

Austin W. Curtis Collection

MSS106

Finding aid prepared by Jaleel Bradley & Michelle McKinney

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History
2008 February 19
315 East Warren Avenue
Detroit, Michigan, 48201
313-494-5800

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Summary Information

Repository	Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History
Creator - Author	Carver, George W., Dr., 1864-1943
Creator - Research team member	Curtis , Austin W., Dr., (Austin Wingate), 1911-2004 -- History-Sources
Title	Dr. Austin W. Curtis Collection
Date [inclusive]	1898-1980
Extent	0.4 Cubic feet 1 Archives Box
Language	English

Biographical/Historical note

On December 20, 1905, Professor Austin Wingate Curtis married Miss Dora Thorne Brown, daughter of W. S. and Alice C. Brown. Mrs. Curtis was before her marriage an accomplished teacher. They had two children, a girl and a boy. The girl's name is Alice Cabell Curtis, while the son is named for his father, Austin Wingate, Jr.

Dr. Austin Wingate Curtis [Jr.] received his Ph.D. in chemistry from Cornell University. He was on staff at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical College when he was asked to work with Dr. Carver at Tuskegee. In 1935, Dr. Curtis arrived at Tuskegee in September. Soon after his arrival Dr. Washington wrote to Dr. Curtis' father and said, "He seems to me more like a son than a person who had just come to work for me". For the next eight years Dr. Curtis worked with Dr. Carver as a laboratory assistant, researching peanut products and sweet potato starch. Dr. Carver respected Dr. Curtis so much that he renamed one of his famous inventions, Dr. George Washington Carver Rubbing Oil, after Dr. Curtis and called it Dr. Curtis Rubbing Oil. In 1943 Dr. Carver died and Dr. Curtis helped to establish the George Washington Carver Research Foundation and the Carver Museum at Tuskegee Institute. Dr. Curtis moved to Detroit in 1944 to organize Curtis Laboratories and created 60 different products made from natural and organic sources. In 1999 Dr. A. W. Curtis turned over the ownership and manufacturing rights of his work with Dr. George Washington Carver to Reverend Bennie L. Thayer, Chairman of the Board for Natural Health Options, Inc. In 2000 Rev. Thayer turned over manufacturing and ownership of Curtis Products to Dr. E. Faye Williams, the current owner. Dr. Curtis died in 2003 at his home in Detroit. Dr. Austin W. Curtis was often referred to as "Baby Carver" for his own notable achievements. <http://www.4elements-ewaf.com/id2.html>

Scope and Contents note

The Curtis collection has two parts: papers and pamphlets of George Washington Carver that Curtis collected (and one that he wrote) while in Carver's employ; and papers of Curtis mainly relating to his community and business activities with A.W. Curtis Laboratories of Detroit, Michigan. There is very little of Dr. Curtis' personal work. The collection is inclusive of the following: booklets about the launching of the George W. Carver Submarine, the Carver Art Collection, the Carver Research Foundation of Tuskegee; a pamphlet honoring Dr. Carver's forty years of service; a business flyer of the Negro Manufacturers & Distributors Association; correspondence from the Detroit Board of Education; and correspondence from the NAACP Education and Legal Defense Fund. There is also a collection of 20 bulletins relating to farming techniques and lectures given by Dr. Carver.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History 2008 February 19

Revision Description

2009 February 20

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Detroit Public Schools. -- History
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Detroit Branch. -- History
- Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church. Tab. (Detroit, MI) -- History
- The Cotillion Club. -- Archives

Personal Name(s)

- Ford, Henry, 1863-1947 -- History

Business**Collection Inventory**

Curtis , Austin W., Dr., (Austin Wingate), 1911-2004 Curtis' paper: "Laboratory Investigation of Low Cost Paints" for Dr. Carver (20 pages, bound) 7/24/1940

	Box	Folder
Text	1	1

Controlled Access Headings**Personal Name(s)**

- Carver, George W., Dr., 1864-1943 -- History-Sources

Business

Negro Manufacturers & Distributors Association (NMDA); brochure layout & mock-up undated

