



THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES

NAME OF COLLECTION	GORDON CLUNES MCKAY MATHISON
ACCESSION NO	1977.0018
CATEGORY ACTIVITY	University, individuals Physiologists
DATE RANGE	1908-1915
SIZE OF COLLECTION	1 cm.
HISTORICAL NOTE	<p>G.C. Mathison, a medical graduate of 1905, was appointed the University Scholar in physiology and went to London in 1908 to continue his work on the physiology of respiration. He became demonstrator in physiology at St. Mary's Hospital and later at University College Hospital. He was awarded the M.D. (Melb.) in 1911 and D.Sc. (London) in 1912 for work on the effects of asphyxia. In September 1913 Mathison was appointed sub-director of pathology at the Melbourne University. When war broke out he enlisted in the A.I.F., and died of wounds sustained at Gallipoli in May 1915.</p>
DATE OF TRANSFER	21 ST June, 1977
ACCESS CONDITIONS	Access: Open

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RECORDS RECEIVED INTO CUSTODY.

NAME: MATHISON, Gordon Clunes

TRANSFEROR: Mr G.M. McFarlane, Baillieu Library, University.

DATE OF RECEIPT: 21 June 1977.

PROVENANCE: A letter from Prof. R.D. Wright to Leigh Scott, University Librarian (3 Sept. 1953) accompanies the collection saying that the Mathison letters were brought to Wright by someone whose name he had forgotten. The letter also enclosed a copy of a letter from Professor Halford to Dr Pitman, which is now placed in the Halford papers.

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1908 - 1915

TYPES OF RECORDS: Letters and newscuttings.

GENERAL NOTE: G.C. Mathison, a medical graduate of 1905, was appointed the university scholar in physiology, ^{and} went to London in 1908 to continue his work on the physiology of respiration. He became demonstrator in physiology at St Mary's Hospital and later at University College Hospital. He was awarded the ^{M.D.} M.Sc. (Melb.) in 1911 and D.Sc (London) in 1912 for work on the effects of asphyxia. The letters were written while he held these appointments. In September 1913 Mathison was appointed sub-director of pathology at the Melbourne Hospital. When war broke out he enlisted in the A.I.F., and died of wounds at Gallipoli in May 1915. (From K.F. Russell The Melbourne Medical School 1862 - 1962.)

LIST OF RECORDS:

GROUP 1. LETTERS

GROUP 2. NEWSCLIPPINGS

GROUP 1. LETTERS

- 1/1 Gordon Clunes Mathison, Physiological Laboratory, St Mary's Hospital Medical School (London) W., to McCaw, 11 June 1908.
Has just started work here. "You complain about lack of organisation in Melbourne. Well I can assure you....so you can understand Prof. Osborne's apparent lack of care. As far as I can see Dr Martin for organisation was far and away above anyone in London." His own work (Histology, Physiology, Pharmacology). May go to the Lister if Alcock gets Professorship at St Andrews. Asks McCaw to collect fee from Dental College.
MS.
- 1/2 Mathison to McCaw, 29 June 1908.
London Laboratory mechanics not good as a class. Apparatus made by Palmer and others. Explains a useful "dodge" method of doing a blood pressure experiment away from the usual place. Done "beautiful lantern studies taken by colour photography here in the lab". London already "plays up" with his throat. Agriculture dead.
Cosmopolitan, tolerant character of London. His move to University College practically certain. Will enter as an internal research student and as a student for D.Sc. by research.
Sewell will provide some use for the microtomes when he returns to Australia.
Excellent work done by his own Histology class. Broadminded views of Bishop of London (W. Ingram). Women suffrage question "becoming pretty acute here"; thinks Government will make it a plank of their election platform. Sends pamphlet ("lies and distortions from end to end") to show what anti-vivisection means here.
A pity Osborne is not keener on research.
2 sheets MS.
- 1/3 Mathison to McCaw, 25 Sept. 1908.
Is already working at University College, London while finishing up at St Mary's. New building: "not nearly so much apparatus at U.C.L. as in Melbourne and not anything like half the room". Glad McCaw is having a good time with the Prof. who left a good impression of Australia while here. No new apparatus of note seen but "rather nice" small things: burners heated by electricity with asbestos over an iron plate, giving even temperature; and for varnishing record papers two drums above varnishing dish to take the paper as it comes off the kymograph. A varnishing table like the one made by McCaw to be made for the class experimental room. Excellence of Martin's lectures in Melbourne. Experiments here seldom "come off". Has worked a little at the Lister (protein precipitation).
Praise by Sir Victor Horsley of Martin.

GROUP 1. LETTERS (cont.)

