

**MEDICAL CENTER ARCHIVES
OF
NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN/WEILL CORNELL**

**1300 York Avenue # 34
New York, NY 10065**

**Finding Aid To
THE ROBERT F. PITTS, MD (1908-1977) PAPERS**

**Dates of Papers:
1930-1974**

**101 Linear Inches
(12 Boxes)**

**Finding Aid Prepared By:
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Elizabeth Shepard
Assistant Archivist
01/1984, updated 06/2008**

PROVENANCE:

These papers were received by the Archives in bits and pieces: Dr. Roger Greif contributed the 1938 New York University Medical School Yearbook and reprints in 1983; Dr. Erich Windhager and the Department of Physiology sent the bulk of the material in April 1980, and the Archives itself has added assorted reprints.

ADMINISTRATIVE/BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

Born: Indianapolis, Indiana - October 24, 1908. (John Franklin Pitts, Estella Coffin)
 Married: Marjorie Anna Wallace - December 25, 1936
 Children: Robert Wallace - July 11, 1939
 Marjorie Ann - May 4, 1944
 Died: June 6, 1977, Gainesville, Florida

Education

B. S. 1929 Butler University; Senior Scholar; Phi Kappa Phi
 Ph.D. 1932 Johns Hopkins University; Bruce Fellow; Sigma Xi; Phi Beta Kappa
 M.D. 1938 New York University College of Medicine: Cellano Gold Medal in Pathology; Alpha Omega Alpha; A.O.A. Senior Prize in Medicine; Senior Prize in Surgery

Appointments

Adam T. Bruce Fellow in Biology, Johns Hopkins University	1931-1932
Assistant in Physiology, New York University Medical College	1932-1933
Instructor in Physiology, New York University Medical College	1933-1938
Medical Fellow of the Rockefeller Foundation at the Neurological Institute, Northwestern University	1938
at the Eldridge Reeves Johnson Foundation for Medical Physics, Univ. of Pennsylvania	1939
Assistant Professor of Physiology, New York University Medical College	1940-1942
Assistant Professor of Physiology, Cornell University Medical College	1942-1944
Associate Professor of Physiology, Cornell University Medical College	1944-1946
Professor and Chairman of the Department of Physiology: Syracuse University Medical College	1946-1950
Cornell University Medical College	1950-01/1973
Professor of Physiology, Cornell University Medical College	01/1973- 07/1974

Emeritus Professor of Physiology, Cornell University Medical College	07/1974- 6/1977
Research Professor, Renal Medicine & Physiology, University of Florida, Gainesville	07/1974- 6/1977

Awards-Honors

Borden Award in Medical Science	1960
New York University Medical Alumni Award	1962
Homer W. Smith Award in Renal Physiology, New York Heart Association	1963
Visiting Fellow, St. Catherine's College, England	1967-1968
Honorary Master's Degree, Oxford, England	1967
American College of Physicians Award for Distinguished Contribution in Science as Related to Medicine	04/1970
Association of Chairmen of Departments of Physiology, First Annual Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Teaching of Physiology	04/1972
Honorary Fellowship Award, Cornell University Medical College Alumni Association	04/1972
Honorary Doctor of Science Degree, Indiana University	05/1972

Dr. Pitts did pioneering work on the kidney and its role in maintaining the body's balance of acid and alkaline states. He was one of the world's leading kidney physiologists, but was also known for work he did from 1938 to 1942 on the neurophysiology of cats. He isolated the areas of the cat's brain that controls respiration and the rhythm of breathing.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

This collection only offers a small glimpse of Dr. Pitt's work in the field of physiology. The collection has been organized into four series: correspondence (1932-1971), research notebooks (1960s), lecture notes (1930-1962), reprints (1932-1971), and miscellaneous (1938-1974).

The miscellaneous series includes a box of awards. The photographs have been removed to the personal photographic collections. See photo catalog.

Two series were discarded. One series was physiology equipment catalogs, and the other was abstracts and citations written on index cards.

Series I: Correspondence, 1949-1973 (Boxes 1-3)

The bulk of the correspondence deals with various accounts and grant projects. The series, arranged alphabetically, does not include any personal correspondence.

Series II: Research Notebooks, 1942-1974 (Boxes 4-5)

The research notebooks record Dr. Pitts and others research. The notebooks have not been organized.

