William Hertrich Papers: Finding Aid

Processed by Huntington Library staff; supplementary encoding and revision supplied by Brooke Dykman Dockter and Diann Benti.
The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
Manuscripts Department
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
Phone: (626) 405-2191
Email: reference@huntington.org
URL: http://www.huntington.org
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Overview of the Collection
Title: William Hertrich Papers
Dates (inclusive): 1904-1966
Collection Number: mssHHH 1-1802
Creator: Hertrich, William, 1880-
Extent: 2,734 pieces in 24 boxes (23.39 linear feet)
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
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Abstract: This collection contains the papers of horticulturist William Hertrich (1878-1966), superintendent of the Huntington Library grounds and buildings, and consists of papers, dating from 1908 to 1966, related to the development of the San Marino Ranch and the Huntington Botanical Gardens, the construction of the Huntington residence and of the Huntington Library, and the city of San Marino, California.
Language: English.
Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. William Hertrich Papers, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Provenance
In library, 1983.
Biographical Note
William Hertrich (1878-1966) was born in Baden, Germany, in 1878, and studied horticulture in Austria. By 1904 he was in California, where he began to work on the San Marino Ranch, then known as Los Robles Ranch, purchased by Henry Edwards Huntington the previous year. Hertrich would remain with Mr. Huntington, progressing from gardener to superintendent of grounds and buildings, until his employers' death in 1927, remained until his retirement in 1948, then continued in an advisory capacity until his own death in 1966.
Hertrich was responsible for the development of the ranch property into specialized areas: stables, dairy barn, milk house, vegetable and fruit areas, orange and avocado groves. He built lily ponds, palm garden, desert garden, rose garden, the cycad collection, the north vista. The unsightly canyon area was converted into the Japanese garden. Greenhouses for rare orchids and ornamentals, and for fruits and vegetables during winter months were established, as were an aviary, a deer park, and camellia gardens. Hertrich was a dedicated worker himself, demanding yet fair with subordinates. He also planned and supervised the construction of a road system and fences, an irrigation network, living quarters for employees. Mr. Huntington quite early realized Hertrich's capabilities, and trusted him with supervision of all work on the ranch, as well as on the other properties in the immediate area, including the remodeling, enlargement and development of the grounds of the Huntington Hotel, formerly the Wentworth Hotel.
Throughout almost 20 years, beginning in 1908, Hertrich wrote regular reports to Mr. Huntington relative to work on the ranch, development of new plants, progress of building projects, costs, profits or produce, weather, staff affairs, etc. The reports were usually sent weekly whenever Mr. Huntington was away, and continued until Mr. Huntington returned to reside permanently in California. At the same time as work continued and reports were made, Hertrich kept records, wrote articles, gave talks to civic and horticultural groups, carried out plant experiments and plant exchanges on an international level, participated in community affairs, made trips in connection with his work, made photographs of plants and of construction in various stages.
Hertrich was married in 1906 to Margarete Stritzinger, and the couple lived on the ranch, first in a small cottage, then from 1910 in a fine house built for them by Mr. Huntington. They remained childless. After his retirement in 1948, Hertrich retained his office, where he continued his writing and research until 1963, when his failing sight no longer permitted him to work, yet he continued his daily walks in the gardens until his death in 1966 at age eighty-eight.

**Scope and Content**

This collection contains the papers of William Hertrich, superintendent of the Huntington Library grounds and buildings, and consists of correspondence and other papers related to the development of the San Marino Ranch and the Huntington Botanical Gardens, the construction of the Huntington residence and of the Huntington Library, and the city of San Marino, California. There are also articles related to botanical gardens and specific plant species. Of note in the collection is correspondence between William Hertrich and Henry Edwards Huntington relative to the ranch and library. Box 24 consists of photographs and negatives related to Hertrich on the Huntington Library gardens and a luncheon in April 1951.

**Processing Information**

Processed by Huntington Library staff, 1983. In 2019, 40 photographs and 7 negatives were transferred from the Huntington Institutional Archives (HIA). Gina C Giang added the photographs and negatives (Box 24) and updated the finding aid in 2020.

**Arrangement**

Arranged in the following order: 1. Correspondence and documents (Boxes 1-17); 2. Register of plants (Boxes 18-20); 3. Register of plants, correspondence and photographs (Box 21); 4. Camellia photographs (Boxes 22-23); 5. Photographs and negatives (Box 24).

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library's Online Catalog.

**Subjects**

Hertrich, William, 1880-
Huntington, Henry Edwards, 1850-1927 -- Correspondence.
Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery.
Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery -- History -- Sources.
Botanical gardens -- California -- San Marino -- History -- Sources.
Camellias -- Pictorial works.
Horticulturists -- California, Southern -- Archives.
Huntington Botanical Gardens -- History -- Sources.
San Marino (Calif.) -- History -- Sources.

**Forms/Genres**

Letters (correspondence) -- California -- San Marino -- 20th century.
Photographs -- California -- San Marino -- 20th century.

**Alternate Authors**

Huntington, Henry Edwards, 1850-1927.

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**Correspondence and documents**

1. 1908-1912
2. 1913 January-October
3. 1913 November-1914 August
4. 1914 September-1915 May
5. 1915 June-December
6. 1916 January-September
7. 1916 October-1917 October
8. 1917 November-1918
9. 1919 January-November
10. 1919 December-1920 October
11. 1920 November-1922 July
12. 1922 August-1923
Correspondence and documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1924 July-1926 June</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1926 July-1927 August</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1927 September-1935 May</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1935 June-1937</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1938-1966; Hertrich articles, talks, and notes (1935-1958)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Register of plants; miscellaneous correspondence; photographs</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Register of plants (HEH 1593 (1-18))</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Register of plants (HEH 1593 (19-36))</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Register of plants (HEH 1593 (37-52))</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Register of plants (HEH 1593 (53-55)); correspondence and miscellany re: Hertrich; photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Camellia photographs</td>
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</tbody>
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Photographs and negatives

| 22 | Camellia photographs |
| 23 | Camellia photographs |

Photographs and negatives of Hertrich and 1951 luncheon