- 1/4 Mathison, Endsleigh Gardens, London, to McCaw. 7 Nov. 1908.
Thanks for photographs. Will have one of our tables fitted up similarly when new laboratory ready. Melbourne dodges here: drum smoking done with coal gas driven through benzene (Mathison passes on some London tips in connection with this(and tubes for arterial cannulae(?). Is working hard on aspects of phosphorous(?) metabolism and hopes to publish soon to get into the Physiological Society and become a recognized teacher of the University. Theatre man in the classes likeable but lacking in energy. Admires Prof. Starling, strong believer in Imperialism, collective effort - "Can't stand aliens marrying white people (though he likes individuals among the aliens well), and thinks Britishers are the best race - none of the ordinary "best things happen in Germany" attitude with which many scientists sicken the British public". Prof. Bayliss very helpful with Physics, Chemistry, Microscopy in relation to Physiology. Glad to see McCaw on Committee of Microscopical Society.
MS 3 sheets.
- 1/5 Mathison, University College, London, to McCaw, 29 Jan. 1909.
Encloses bill for the dializers and Fluor-chrome. Has paid Fielder. Men McCaw knows in London: Forsyth, Turnbull, O'Leary. Hopes to have paper on Phosphorous in Urine published in J. Physiology. Press here continually noting trend of Australian politics, (i.e. the Labor Government's actions). Our Military Service Act found great favour "with many prominent men". Hopes Labor people go on with it. If Chamberlain "were in going order" or Tariff Reform had a vigorous champion the Liberal Government would go in six months. Berry's article in M.U.M. a good record of his organisation.
- 1/6 Mathison, Hampstead, to McCaw. 3 May 1909.
"Things seem somewhat chaotic at the Vaisity". Thinks Allen responsible. "Usually he manages things well, but as regards the Physiology building he was so afraid of younger men getting an advantage over him that he spoilt the whole show". Agrees Pathology department seems upside down. No one will stay "with a small screw with a formal man like Professor Allen at the head. Medical School people should pull together "to retain our advantage over Sydney". News of R.A. O'Brien and Dr Martin. A trip to Devon.
Disgusted at the "sorry exhibition" some Australian politicians made over the Dreadnought business, e.g. Murray and Deakin: "there is not the slightest doubt that we are in grave danger from Germany, but this jumpy flashy style of demonstrating loyalty is to be deprecated. " Cables in Australian papers of speeches in the English Parliament interesting examples of distortion by news ring. Moving into new lab. His work on Phosphorous. Has enough material on amonia in urine for a paper (has a note on it in the B.M.J.) but not inclined to publish it: "those little things don't do one any good". Ends with a variety of matters.
MS 4 sheets.

GROUP 1. LETTERS (cont.)

- 1/7 Mathison, Institute of Physiology, University College, to McCaw, 14 July 1909.
Sends a description of new building, and speech by Lord Roseberry to the Press Conference with which he does not entirely agree but which is high-class dinner oratory (neither is with this letter). Professor Starling's address in "Nature" on adaptation as the great factor in success. A great week for Victorians in England: Rivett in rowing and in Oxford examinations, Seitz, Higgins. Thanks for the M.U.M. After Belfast meeting of B.M.A. will spend fortnight in camp, then a week or so in France. "Germany I am not going near this year, but I am looking forward to a possible trip to Vienna for International Physiology Congress 1910. Probably will not see McCaw for another 18-20 months.
MS 2 sheets.
- 2 Newscuttings. (undated, no source given)
- 2/1 Obituary for Captain G.C.M. Mathison, A.C.M.C.
- 2/2 A second obituary notice.
- 2/3 Account of Mathison's death at Gallipoli, 21 May 1915, headed "Working Against Odds".
- 2/4 Report of address given by Prof. Sir Harry Brookes Allen at a meeting of the University Senate, speaking to a motion for the endowment of a triennial lecture with the surplus funds collected for a memorial to Mathison (a "memorial bronze" had already been erected at the University). Proposal was adopted. Death date given here as 18 May 1915.
3. Letter Prof. R.D. Wright to Leigh Scott, University Librarian, 3 Sept. 1953.
Covers the photocopied Halford letter, presented by Professor E.C. Dodds on the occasion of his giving the Halford Oration. The manuscript letters from G.C.M. Mathison brought to Wright by someone whose name is forgotten.
- Halford, 17 Victoria Square to Dr Pitman, 12 Aug. 1862
Presents to Pitman on behalf of the University of Melbourne Council a set of publications at present in the hands of the Commissioners for Victoria at the International Exhibition. Leaves for Melbourne on 6 September and wishes to carry any contribution towards the establishment of the University, Library and Museum. Halford and his University colleagues from Melbourne will send home whatever scientific information or specimens needed. Hopes that those first exchanges may be followed by others.
- Photocopy.
- Note: Halford letter now with Halford papers recently received.