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## FREDERIC TRACY HUBBARD

(1875 - 1962)

Richard Evans Schultes (Cambridge, Mass.)

Frederic Tracy Hubbard, for many years Botanical Assistant at the Botanical Museum of Harvard University, died on April 23, 1962, at Annisquam in Gloucester, Massachusetts, in his eighty-seventh year, following a lingering illness.

Born in Boston on September 28, 1875, Hubbard attended Noble & Greenough School and Harvard College, where he prepared himself in botany, earning the degree of A.B. in 1898. In 1909, he married Mary Bessie Welling of Cambridge, Massachusetts. They had three children and two grandchildren. He had been a widower the last six years of his life.

After leaving college, he went abroad and studied forestry for three years at the University of Munich, a course which he followed up with a further year's study at the Biltmore School of Forestry in North Carolina. Concerning his stay in Europe, Hubbard wrote in his Harvard 25th Year Report: "While I was in Europe, I traveled rather extensively, part of the time in pursuit of my studies in forestry and partly for pleasure. In the course of my wanderings, I made two trips to Italy, seeing a considerable portion of that country. I spent one summer in Switzerland, and another summer I roamed over Germany, visiting all four quarters of that country and working my way into part of the present countries of Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Austria and Hungary, and the cities of Memel and Danzig. I have also been in England, Holland and Belgium, and in that part of France known as Alsace-Lorraine, then under German domination."

He took Federal government employment in the State of Maine, but after a year went into landscape architecture for four years, working at first for the Shady Hill Nursery Company near Boston, and later forming the firm of Hubbard & Arnold, from which he retired shortly owing to poor health. He eventually returned to botany, specializing in the grasses, in which study he worked in various institutions. On three distinct occasions, he was employed as botanist for the United States Government. For one year he served as assistant to Professor L. H. Bailey at Ithaca, New York, where he worked on the "Standard Cyclopedia of Horticulture". Following this venture, he was on the staff of the Arnold Arboretum for a short time.

Recognizing Hubbard's very diversified knowledge and training, Professor Oakes Ames invited him to collaborate in building up a laboratory of economic botany at the Bussey Institution of Harvard University in Jamaica Plain (Boston) and at the Ames Botanical Laboratory in North Easton, Massachusetts. It was not long before Hubbard turned his botanical attention partly to the orchids, taking a major part in the develop-

ment of the Orchid Herbarium of Oakes Ames. When Ames became director of the Botanical Museum of Harvard University, he transferred his staff and collections of economic botany and orchidology to that institution. There Hubbard took up the final and, probably, the most productive phase of his botanical work in various aspects of the organization, research and programme of publication at the Museum. He was editor of the numerous monographs published by the press of the Museum and had an important part in the founding of the *Botanical Museum Leaflets*, which he edited for many years until his retirement in 1947.

Hubbard's life revolved around his family and his profession. His publications, mostly on grasses, are few. To appreciate his impact on botany, one must look to his colleagues and to students who trained in institutions where his influence was felt. At Harvard, for example, his critical sharpness in botany, his meticulousness in matters editorial, his command of precise expression, and his possession of an impeccable technical Latin style resulting from an intimacy with the classics—all of these were more or less unconsciously absorbed by students and sought for by colleagues. Professor Oakes Ames, himself, widely acclaimed as a master of classical meticulousness and exponent of clarity in botanical writing, leaned heavily on his assistant, Hubbard.

He was for many years a member of the New England Botanical Club and the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. He once wrote that his "... profession, ... is that of economic botanist ...". Yet he was more—his proficiency in the orchids is well known, as was exemplified by his major part in Ames, Hubbard and Schweinfurth's "The Genus *Epidendrum* in Middle America".

The Oakes Ames Library of Economic Botany at the Botanical Museum owes its entire system of filing and its amazingly detailed card catalogue to his imagination and years of work; and the oldest course in Economic Botany in the United States—that taught at the Botanical Museum since 1888—derived much from Hubbard's influence in the years when Ames taught it.

An Episcopalian, he was an active member of the Brotherhood of Saint Andrew and the Episcopalian Club of Massachusetts. He was a very definite Anglophile. Hubbard was an outspoken man with very strong ideas. He often voiced his belief, for example, that an aristocratic government with a constitutional monarchy might serve mankind better than the forms of government most prevalent at the present time.

Those of us who worked with Hubbard as students or colleagues or, the most fortunate of us, who enjoyed both relationships, look upon his passing as the disappearance of one more of those great individualists of the past who have given so much of themselves to the taxonomic botany that we have now inherited as a fully field of scientific learning.

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## BOTANICAL NOMENCLATURE, PUNCHED CARDS, AND MACHINES

C. E. Wood, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass.), R. S. Cowan (Washington, D.C.)  
and G. Buchheim (Berlin-Dahlem)

The use of machines in the storing, sorting, and quick retrieval of information has been highly publicized as a sort of panacea for many of the difficult or tedious problems of science. Hence, the publication of a pilot volume of the International Plant Index,<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Family Names of the Plant Kingdom. International Plant Index, Volume 1. By Sydney W. Gould. xi + 119 pp. 4°. New Haven and New York, 1962. (Obtainable from International Plant Index, P. O. Box 1106, New Haven 4, Connecticut, U.S.A.; price \$2.50 in the U.S.A. and Canada, \$3.00 in other countries.)