

Archives and Special Collections

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

COLLECTION REGISTER

Name: **Priestley, Joseph (1733-1804)** **MC 2003.8**

Material: Miscellaneous Papers (1833-1994)

Volume: 1.0 linear feet (Document Boxes 1-3, and 2 Oversized Folders)

Donation: Gifts of various donors

Usage: These materials have been donated without restrictions on usage.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Joseph Priestley was born on 13 March 1733 to Jonas and Mary Swift Priestley. Jonas Priestley was a dyer and dresser of woolen cloth. Joseph's mother died when he was young, so much of his early education was provided by his aunt, Sarah Keighley. He went on to study at a local grammar school, and in 1751 entered Daventry Academy.

In September 1755 he obtained a parish in Needham Market, Surrey, and he was finally ordained on 18 May 1762. He was called as a tutor to Warrington Academy and taught modern history and languages from 1762 to 1767. He married Mary Wilkinson on 23 June 1762, shortly after beginning work at Warrington. For reasons regarding Mary's health, the two of them moved to Mill Hill in 1767 where Joseph obtained another congregation.

Lord Shelburne (William Petty) hired Priestley as his librarian in 1772, retaining his services until 1880. Priestley then moved on to the New Meeting congregation in Birmingham where he remained until the Birmingham Riot of July 1791. During the riot, Joseph Priestley's home was burned, he and his family narrowly escaping. The family settled in London for a few years, but sailed for the United States in 1794.

Joseph Priestley was a well known figure in his day, and therefore was greeted with much attention when he reached America. After being received in New York, Priestley moved on to Philadelphia, a city of which he was not very fond. He decided to move to central Pennsylvania and purchased land in Northumberland, where his son, Joseph Priestley, Jr., had already settled. In 1795 Henry, Joseph and Mary's youngest son, died at the age of eighteen. Mary herself passed away the following year, both deaths seriously affecting Priestley.

For the ten years that he lived in the United States, Joseph Priestley continued to write, perform experiments, correspond with friends and colleagues, and occasionally preach to Unitarian congregations. He died on 6 February 1804 at his home in Northumberland.

Joseph Priestley is perhaps best known for his discovery of oxygen while performing

experiments with gases in 1774. Ultimately, Priestley identified nine distinct gases, including carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide. He is credited with developing a sound method for infusing carbon dioxide into water, thus establishing himself as the father of carbonation. He met Benjamin Franklin in 1765 in London, at which time Franklin reputedly encouraged Priestley to continue experiments he was conducting with electricity. Priestley also met Antoine Lavoisier, apparently in Paris in 1774 shortly after isolating oxygen. It is believed that Lavoisier expanded on Priestley's experiments in this area.

Science, however, was really only ever a hobby of Priestley's, his primary interest being theological studies. He was forever reexamining doctrine, constantly publishing his opinions, occasionally preaching, and often times altering his religious views. He produced a voluminous body of writing, publishing on subjects as varied as politics and philosophy, electricity and other scientific matters, history and biography, and, of course, theology. He is considered, in many ways, to have been a Renaissance man of his age.

COLLECTION DESCRIPTION

The Joseph Priestley Miscellaneous Papers are housed in three document boxes and two oversized folders. The materials in this collection are divided into the following six series: Articles, Clippings, Ephemera, Genealogical Materials, Manuscripts, and Miscellaneous. The papers were donated by various people, often the authors of the articles themselves.

The series entitled Articles consists exclusively of published works, or off-prints and photocopies thereof. The articles cover a variety of topics, but most deal in some way with Joseph Priestley, his various scientific accomplishments, his scientific apparatus, or with the Priestley House, located in Northumberland, Pennsylvania. The materials in this series are arranged alphabetically by author, and then by article title.

The series entitled Clippings consists of photocopies of newspaper and magazine articles written about Joseph Priestley and other related topics. The materials in this series are arranged chronologically.

