

Register to the Papers of  
Richard Lynch Garner

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December 1976

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September 2006

National Anthropological Archives  
Smithsonian Institution

## Introduction

The papers of Richard Lynch Garner, early animal behaviorist and expedition leader on occasion for the Smithsonian Institution, were given to Dr. John P. Harrington by Garner's son, Henry. Harrington completed a biography of Garner in 1941. Garner's papers originally entered the National Anthropological Archives as a part of the papers of Harrington, and have since been separated to form its own collection.

Garner, an authority on primitive language, took up the study and investigation of the language, life and habits of anthropoid apes after he realized the usefulness of the phonograph for recording primate communication. According to Harrington, Mr. Garner was the discoverer and initiator of the study of the language of apes, and his work was posthumously proven valid by Robert Mearns Yerkes in approximately 1925.

## Chronology

February 19, 1848	Born in Abingdon, Virginia
1862	Joined the Third Tennessee Mounted infantry
	Educated at the Jefferson Institute, Tennessee
October 15, 1872	Married Margaret E. Gross
1876-1890	Worked as a school teacher
1884	Visited the Cincinnati Zoological Garden, his first ever visit to a zoo.
	Began recording monkey language with a phonograph
1892	Made first of several trips to the French Congo. Sailed from New York to the French Congo to live in a cage among primates at Lake Fernan Vaz
	Published the <i>Speech of Monkeys</i>
1900	Published <i>Apes and Monkeys</i>
1905	Had a house built on an island in Lake Fernan Vaz, French Congo
1916 - 1919	Under the Smithsonian Institution, made last expedition to the French Congo
January 22, 1920	Died in Chattanooga, Tennessee

## Selected Bibliography

- Garner, Richard Lynch  
1892 The Speech of Monkeys. New York: C. L. Webster and Company.
- 1896 Gorillas & Chimpanzees. London: Osgood, McIlvaine & Co.
- c1900 Apes and Monkeys; Their Life and Language. Boston and London: Ginn & Company. [Includes parts of Gorillas and Chimpanzees]
- c1930 Autobiography of a Boy; from the Letters of Richard Lynch Garner. An Introduction by Ales Hrdlicka. Washington: Printed by Huff Duplicating Co.

## Scope and Content

Many facets of Richard Lynch Garner's life and work as an early animal behaviorist observing primates in Africa are represented in these papers. Other than a few notebooks of poems and manuscripts of books Garner had published before he began his study of apes and monkeys, there is little material that reflects his personal life or his work before about 1890. These papers, covering the period of 1891 to 1941, contain a diary, correspondence, articles written for magazines, manuscripts, poetry, notes, data collected on chimpanzees, financial records, legal records, maps, biographical material, artwork, and photographs.

Many of Garner's observations and writings on the study of the languages of apes are included in this collection. Also included in these papers are comments, notes and essays written by Garner on the French administration of the Congo, on missionaries living in Africa and on the natives themselves. Many, but not all of Garner's writings have been published. Abstracts of many of his articles can be found in the folder "Synopsis." Garner also created indices to his works, which may be helpful in navigating his writings. *Psychoscope*, a book of poems by Garner was published in 1891 and can be found in this collection along with his other poems. His manuscripts and poems are arranged alphabetically.

Of special interest in this collection is the diary Garner kept while in the French Congo. The diary covers the period of January, 1905 to February, 1906. Also in the collection are data that he collected on chimpanzees, records of his financial transactions with the natives (including the purchase of animals), and rough sketch maps of American Point and Cameroun. The folder "Artwork" contains oil, pen, and pencil drawings of animals, likely intended to illustrate Garner's writings. Among the photographs in the collection are images of Garner, African people, and some of the animals Garner worked with, in particular Susie, his chimpanzee.

Harrington's completed biography on Garner as well as his research notes, reference materials, and drafts can also be found in this collection. In addition, the collection

contains obituaries for Garner, presumably collected by his son, Henry. Two letters from Henry Garner to Harrington can be found under "Incoming Correspondence." Most of the outgoing correspondence are addressed to Garner's son.

## Extent

The collection occupies 2 linear feet of shelf space.

## Related Collections

Other materials in the National Anthropological Archives that relate to Garner can be found in the correspondence of John P. Harrington and Aleš Hrdlička and in the USNM Division of Ethnology Manuscript and Pamphlet File. Garner's lantern slides can be found in Photo Lot 81-58A and Photo Lot 92-46.

