Figures

- to come

Printed papers

- to come

The Lyman Project

ABOUT THE LYMAN MUSEUM & COLLECTIONS

McGill's downtown campus did not possess an entomological collection until 1915 when it obtained the insect collection bequeathed by Henry H. Lyman. Lyman and his wife died on May 29, 1914, when their ship, the "Empress of Ireland" drowned in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In addition to a collection housing around 20,000 specimens, the bequest included 78 entomological volumes and a fairly substantial endowment. Some of the specimens in this original collection were collected as early as 1860.[5]

The terms of Lyman's bequest stated that in order to accept the collections and the endowment fund, the University had to form a committee to oversee the collection, "to invest the capital, and to make available the interest from this, to provide a 'suitable and commodious room' in the Redpath Museum, 'free from dampness and properly lighted,' in which to house the collections, and to erect there 'a brass wall tablet' to the memory of the benefactor." The Lyman Bequest Committee, which was later renamed as the Lyman Entomological Committee, was formed on Dec. 22, 1914. Professor A. Willey was appointed as Chairman, while George A. Moore was selected to be the Secretary.[5]

It seems that Lyman bequeathed his collection to the downtown campus instead of Macdonald College because at the time there was no separate Entomology Department at Macdonald College. Furthermore, the local entomologists would tend to meet at the Redpath Natural History Museum. Actually, from 1916 onwards the Redpath Museum's Lyman Room became the main meeting place for the Montreal Branch of the Entomological Society of Ontario. At least one meeting per year was held at the Redpath Museum until 1961. The Collection was unofficially viewed as belonging to the Montreal Branch.[5]

However, the first entomological collection at McGill University was not that bequeathed by Lyman, but was established by James M. Swaine [assistant to Professor William Lochhead who was responsible for the subject of Entomology at Macdonald College (1908)]. Swaine left in 1912 after managing to compile a small collection. Following the departure of Swaine, the Macdonald College collection became disorganized. In 1926-27 Walter E. Whitehead was appointed as Assistant in the Department of Entomology and took on the task of organizing the collection. Robert S. Bigelow was appointed in 1955 to take over the Macdonald College collection following Whitehead's retirement. Bigelow oversaw the growth of the collection until its merger with the Lyman Collection in 1962.[5]

Nearing the end of the 1950s it became apparent that the Peter Redpath Museum did not provide sufficient room for the continued growth of the collections. The transfer of the collections to the Biology Building at Macdonald College (the Lyman Collections took up part of a then newly constructed third floor) required authorization from Lyman's heirs, which was of course granted. Macdonald College's Lyman Entomological Museum was formally opened on April 12, 1962 by George A. Moore. The relocation of the collections to the Macdonald College Campus allowed for the amalgamation of the Lyman Collections (insects and books) with the collections possessed by the Department of Entomology (known as the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology due to the merging of these two departments during 1958-1964 [2, 4]) at Macdonald College. The transfer also meant that the Curator would no longer be isolated from colleagues and had the opportunity to become an Assistant Professor in the Department of Entomology. Dr. D.K. McE. Kevan, Chairman of both the Lyman Bequest Committee and the Department of Entomology at Macdonald College at the time, played a large role in the implementation of these modifications.[1]

In 1961-62, the library portion of the Lyman Collections was added to the holdings of the Macdonald Library and merged with the entomological books and journals housed at Macdonald campus. Due to various obstacles (lack of staff, decentralization of Macdonald College's entomological holdings), the cataloguing and incorporation of the Lyman books and periodicals took approximately eight years to complete. However, the Macdonald College Library did not take over the maintenance of the Lyman reprints. The collection was first voluntarily maintained by Mrs. Muriel Vickery (Vernon R. Vickery's wife) and later by the Museum's staff.[5]

On Dec. 22, 1964 the Lyman Entomological Museum (renamed as such in 1961[5]) had been in existence for 50 years. A buffet dinner was organized at the Vickerys' home to

ROCKLAND, 20th Aug 1899

Description of Hyphantria Cunea
2nd stage after 1st Moult,

Length 5 4/32"

Head black, with whitish hairs

Body white, On 1st thoracic seg a small brown
cervical shield, with blackish hairs on 2nd & 3rd thoracic segs.
two large subdorsal warts, one on each side.

On the abdominal segs there are two
similar warts except that they are
rather long placed longitudinally, and
two small warts between them. The
other warts are small. The large warts
have each a long black hair the
other warts emit shorter whitish hairs

Feet black, claspers whitish

? Warts on dorsum of abdominal segs three.

Drawn by T.R.Peale.   40   Engraved by C.Tiebout.

J.Bridgham.   Hyphantria textor

Erica Burnham
Macdonald Campus Library

October 9, 2006
USAIN

Problems

- Project too ambitious for budget
- Untested technology
- Confusion of goals
- No maintenance plan

McGill Library Bibliothèque
Information ♦ Innovation ♦ Service

Erica Burnham
Macdonald Campus Library

October 9, 2006
USAIN

McGill's Digital Collections

- 50+ separate projects
- No budget
- Grant-driven
- Goals:
  - Improve access
  - Support research
  - Preservation
- Theses?

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Problems

- Few staff

- No maintenance plan

- Uneven metadata documentation

- Unique websites with a range of materials and methods of access

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McGill's Institutional Repository

- eScholarship@McGill
- Research output of the university
- Stumbling blocks – copyright, staffing
- Addition of theses?

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Digital Asset Management

- What can Digitool do for me?
- Are digitization projects institutional research output?

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