The series entitled Ephemera consists of materials relating to Joseph Priestley and the various commemorative celebrations held in his honor. The bulk of this series consists of programs and notices for Priestley celebrations, and these materials are further arranged according to the entity holding the event. Other materials included in this series are postcards, a Priestley bookplate, and a folder containing Priestley commemorative stamps and envelopes. This series is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

The series entitled Genealogical Materials consists of correspondence, charts, and notes relating to the genealogy of Joseph Priestley. There is also material relating to the 1994 Priestley family reunion. The series is arranged alphabetically by folder title.

The series entitled Manuscripts consists of unpublished works dealing with Joseph Priestley and related topics. This series is arranged alphabetically by author's name, when known (or article title if author is unknown) and then, if available, article title.

The series entitled Miscellaneous consists of materials relating to the First Unitarian Church and the Unitarian Universalist House in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the Priestley House and Priestley Memorial Chapel in Northumberland, Pennsylvania; and a television program about Priestley produced by Harrisburg, Pennsylvania PBS affiliate WITF. The materials in this series range from correspondence to printed materials and are arranged alphabetically by folder title.

Two oversized folders consist of materials from the Ephemera series which have been separated out from the collection due to their size. The first folder contains a presentation page for the Priestley commemorative stamp and envelope, and the second contains posters for American Chemical Society programs.

COLLECTION INVENTORY

BOX 1 - MC 2003.8

ARTICLES

- Folder 01) Abrahams, Harold J. "Priestley Answers the Proponents of Abiogenesis." Ambix 7, no. 1 (1964): 44-71. [off-print]
- Folder 02) American Bottlers of Carbonated Beverages. "Chronology: General Development of the Bottled Carbonated Beverage Industry in the United States." (1958)
- Folder 03) Andrews, Jeanmarie. "Joseph Priestley: Icon of Enlightenment." Early American Homes (April 2000): 37-43. [photocopy]
- Folder 04) Badash, Lawrence. "Joseph Priestley's Apparatus for Pneumatic Chemistry." Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences 19, no. 2 (1964): 139-155. [off-print]
- Folder 05) Bedini, Silvio A. "Early American Scientific Instruments and Their Makers." Washington D.C.: Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution, 1964: 140-143. [photocopy]
- Folder 06) Belloc, Bessie Rayner. "Joseph Priestley in Domestic Life." The Contemporary Review 66 (1894): 567-579. [photocopy]
- Folder 07) Bierring, Walter Lawrence. "James Taggart Priestley—Historical and Personal." The Journal of the Iowa State Medical Society 5, no. 10 (1915). [photocopy]
- Folder 08) Billinger, R. D. "Northumberland, Shrine of Joseph Priestley." The Octagon 31, no. 8 (1948): 150. [photocopy]
- Folder 09) Brown, Ira V. "Joseph Priestley . . . Exile in Pennsylvania." American Heritage (1954): 12-15. [photocopy]
- Folder 10) Brown, Sheldon. "Joseph Priestley." Susquehanna (May 1991): 11-17. [photocopy]
- Folder 11) Browne, C. A. "The Bookplate of Dr. Joseph Priestley." Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry 12, no. 6 (1920): 1-2. [photocopy]
- Folder 12) Browne, C. A. "The Past and Future of the History of Chemistry Division." Journal of Chemical Education 14, no. 10 (1937): 453-464. [off-print]
- Folder 13) Browne, C. A. "Presentation of Joseph Priestley Portrait." Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry 13, no. 10 (1921): 879-882. [off-print]
- Folder 14) "Chemists Visit Priestley Home." The Penn State Alumni News 13, no. 1 (1926). [photocopy]

BOX 1 - MC 2003.8 (cont.)

ARTICLES (cont.)