## Container List

### Box 1

Diary, January 1905 – February 1906

*Includes typescript copy of diary*

Outgoing Letters, 1892 – 1919

*Arranged chronologically. Includes primarily letters to Harry E. Garner, Mr. Garner's only son.*

Incoming Letters, 1891-1937

*Arranged alphabetically. Includes letters to Henry Garner*

Manuscripts and Poems by Garner

Index (2 folders)

"Africa and the World War" – "Autobiography of a Pie" (1908)

*Folder also includes: "African Humor," "African Women," "An American Lawgiver – Captain Lawler," "Among the Cannibals," "Animal Architecture," "Animal Diversions and Dissipations," "Animal Fiction," "Animal Instincts," "Animal Intelligence" (1908), "The Animal Mind" (1921), "Animal Speech," "Ants," ("Are Plants Conscious" – see "Things That Are Not"), "Assusi"*

"Base Ingratitude" – "Buiti"

*Folder also includes: "Beautiful Sunsets," "Beauty Spots of Africa and Tropical Foliage," "Biographies of My Simian Family," "Blood Water Mystery" (1907), "Bubu, a Faithful Dog" (1908), "Buiti"*

"The Book of Conundrums"

"A Book of Travel"

"Can Monkeys Talk?" (Oct. 1910) – "Christian Missionaries"

Folder also includes: "Catholic Missionaries," "Cats and Dogs" (1905), "Ceasar's Ghost," "Ceremonies," "Character – Human and Animal," "The Chimpanzee at Home" (1908), "Chimpanzees"

## Box 2

"Civilized Savagery" – "Critics and Croakers"

Folder also includes: "Civilizing the Negro," "The Cock and the Bull," "Colonial Officials," "The Colonization of Africa," "Colonizing Africa," "The Color Sense in Apes," "The Comparative Intelligence of Animals," "Concessionaire System of Trade," "The Condition and Destiny of the Negro Race," "The Crimson Curse"

"Dangers of Traveling in Africa" – "Drugs – Their Uses and Abuses"

Folder also includes: "Dangers and Disagreeable Experiences," "Deadly Combats," "The Development of Brains," "Dinkie and Dot, The Pathetic Story of Two Orphan Monkeys," "Distribution of Animals," "Do Apes Reason," "Do Plants Reason," "Dogs and Dog Tails," "Domestic Life and Habits of the Great Apes"

"Educated Natives" & "The Ethics of Wild Animals"

"Facial Expression" – "The French Congo"

Folder also includes: "Facts and Fallacies about Animal Intelligence," "Faculties of the Monkey Mind," "Famine and the Food Problem in Africa," "The Feast of Fire," "Flight of Butterflies"

Galley Proofs

Folder includes: "What I found in the Jungle," "A Day in the Jungle"

"The Gorilla at Home"

"The Habits of Wild Animals" – "Heathen Rites to Heathen Gods"

Folder also includes: "The Heathen and the Bible," "Heathen Institutions," "Heathen Interpretations of Bible Stories," "Heathen Prayers"

"Her Name was Marthy" – "Hunting the Leopard"

Folder also includes: "A Hermit's Home" (1906), "Highlights and Shadows," "The Home Life of African Children," "How People Learn What You are Doing," "How the Ugu Acquired His Horns," "How to Learn the Speech of Monkeys," "The Human Race," "Human Slavery," "Hunting Big Game in Africa" (1907), "Hunting the Congo Buffalo"

"The Indian and His Dog" – "The Isengi"

Folder also includes: "Insect Life and Insect Pests of Central Africa"

"Jack-O'Lantern Farm" & "Just as It Happened"

"Ki and Kiu" (1909) & "Kindergarten Studies of a Chimpanzee"

"The Land of Monkeys" – "Love and Marriage"

Folder also includes: "Languages," "Lecture No. 1," "Lecture No. 2," "Lecture No. 3," "Love and Marriage," "Logic of Evolution"

