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Harrison M. Randall papers, 1897-1965 (majority within 1954-1962)

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Summary

CREATOR:

[Randall, Harrison M. \(Harrison McAllister\). 1870-](#)

ABSTRACT:

Renowned physicist who studied, conducted research, and taught at the University of Michigan from the late 1800s until the 1960s; Dr. Harrison M. Randall helped develop the atomic and nuclear components of the physics program, and conducted research on infrared spectroscopy. Materials include correspondence, photos, postcards, research data, progress and final research reports, grant proposals, and reprints.

EXTENT:

1.5 linear feet (in 2 boxes)

LANGUAGE:

English

German

CALL NUMBER:

85521 Aa 2

AUTHORS:

Finding aid created by Alix Norton, October 2014

AUTHOR

Finding aid created by Alix Norton, October 2014

Background

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

This collection includes Harrison M. Randall's personal and research-related materials including correspondence, photos, and research files. The bulk of the collection focuses on research projects in bacteriology that Dr. Randall conducted in collaboration with Donald W. Smith between 1948 and 1964.

BIOGRAPHICAL / HISTORICAL:

Harrison M. Randall was a renowned physicist who studied, conducted research, and taught at the University of Michigan from the late 1800s until the 1960s. He helped develop the atomic and nuclear components of the physics program, and conducted research on infrared spectroscopy during his tenure at the university.

Harrison McAllister Randall was born on December 17, 1870 in Burr Oak, Michigan. He earned three degrees at the University of Michigan: a Bachelors of Physics in 1893, a Masters in 1894, and Ph.D. in 1902. He studied infrared physics and developed the field of infrared spectroscopy during his faculty tenure at Michigan from 1910 to 1941. During this time he also played a large role in the initiation and leadership of the annual Michigan Summer Symposium in Theoretical Physics, which provided a forum for physicists to discuss the newly developing quantum theory. As chair of the physics department, Randall oversaw the university's growth in atomic and nuclear physics. In 1937, Randall was elected as the president of the American Physical Society (APS).

In December 1940, the newly constructed East Physics Building was officially renamed "The Harrison M. Randall Laboratory of Physics" in recognition of Randall's contributions to the field of physics at the University of Michigan. Randall retired from his faculty position as the chair of the physics department and was named Professor Emeritus of Physics in early 1941.

After retirement, Randall continued to pursue research in infrared spectroscopy and biophysics, collaborating with Donald W. Smith, a bacteriologist at University of Wisconsin who had previously studied at Michigan, earning his PhD in Bacteriology in 1951. After Smith accepted a faculty position at Wisconsin in 1953, he and Randall continued working together until 1964, developing a means of identifying certain mycobacteria strains by studying the unique infrared spectra of their chemicals.

Randall passed away on November 10, 1969.

ACQUISITION INFORMATION:

Donated by H. Richard Crane (donor no. 6005) in 2000; Virginia Beabes Emerson (donor no. 10158) in 2009, 2012, and 2014; and Mrs. Donald Smith (donor no. 10722) in 2012.

ARRANGEMENT:

The collection is composed of three series: Correspondence, Research Files, and Visual Materials.

ACCRUALS:

No further additions to the records are expected.

RULES OR CONVENTIONS:

Finding aid prepared using Describing Archives: A Content Standard (DACS)

Subjects

Click on terms below to find any related finding aids on this site.

Subjects:

[Physicists -- Michigan -- Ann Arbor.](#)

Formats:

[Correspondence.](#)

[Postcards.](#)

[Photographs.](#)

[Reports.](#)

Names:

[University of Michigan. Department of Physics.](#)

[University of Michigan -- Faculty.](#)

[Randall, Harrison M. \(Harrison McAllister\), 1870-
Randall, May Muma.](#)

[Smith, Donald W. \(Donald Ward\), 1926-2012.](#)

[Bohr, Niels, 1885-1962.](#)

[Bose, Jagadis Chandra, 1858-1937.](#)

[Colby, Walter F. \(Walter Francis\), 1880-](#)

Contents

Correspondence, 1897-1965 (Series)

The Correspondence series (1897-1965, undated) includes letters, memos, and some postcards and is organized by accession and chronologically. The first accession includes earlier correspondence and postcards, while the second accession contains letters predominantly exchanged between Randall and Smith during their collaborative work in the 1950s-1960s. Other correspondents include Niels Bohr, J. C. Bose, Walter Colby, and George Kubica. Topics related to research projects are covered, including summaries, meeting notes, progress reports, questions about data, and equipment concerns.

1897-1915, undated (File)

Box 1

1916-1930 (File)

Box 1

1931-1956 (File)

Box 1

1953-1965 (File)

Box 1

Research Files, 1896, 1949-1959 (Series)

The Research Files series (1896-1961) contains grant proposals, reports, raw research data, reprints, and other information on publications primarily related to research conducted by Randall and Donald W. Smith. Reports include progress reports and final reports presenting synthesized and summarized information about Randall's and Smith's projects. Proposals and funding requests to the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Office of Naval Research are included. Topics covered include tuberculosis, sarcoidosis, infrared spectroscopy, and bacteriology.

Proposals, 1956-1957 (File)

Box 1

Progress reports, 1949-1959 (File)

Box 1

Reports I, 1948-1950 (File)

Box 1

Other Descriptive Data

(Originally in binder)

Reports II, 1950-1952 (File)

Box 1

Other Descriptive Data

(Originally in binder)

Reprint, "An Apparatus for Illustrating the Law of Falling Bodies, ", 1896 (File)

Box 2

Tuberculosis antigen studies, 1949-1950 (File)

Box 2

Tuberculosis report, 1953 (File)

Box 2

"Report upon the Growth of Potassium Chloride Crystals" by John Strong, undated (File)

Box 2

Research data, 1947-1951 (File)

Box 2

Visual materials (Series)

The Visual Materials series (1890-1965) contains photographs of Randall's wife (Ida) May Muma Randall (also referred to as Ida Plankand of Randall, Donald W. Smith, Paul Weyrich, Walter J. Nungester, and University of Michigan President Harlan Hatcher from an event honoring Dr. Randall in 1965. These photographs are accompanied by a statement honoring Randall's career and a list of 20 of his publications. The series also includes postcards collected by May Muma Randall.

Photographs (File)

May Muma Randall, circa 1890 (File)

Box 2

Randall retirement, 1965 (File)

Box 2

Postcards, 1910-1917 (File)

Box 2

Using These Materials

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RESTRICTIONS:

The collection is open to research.

USE & PERMISSIONS:

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