

*Barre History Collection*

**DeForest C. Jarvis  
Collection, 1925-1994  
BHC 216 & BHC 532**

Volume: 1 linear foot  
Inclusive Dates: 1925-1994  
Record Types: Correspondence, printed materials, interviews, programs, and  
newsclippings.

**Introduction**

This collection contains papers and works of DeForest C. Jarvis, from 1925 to 1994. The collection is housed in two archival flip-top boxes and occupies 1 foot of linear shelf space.

**Custodial Note and Arrangement History**

The newsletters within this collection were donated by Iside Brusetti, a classmate of Dr. Jarvis' daughter, Sylvia Jarvis Smith. The collection is part of the Barre History Collection acquired from the Aldrich Public Library in November 2014. Some of the items were assigned the accession number 84.33.1.

**Biographical History**

DeForest Clinton Jarvis (Dr. Jarvis) was born on March 15, 1881, in Plattsburgh, New York. Although born out of state, he claimed to be a fifth generation Vermonter through his mother, Abbie Gena Vincent. After receiving his M.D. from the University of Vermont Medical College in 1904, he specialized in otolaryngology (ear, nose and throat care) in his Barre, Vermont practice. In 1908, he married Pearl Maeferd Macomber, born in Iowa but with Vermont roots. Their only child, Sylvia Abbie Jarvis, was born on June 29, 1914. An interest in folk medicine and health led Dr. Jarvis to author two books on the subject, which won him both national acclaim and the scorn of his medical colleagues. Jarvis was best known for his belief in a mixture of apple cider vinegar, honey and water as an effective tonic to maintain health and fight disease.

Dr. Jarvis enjoyed playing the cello. His love of music prompted him to establish the Barre (Vermont) Junior Symphony Orchestra, which he directed for 22 years, from the 1930s to the 1950s. It is said that his dedication prompted him to buy instruments for children who had none. He also taught the youngsters how to play them. The youth orchestra performed ambitious bi-weekly Sunday music hours at Barre's Municipal Auditorium, often with guest soloists. Many members eventually went on to have careers in music. By the time he died in Barre on August 18, 1966, at the age of 85, the energetic Dr. Jarvis was a much-loved and respected figure in the Barre community, esteemed for his valuable contributions to its citizens.

Oral historian, Carolyn Shapiro, became interested in Dr. Jarvis due to her research in practitioners of folk medicine. She interviewed Sylvia Jarvis and the former patients of Dr. Jarvis and applied for a grant to the Vermont Folklife Center in 1994.

### Scope and Content

The bulk of this collection consists of material created by researchers concerning the life and works of Dr. D. C. Jarvis. The collection spans from 1925 to 1994 and contains oral history interviews conducted by Carolyn Shapiro.

The collection also includes several event programs from Dr. Jarvis' lifetime, as well as a piece of correspondence with Barre Junior Symphony Orchestra members during World War II and three other letters to Dr. Jarvis. The collection contains many of Dr. Jarvis' medical journal publications as well as his typed book of home remedies.

Finally, this collection also contains English language versions and French, Norwegian, Danish, German and Japanese translations of Dr. Jarvis' work, *Folk Medicine: A Vermont Doctor's Guide to Good Health*. The collection also contains a French translation of the doctor's work, *Arthritis and Folk Medicine*.

### Related Collections

The Vermont Historical Society library collection contains a collection of Dr. Jarvis' folk remedies as distributed to his friend J. Alfred Healy (MSA 372:1) and letters that he sent to members of his youth symphony during World War II (MSA 372:2-5). The library also has a short letter and receipts from Dr. Jarvis (MSA 252:7).

### Inventory

#### I. Papers of D. C. Jarvis

- BHC 216:01 Correspondence: D. C. Jarvis, 1925-1959  
*Includes:* typed newsletter, dated May 9, 1945, to Barre Junior Symphony Orchestra members serving overseas
- :02 Programs, 1933-1978  
*Includes:* Montpelier Seminary sports; Barre Junior Symphony Orchestra, 1933; Jarvis Memorial Orchestra concert, 1978; "Nutritional Cocktails" by Sylvia Jarvis Smith
- :03 Typed Book of Jarvis' Remedies, 1942  
Presented to William Halvosa, Jr.
- :04 Journal Publications, 1922-1937
- :05 \_\_\_\_\_, 1937-1941
- :06 Edmunds H.S. Yearbook; Burlington, Vt.; 1901  
*Includes:* Signature of D. C. Jarvis on flyleaf and listing for Lula Rhoda Jarvis in the Junior class (p. 36)

II. Research about D. C. Jarvis

- :07 Correspondence to Sylvia Jarvis Smith: Researchers, 1978-1994
- :08 Oral History Interview Transcriptions: Silvia Jarvis Smith, 1993
- :09 \_\_\_\_\_: Charles Mraz, 1993
- :10 \_\_\_\_\_: Joseph Maiola, 1994
- :11 \_\_\_\_\_: Robert and Jane Strong, 1993
- :12 Vermont Folk Life Center Project, 1994
- :13 Newsclippings: Folk Remedies, 1959-1993
- :14 \_\_\_\_\_: Miscellaneous, 1915-1991

III. Books by D. C. Jarvis

- BHC 532:01 *Folkemedisin: en leges veiledning til bedre helse*, 1969
- :02 *Leef Lang en Gezond: het geheim van Dokter Jarvis*, n.d.
- :03 *Folk Medicine: Japanese Translation*, 1958
- :04 *Fold Medicine: a New England almanac of natural health care from a noted Vermont country doctor*, 1958
- :05 *Folke-Medicin: en laeges vejledning til et bedre helbred*, 1967
- :06 *Arthritisme et Vieux Remèdes*, 1960
- :07 *Ces Vieux Remèdes qui Guérissent*, 1958
- :08 *Folk Medicine: a Vermont doctor's guide to good health*, 1958  
*Includes: inscription, "to William Halvosa with best wishes from his friend D.C. Jarvis, M.D. March 29. 1958."*
- :09 *Folk Medicine: a Vermont doctor's guide to good health*, 1958  
*Includes: inscription, "With Best wishes D.C. Jarvis, M.D. August 24, 1959"*

Mary Catherine Shea  
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