- Folder 15) Cohen, Seymour S. "Two Refugee Chemists in the United States, 1794: How We See Them." Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society 126, no. 4 (1982): 301-315. [off-print]
- Folder 16) Conant, James Bryant, ed. The Overthrow of the Phlogiston Theory. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950. [off-print]
- Folder 17) Dufton, S. F. "The Father of Modern Chemistry." The Inquirer and Christian Life (Mar. 11, 1933): 111-112. [photocopy]
- Folder 18) Fitch, Howard M. "Joseph Priestley's Barrel Organ." Bulletin of the Musical Box Society International (1969): 1-4. [photocopy]
- Folder 19) Fitzpatrick, M. "Priestley in Caricature." Third BOC Priestley Conference: 347-369. [photocopy]
- Folder 20) Fonvielle, M. W. "Celebration du Premier Centenaire de la Découverte de l'Oxygène," Paris: 1875.
- Folder 21) Fulton, John F. "The Scientific Writings of Joseph Priestley (1733-1804)." Fifteenth International Congress of the History of Medicine (1954): 1-8. [off-print]
- Folder 22) Fulton, John F. "The Warrington Academy and Its Influence upon Medicine and Science." Bulletin of the Institute of the History of Medicine 52, no. 2 (1933): 50-80. [off-print]
- Folder 23) Fulton, John F. and Charlotte H. Peters. "An Introduction to a Bibliography of the Educational and Scientific Works of Joseph Priestley." The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America 30, no. 2 (1936): 150-167. [photocopy]
- Folder 24) Fulton, John F. and Charlotte H. Peters. Works of Joseph Priestley, 1733-1804. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University School of Medicine, 1937. [2 copies]
- Folder 25) Furness, W. H. "A Christmas Discourse Delivered in the First Congregational Unitarian Church of Philadelphia December 21st 1890."
- Folder 26) Garrett, Clarke. "Joseph Priestley, the Millennium, and the French Revolution." Journal of the History of Ideas 34, no. 1 (1973): 51-66. [off-print]
- Folder 27) Great Meeting Chronicle. (Apr. 1898, Feb. 1904)
- Folder 28) Griffin, Rev. Frederick. "Joseph Priestley, 1733-1804" 1933. [2 copies]
- Folder 29) Gutelius, C. Warren. "Northumberland Centennial Summers." Proceedings of the Northumberland County Historical Society 16 (1948). [off-print; 2 copies]
- Folder 30) Hartog, Sir Philip. "Joseph Priestley and His Place in the History of Science." Proceedings of the Royal Institution of Great Britain (1931). [off-print]
- Folder 31) Hepburn, Joseph Samuel. "New Priestley Letters on His Scientific and Educational Experiments." Library Bulletin of the American Philosophical Society (1946): 78-82. [off-print]

BOX 1 - MC 2003.8 (cont.)

ARTICLES (cont.)