### Box 3

- “Man as He Will Be” (1921) – “Missions and Missionaries”  
*Folder also includes: “Mangabeys,” “Marooned by Savages,” “Meditations,” “Memo of Strange Things in the Forest,” “Methods of the Nkamis,” “Migrations of the Great Apes,” “Missing Links Found”*
- “The Modos” (2 folders)
- “Monkey Land” (1902) – “My Recent Work and Susie”  
*Folder also includes: “Monkey Prosperity,” “Monkey at Home and Elsewhere,” “The Moon’s Fire,” “Moths, Etc.,” “The Motives of Speech and How Interpreted,” “Musical Monkeys,” “My Jungle Habitation,” “My Slot Machine”*
- “Nancy Bet” – “Notes on Progressive Evolution”  
*Folder also includes: “Native Institutions of the Ogowe Tribes of West Central Africa,” “Needed Reforms,” “The Negro,” “Negro Loyalty,” “The Negro Problem,” “The Negro Race,” “Njago Intyi – or Earth Leopard,” “The Nkami Territory,” “Nkanjo,” “Notes on Christianity,” “Notes on Mental Development”*
- “Nyanga, the Queer Boy”
- “Olongo” – “The Origin of the Rainbow”  
*Folder also includes: “Origin of the Butterfly,” “The Origin of the Earth and Sun”*
- “The Phonograph Among the Savages” – “The Psychoscope” (1891)  
*Folder also includes: “Photography,” “Political Problems,” “The Portuguese Colonial System,” “Prospective Evolution,” “Psychics of Dogs” (1902), “Psychological Studies of the Negro Race”*
- “Poems and Queries”
- “Qualities of Voice” & “A Queer Bird”
- “Racial Traits of the Negro” – “Rigundo – King of Nkami”  
*Folder also includes: “The Rain,” “Rare Tragedies,” “Recent Studies of Monkey Minds,” “The Religious Test,” “Resources of the African Jungle”*
- “The Real Thing and Other Things” (1908)
- “The Record of Idle Moments”

### Box 4

- “Sanctuary to Women” – “Spider Webs”  
*Folder also includes: “Scraps on Negro,” “Secrets of the Jungle,” “Series A Films,” “Skits and Sketches of Little Things,” “Simian Acts of African Children,” “Snakes,” “Some New Facts about Gorillas,” “Some Pretty, Little Birds,” “Some Recent Studies of Monkeys,” “Some Small Birds,” “Sounds Made by Snakes,” “A Species of Mocking Bird,” “Specimen Letters of Natives,” “The Speech of Animals,” “The Speech and Habits of Wild Animals” (1907)*
- “Skits and Sketches of Little Things”
- “Spots of Earth” – “Superstitions of the West African Tribes”

*Folder also includes: "A State of Mind and a State of Facts," "The Story of Repero," "A Strange Mollusk," "A Sublime Sunset," "The Superstition of Animals," "Superstition of the Rainbow"*

Synopses

"Tails of Dogs and Other Animals – Their Functions" (1901) – "Trixie"

*Folder also includes: "Things That Must and Will Come to Pass" (1908), "Three Young and Happy Chimpanzees," "Tragedies of the Jungle"*

"Typewriter and Other Girls" (1901) (2 folders)

"Ugly Neighbors"

"Vespertillo" – "Virtues of the Negro"

*Folder also includes: "Vital Phenomena"*

"What Next?" – "Women of Other Lands"

*Folder also includes: "The Witch Rain," "Woman's Place"*

Untitled Manuscripts and Miscellaneous Notes

Untitled Notebooks

Newspaper Clippings by Garner, 1893-1919

Data Collected on Chimpanzees

**Box 5**

Maps

*Sketches of American Point and Cameroun*

Financial Records

*Consists mostly of Garner's financial transactions with African natives, including animals purchased.*

Legal Records

*Mostly travel documents associated with the Collins-Garner Congo Expedition under the Smithsonian Institution. Includes a special passport issued by the Secretary of State in 1916 and, a letter of introduction from the Secretary of the Smithsonian. The folder also contains Garner's 1906 contract with Ida Vera Simonton*

Newspaper Clippings about Garner, 1900-1919 (2 folders)

Newspaper Clippings – Obituaries for Garner

Biographer's Papers. 1941

*Includes the research materials of John P. Harrington, "He Spoke," biography of Garner by Harrington, and an anecdote submitted to Harrington by Harry E. Garner about his father. Also includes publication information on many of the writings of Richard Garner.*

Newspaper Clippings - Miscellaneous

Miscellany

Artwork

Photographs (3 folders)

*Include photographs of Garner, his chimpanzee Susie, and African people*