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Guide to the Orator F. Cook Papers 1889-1898



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Descriptive Summary

Identifier	ICU.SPCL.COOK
Title	Cook, Orator F. Papers
Date	1889-1898
Size	3.5 linear ft. (7 boxes)
Repository	Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
Abstract	Orator F. Cook, botanist. The Orator F. Cook Papers consist of materials pertaining to Cook's activities in Liberia from 1889 to 1898 including correspondence, clippings, business records and photographs. The collection also includes biographical materials about Cook.

Acknowledgments

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

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Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Cook, Orator F. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Orator F. Cook was an American botanist who specialized in cotton and rubber plants, as well as in the classification of palms. Born in 1867 in Clyde, New York, Cook graduated from Syracuse University in 1890, where he stayed on as an instructor for one year. He traveled extensively in many parts of the world collecting botanical specimens, and from 1891 to 1898 he was employed as a special agent of the New York State Colonization Society. He spent much of his time in Liberia, and in 1896, Cook was elected president of Liberia College, a position, which he held until 1898. From 1898 he served as a plant scientist with the U. S. Department of Agriculture, where he became Principal Botanist. He published almost four hundred books and articles during his life, and was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Science by Syracuse University in 1930.

Scope Note

The collection has been divided into six series. Series I, General Correspondence includes exchanges related to Cook's work in Liberia and with his scientific colleagues. Series II, Personal Correspondence, primarily contains letters between Cook and Alice Carter, who he married in 1892. Series III contains documents related to Liberia, as does Series VI (oversize materials.) Series IV includes photographs of Liberia and the Canary Islands. Series V is a biographical calendar of Cook's life, prepared by his daughter Helen Newman.

Related Resources

Browse finding aids by topic.

Subject Headings

- Cook, O. F. (Orator Fuller). 1867-1949
- Canary Islands
- Liberia
- Botanists
- Photographs.

INVENTORY

Series I: General Correspondence

These letters are organized alphabetically, and include correspondence from J. Braman of the Trustees of Donations for Education in Liberia, Charles Geyer of the New York Colonization Society, and Reverend George Goll of the Board of Foreign Missions, as well as letters from colleagues who participated in his survey of Mount Coffee, Liberia, such as botanists Guy Collins and Fred Straub. There is extensive correspondence with Lucien M. Underwood, Cook's teacher at Syracuse University.

Box 1

Folder 1

Allen - Agassiz

Box 1

Folder 2

Barclay - Buchanan

Box 1

Folder 3

Cheeseman - Coleman

Box 1

Folder 4

Collins, Guy

Box 1

Folder 5

Cook - Currie

Box 1

Folder 6

Daly - Ennis

Box 1

Folder 7

Fair - Frisell

Box 1

Folder 8

Geyer, Charles (New York State Colonization Society)

Box 1

Folder 9

Gibson - Goll

Box 1

Folder 10

Goode - Goche

Box 1

Folder 11

Hartzell - Hookway

Box 1

Folder 12

Houghton

Box 1

Folder 13

Houghton - Locke

Box 1

Folder 14

McCabe - Merrill

Box 1

Folder 15

Merrick - Morgan

Box 1

Folder 16

New York Age - Osborne

Box 1

Folder 17

Page - Public Opinion Company

Box 2

Folder 1

Richardson - Sevier

Box 2

Folder 2

Sharp

Box 2

Folder 3

Sharp - Stewart

Box 2

Folder 4

Straub, Fred

Box 2

Folder 5

Straub, cont.

Box 2

Folder 6

Straub, cont.

Box 2

Folder 7

Taylor - Thompson

Box 2

Folder 8

Trio Club - True

Box 2

Folder 9

Underwood, Lucien

Box 2

Folder 10

Underwood, cont.

Box 2

Folder 11

Underwood, cont.

Box 2

Folder 12

Underwood - Verdoorn

Box 2**Folder 13**

Walrath - Wood

Box 2**Folder 14**

Miscellaneous

Series II: Personal Correspondence

This series primarily consists of correspondence between Orator Cook and Alice Carter, who he married in 1892. These letters highlight their private interests and concerns, but also contain information pertaining to Cook's whereabouts during his travels and his general plans. Miscellaneous letters from other family members also appear in this series, as well as some of Alice's letters to friends at Mount Holyoke College where she taught botany.

Box 2**Folder 15**

Family correspondence of Alice Carter Cook

Box 2**Folder 16**

Correspondence of Alice and Orator Cook with Edith and Eliza Cook

Box 3**Folder 1**

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, October 1888 - August 1891

Box 3**Folder 2**

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, September 1892

Box 3**Folder 3**

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, October 1891 - November 1891

Box 3**Folder 4**

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, December 1891 - May 1892

Box 3**Folder 5**

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, June 1892 - September 1892

Box 3**Folder 6**

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, December 1893 - January 1894

Box 3**Folder 7**

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, February 1894 - April 1894

Box 3**Folder 8**

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, May 1894 - December 1895

Box 3

Folder 9

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, July 1896 - August 1897

Box 3

Folder 10

Alice Carter to Orator Cook, October 1897 - November 1897

Box 3

Folder 11

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, June 1891 - July 1891

Box 3

Folder 12

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, August 1891 - September 1891

Box 3

Folder 13

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, October 1891 - December 1891

Box 3

Folder 14

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, January 1892 - June 1892

Box 3

Folder 15

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, July 1892 - October 1892

Box 3

Folder 16

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, April 1893 - March 1894

Box 4

Folder 1

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, March 1894 - November 1895

Box 4

Folder 2

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, December 1895

Box 4

Folder 3

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, January 1896 - July 1896

Box 4

Folder 4

Orator Cook to Alice Carter, November 1896 - November 1897

Series III: Liberian Documents

These documents include articles and clippings on Liberia, information on Liberian folklore, articles on botany, and miscellaneous business material.