- Folder 32) Hepburn, Joseph Samuel. "The Pennsylvania Associations of Joseph Priestley." Journal of the Franklin Institute 244, nos. 1 and 2 (1947): 63-72, 95-107. [off-print; 2 copies]
- Folder 33) Jaffe, Bernard. "Priestley-Oxygen." The Magazine of Controversy 83, no. 6 (1930): 380-384. [photocopy]
- Folder 34) Journal of Chemical Education 4, no. 2 (1927). [2 copies]
- Folder 35) Journal of Chemical Education 10, no. 3 (1933).
- Folder 36) Kieft, Lester. "The Diverse Lives of Joseph Priestley." Footnote Prints 46, no. 1 (1983): 24-36. [photocopy]
- Folder 37) Kieft, Lester. "Joseph Priestley and the Priestley House." Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell Department of Chemistry.
- Folder 38) Kracum, Vincent D. "The American Home of Joseph Priestley, Discoverer of Oxygen." Respiratory Care 19, no. 8 (1974): 591-595. [photocopy]
- Folder 39) Lectures, Delivered at the Chapel in South Place, Finsbury.
- Folder 40) Martineau Dixon of Thearne, Ronald A. "Some Letters of the Reverend Dr. Joseph Priestley, F.R.S." Journal of Chemical Education: 149-150. [photocopy]
- Folder 41) May, Joseph. "Joseph Priestley LL.D., F. R. S." Philadelphia: George H. Buchanan and Company. [2 copies]
- Folder 42) "Oxygen, Hydrogen, and Their Compounds." The Science Leaflet 10, no. 1 (1936): 5-8. [photocopy]
- Folder 43) Park, Mary Catheryne. "Joseph Priestley and the Problem of Pantisocracy." Proceedings of the Delaware County Institute of Science 9, no. 1 (1947).
- Folder 44) Pennsylvania Bottlers' Protective Association. "Constitution and By-laws Adopted August 15, 1889." Philadelphia: Dando Printing and Publishing Co., 1889.
- Folder 45) Price, Derek J. de Solla. "Of Sealing Wax and String." Natural History 84, no. 1: 49-56. [off-print]
- Folder 46) Priestley, Joseph. "The Discovery of Oxygen." Alembic Club Reprints, no. 7 (1992).
- Folder 47) Priestley, Joseph. "Experiments on the Lateral Force of Electrical Explosions." 57-62, 67-74.

BOX 2 - MC 2003.8

ARTICLES (cont.)

- Folder 01) "Priestley, Rev. Joseph." Genealogical and Biographical Annals of Northumberland County, Pennsylvania. Chicago: J. L. Floyd and Co., 1911: 3-6. [photocopy]
- Folder 02) "Priestley: The Great Man Among Men." Northumberland: The Story of an Old Town. Northumberland, PA: The Susquehanna Press: 10-12. [photocopy]

BOX 2 - MC 2003.8 (cont.)

ARTICLES (cont.)

- Folder 03) "Priestley House-Laboratory." Historic Preservation 12, no. 2 (1960): 66-69. [photocopy]
- Folder 04) "Joseph Priestley: Pennsylvania Scientist." Pennsylvania in Review: 10. [photocopy]
- Folder 05) Rail, Tony. "Looted Priestley and Russell Correspondence in the Public Record Office, London: Part 1 – three letters to Joseph Priestley." Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society 20, no. 3 (1993): 187-201. [photocopy]
- Folder 06) "Report Covering Period November, 1930, to December 31, 1933." The Joseph Priestley House. Philadelphia: International Printing Co., 1934.
- Folder 07) "Report Covering Period January 1, 1934, to January 1, 1937." The Joseph Priestley House. Philadelphia: International Printing Co., 1937.
- Folder 08) Riley, I. Woodbridge. "American Philosophy: the Early Schools." New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1907.
- Folder 09) Riley, John J. "Scientific and Medical Origin of Carbonated Waters." American Bottlers of Carbonated Beverages (1946, 1947). [2 copies]
- Folder 10) Schofield, Robert E. "Electrical Researches of Joseph Priestley." Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Sciences 16, no. 64 (1963): 277-286. [off-print]
- Folder 11) Schofield, Robert E. "Joseph Priestley, The Theory of Oxidation and the Nature of Matter." Journal of the History of Ideas 25, no. 2 (1964): 285-294. [off-print]
- Folder 12) Schroeder, W. Lawrence. "Joseph Priestley: A Versatile Genius." The Inquirer and Christian Life (Mar. 11, 1933): 109-110. [photocopy]
- Folder 13) Sigsbee, Ray Addison. "Das Philosophische System Joseph Priestleys." Heidelberg: Klohe & Silber, 1912.
- Folder 14) Smeaton, W. A. "Some Large Burning Lenses and Their Use by Eighteenth-Century French and British Chemists." Annals of Science 44 (1987): 265-276. [off-print]
- Folder 15) Smith, Edgar F. "The American Spirit in Chemistry." Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry 11, no. 5 (1919): 405-417. [off-print]
- Folder 16) Thomas, John. "Josiah Wedgwood and His Portraits of 18th Century Men of Science." Proceedings of the Royal Institution of Great Britain (1938). [off-print]
- Folder 17) Thorpe, T. E. "Joseph Priestley: His Life and Chemical Work." Science Lectures for the People 6, no. 4 (1874): 45-65. [off-print]
- Folder 18) Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society 28, no. 1 (1983).
- Folder 19) The Christian Sentinel 23, no. 3 (1922): 132-135. [photocopy]