Series III: Lecture Notes, 1930-1962 (Boxes 6-7)

The series, arranged alphabetically, includes Dr. Pitts lecture notes on anatomy, body fluids, histology, neurohypothesis, renal function, and respiration. The series also includes a bound volume of lectures on development by H.S. Jennings, his professor at Johns Hopkins.

Series IV: Reprints, 1932-1971 (Boxes 7-9)

This series, arranged chronologically, consists of a bound set of his reprints from 1932-1971.

Series V: Miscellaneous, 1937-1974 (Boxes 10-12)

The miscellaneous series includes awards and certificates and his 1938 yearbook from New York University School of Medicine.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS:

ACCESS POINTS:

RELATED MATERIAL:

Reprints by other physiology faculty were either placed with their papers or in their biography files. They included Drs. Erich Windhager, David Thompson, Thomas Meikle, Jr, and Graham Lusk.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST:

Box 1: Series I, Correspondence, 1949-1973

Folder:	Description:
1	Account 825, 1956-1958
2	Account 840, 1957-1967

3	Account RG-2165, 1949
4	Account Others, 1954-1966
5	American Heart Association, Account 839, 1949-1956
6	Autoradiology, 1954
7	CUMC, Committee on Content of Academic Programs, 1973
8	Drugs-Chemicals, 1955, 1958
9	Health Research Council, Applications, 1968-1969
10-13	Life Insurance Medical Research Fund, 1949-1968

Box 2: Series I, Correspondence, 1949-1973

Folder:	Description:
1	Life Insurance Medical Research Fund, 1965-1970
2	National Science Foundation, Application, 1960-1961
3	New York Community Trust, 1950-1956
4-5	NIH Career Award, 1967-1968
6-15	NIH Grants, 1950-1971

Box 3: Series I, Correspondence, 1949-1973

Folder:	Description:
1	NIH Grants, Closed, 1955-1970
2	Permit for Fresh Blood, 1955
3	Pharmacological Studies, 1957
4-6	Physiology Shop, 1949-1961
7	Radioisotope Procurement, 1952-1958
8	Sarah Ward Fund, 1963-1965
9	Steroids, 1959-1960
10-11	USPAS, 1953-1955, 1968-1969

Box 4: Series II, Research Notebooks, 1942-1974

Box 5: Series II, Research Notebooks, 1942-1974

Box 6: Series III, Lecture Notes, 1930-1962

Folder:	Description:
1	Anatomy, Endocrines, prior to 1962
2	Body Fluids, Lecture Notes, 1951
3	Curriculum, Exams, Lectures, 1971
4	Histology, n.d.
5	Neuroanatomy, Lectures, 1933
6	Neurohypothesis, Chemistry of the Hormones, 1955

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|------|-------------------------------------|
| 7 | Renal Function, Lecture Notes, n.d. |
| 8 | Respiratory Center, Lecture Notes, |
| 9-10 | Respiration, Lecture Notes, n.d. |

Box 7: Series III, Lecture Notes, 1930-1962

Folder: Description:

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|---|--|
| 1 | Bound Lectures on Development by H.S. Jennings, 1930-1931
(Pitts Johns Hopkins Class when he was a student) |
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Box 7: Series IV, Reprints, 1932-1971

Folder: Description:

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|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Bound Reprints, 1932-1946 |
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Box 8: Series IV, Reprints, 1932-1971

Folder: Description:

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|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Bound Reprints, 1947-1954 |
| 2 | Bound Reprints, 1954-1964 |

Box 9: Series IV, Reprints, 1932-1974

Folder: Description:

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|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | Bound Reprints, 1965-1971 |
| 2 | Reprints, 1944-1952 |
| 3 | Reprints, 1960-1970 |
| 4 | Duplicates |

Box 10: Series V, Miscellaneous, 1937-1974

Folder: Description:

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| 1 | Awards & Certificates, 1954-1974 |
| 2 | Pulmonary Function Tests, n.d. |
| 3 | Yearbook for New York University School of Medicine, 1938 (Pitt has on the physiology faculty and received his MD in 1938) |

Box 11: Series V, Miscellaneous: Memorabilia, 1937-1974

Box 12: Series V, Miscellaneous: Awards and Certificates, 1937-1974