Box 4

Folder 5

Liberia (magazine of the American Colonization Society), February 1898 and November 1898, including articles by Cook; clippings on colonization

Box 4

Folder 6

Charter, Constitution, By laws and Financial Report of the New York Colonization Society, 1891; Third Report of the Board of Managers of the New York Colonization Society, New York: 1896; Report of O. F. Cook to the Board of Managers, New York: 1892

Box 4

Folder 7

African Planter, 1894-1895 (incomplete run)

Box 4

Folder 8

Newspaper clippings and pamphlets on lynching and racial conflicts in the United States, 1890s-1900s

Box 4

Folder 9

Newspaper clippings and pamphlets on lynching and racial conflicts in the United States, cont.

Box 4

Folder 10

Clippings and articles on Liberia

Box 4

Folder 11

Drafts of official documents related to Liberian interests, 1890s; typescript drafts of articles on colonization by Cook; typescript "Report upon Collections made in Liberia, West Africa, February to March 1897," by Rolla P. Currie

Box 4

Folder 12

Notes on Liberian folklore

Box 5

Folder 1

Lucien M. Underwood and other authors, off-prints dealing with botanical subjects, 1890s-1900s

Box 5

Folder 2

Guy Collins, obituary (off-print, with original photograph attached); remarks by the Secretary of Agriculture for the presentation of the Meyer Medal to "David Fairchild, Plant Explorer," 1939

Box 5

Folder 3

Miscellaneous Programs

Box 5

Folder 4

Invoice statements relating to research and expedition supplies, 1891-1892

Box 5

Folder 5

Invoice statements relating to research and expedition supplies, 1893-1894

Box 5

Folder 6

Invoice statements relating to research and expedition supplies, 1895-1896

Box 5

Folder 7

Orator Cook's personal account book and general log, regarding work for the New York State Colonization Society and others

Box 5

Folder 8

Miscellaneous documents related to international trade

Series IV: Photographs

These are black and white photographs of the people and landscape of Liberia and the Canary Islands, 1890s-1900s, in various formats. Some of the photographs are identified on the verso.

Box 5

Folder 9

Canary Islands

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/cook-0005-009>

Box 5

Folder 10

Canary Islands

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/cook-0005-010>

Box 5

Folder 11

Liberia

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/cook-0005-011>

Box 5

Folder 12

Liberia

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/cook-0005-012>

Box 5

Folder 13

Liberia, views of "The Farm"

View digitized documents. <http://pi.lib.uchicago.edu/1001/scrc/md/cook-0005-013>

Series V: Biographical Materials

These documents are a general biographical calendar. This calendar description of Cook's life spans 1891-1897. It was prepared by his daughter, Helen Newman.

Box 6

Folder 1

Biographical calendar of Cook's life, March 1891-December 1892

Box 6

Folder 2

Biographical calendar of Cook's life, January 1893-1897

Box 6

Folder 3

Orator Cook and Guy Collins, Economic Plants of Porto [sic] Rico, Washington, DC, Smithsonian Institution, 1903, 269 p.

Box 6**Folder 4**

Pamphlets bound together into one volume

- Act Incorporating Liberia College, Monrovia, 1864
- The Laws of Liberia College, Cambridge, 1883
- Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the New York State Colonization Society, New York, 1864
- Charter, Constitution and By-Laws of the New York State Colonization Society, New York, 1891
- A Statement of the Condition of Liberia College, Monrovia, 1894
- Acts Passed by the Legislature of the Republic of Liberia, Monrovia, 1894
- Report of the Dr. Charles E. Thomson and Prof. Guy N. Collins to the Board of Managers of the New York State Colonization Society, 1892
- Reports of Prof. O.F. Cook to the Board of Managers..., New York, 1892
- Second Report of Prof. O.F. Cook to the Board of Managers..., New York, 1894; with notes, tipped in, and holograph annotations

Series VI: Oversize Materials

This series primarily holds newspapers and other printed material from Liberia.

Box 7**Folder 1**

Liberia Gazette, 1894-1985 (incomplete run)

Box 7**Folder 2**

Lagos Weekly Record, 1894-1895 (incomplete run)

Box 7**Folder 3**

Publications

- Voice of Missions (Atlanta, George) March 1897
- The colored American (Washington, D.C.) August 20, 1898
- The New York Age, December 19, 1895

Box 7**Folder 4**

Orator Cook, Memorial to the People and Government of Liberia, January 17, 1896 (2 copies)

Box 7**Folder 5**

Afrikanische Dampfschiffs-Actien-Gesellschaft, Woermann-Linnie (shipping passenger boat time-table, Hamburg to West Africa route), July to September 1894; and Woermann-Linie, 1896, both schedule annotated with the names of the captains