CLIPPINGS

- Folder 20) Undated to 1969
- Folder 21) 1970 to 1994

BOX 2 - MC 2003.8 (cont.)

EPHEMERA

- Folder 22) Bookplate
- Folder 23) Commemorative Stamps and Envelopes
- Folder 24) Postcards
- Folder 25) Programming – American Chemical Society - 1974, 1976
- Folder 26) Programming – Bucknell University - 1980, 1983
- Folder 27) Programming – Centennial of Chemistry - 1874
- Folder 28) Programming – Delaware County Institute of Science - 1983
- Folder 29) Programming – Dickinson College - 1994
- Folder 30) Programming – Joseph Priestley House - 1983
- Folder 31) Programming – Pennsylvania State College - 1952
- Folder 32) Programming – Royal Society of Chemistry - 1983
- Folder 33) Programming – University of Pennsylvania

GENEALOGICAL MATERIALS

- Folder 34) Correspondence
- Folder 35) Notes and Charts
- Folder 36) Priestley Family Reunion, 1994

MANUSCRIPTS

- Folder 37) “Archaeology at Priestley House”
- Folder 38) Bolton, H. Carrington. “The Lunar Society, or, The Festive Philosophers of Birmingham One Hundred Years Ago.” 1888.
- Folder 39) Clark, John Ruskin. “Joseph Priestley’s Contributions to Unitarian Theology.” 1974.
- Folder 40) Clark, John Ruskin. “A Prophet Not Without Honor – Joseph Priestley.”

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MANUSCRIPTS (cont.)

- Folder 01) Cole, Kenneth S. “Physical Chemistry and Cell Membranes.” 1939.
- Folder 02) Davenport, Derek. “Joseph Priestley in America: 1794-1804”
- Folder 03) DuPree-Begos, Jane. “Joseph Priestley’s Feminist Legacy.”
- Folder 04) Frick, George A. “Untitled.” [excerpts]
- Folder 05) Hill, Andrew M. “Untitled.”
- Folder 06) “An Introduction to Joseph Priestley.”
- Folder 07) “The Joseph Priestley Collection: Accessions to May 1972.” Penn State University, Pattee Library.
- Folder 08) Pifer, Connie. “Joseph Priestley and The Priestley Award.” 1970.
- Folder 09) Rogers, Horace E. “A History of the Annual Dickinson College Celebration in Memory of Joseph Priestley, 1952-1976.”
- Folder 10) Smith, Edgar Fahs. “Priestley in America.”
- Folder 11) “The Susquehanna’s Early Fame – A New Elysium for Refuge from War and Politics.” Northumberland, PA: Public Press, 8 June 1886.
- Folder 12) Vuilleumier, Ernest A. “Untitled.”

BOX 3 - MC 2003.8 (cont.)

MANUSCRIPTS (cont.)

Folder 13) Worden, Edward. "Joseph Priestley." 1937.

MISCELLANEOUS

Folder 14) First Unitarian Church, Philadelphia, PA
Folder 15) Priestley House, Northumberland, PA
Folder 16) Priestley Memorial Chapel, Northumberland, PA
Folder 17) Unitarian Universalist House, Philadelphia, PA
Folder 18) Television Program, WITF, Harrisburg, PA - 1968

OVERSIZED - OC 2003.8

EPHEMERA

Folder 01) Commemorative Stamps and Envelopes
Folder 02) Programming – American Chemical Society, 1983