	Box	Folder
Text	1	2

Inner-City Business Improvement Forum (ICBIF), Board minutes, memo, & by-laws 1968-1973

Community

	Box	Folder
Text	1	3

Community

The Cotillion Club - official roster of officers and members 1958

	Box	Folder
Text	1	4

The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Contributions by Dr. Austin W. Curtis 1955

	Box	Folder
Text	1	5

Detroit Public School Program-Curriculum & Regulations-"Use of Public School Facilities" 1957

	Box	Folder
Text	1	6

Detroit Board of Education Central Regional Committee Correspondence 1957

	Box	Folder

Dr. George Washington Carver

Text	1	7
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Dr. Austin W. Curtis' Speech at Tabernacle Baptist Church undated

	Box	Folder
Text	1	8

Dr. George Washington Carver**Programs and photograph - Ford and Carver**

The Carver Research Foundation of Tuskegee Institute 40th Anniversary program 1980

	Box	Folder
Text	1	9

Brief Summary of Dr. Carver's Scientific Achievements and Proposal for Carver Lab 1937

	Box	Folder
Text	1	10

Dr. Carver's 40-year Anniversary at Tuskegee celebration; Submarine launch (Programs) 1936 & 1965

Programs and photograph - Ford and Carver

	Box	Folder
Text	1	11

"The Carver Art Collection" catalog, with foreword by A. W. Curtis, Jr.; gallery program 1941

	Box	Folder
Text	1	12

Photograph - "Henry Ford visits Dr. Carver at Tuskegee Institute" circa 1939

	Box	Folder
Graphic materials	1	13

Carver Bulletins, Address, & Teaching pamphlets (20) 1898-1942

	Box
"How to Live Comfortably this Winter;" (8 pages) undated	1
"Feeding Acorns" - Bulletin No. 1 (9 pages) 1898	1
"Fertilizer Experiments on Cotton" - Bulletin No. 3 (16 pages) 1899	1
"Some Cercosporae of Macon County, Ala." - Bulletin No. 4 (8 pages) 1901	1

Programs and photograph - Ford and Carver

"Cow Peas" - Bulletin No. 5 (10 pages) 1903	1
"Nature Study and Children's Gardens" - Teachers' Leaflet No. 2 [17 pages] 1903	1
"Increasing the Yield of Corn" - Bulletin No. 15 (11 pages) 1909	1
"Cotton Growing for Rural Schools" - (2 copies) Bulletin No. 20 (29 pages) 1911	1
"Poultry Raising in Macon County, Alabama" - Bulletin No. 23 (20 pages) 1912	1
"How to Dry Fruits and Vegetables" - leaflet (4 pages) 1917	1
"An Analysis of the Cow Pea: its benefits . . ." - Farmers' Conference Address (11 pages) 1919	1
"The Pickling and Curing of Meat in Hot Weather" - Bulletin No. 24, 2nd edition (23 pages) 1925	1
"A Study of the Soils of Macon County, Alabama and Their . . ." - (2 copies) Bulletin No. 25 (13 pages) 1913	1
"How to Grow the Peanut and 105 Ways of Preparing it for Human Consumption" - Bulletin No. 31, 6th edition (29 pages) 1925 & 1936	1

Programs and photograph - Ford and Carver

"Three Delicious Meals Every Day for the Farmer" - (2 copies) Bulletin No. 32 (13 pages) 1916 1

"43 Ways to Save the Wild Plum Crop" - Bulletin No. 34 (12 pages) 1917 1

"How to Make and Save Money on the Farm" - Bulletin No. 39 (16 pages) 1927 1

"Can Livestock be Raised Profitably in Alabama?" - (2 copies) Bulletin No. 41 (12 pages) 1936 1

"How to Build Up and Maintain the Virgin Fertility of Our Soils" - Bulletin No. 42 (10 pages) 1936 1

Curtis , Austin W., Dr., (Austin Wingate), 1911-2004 "Nature's Garden for Victory and Peace" - Bulletin No. 43 (25 pages) 1942 1

Controlled Access Headings
Personal Name(s)

- Carver, George W., Dr., 1864-1943 -- History-Sources
- Ford, Henry, 1863-1947 -- Pictorial works