

CONTEMPORARY SCIENTIFIC ARCHIVES CENTRE

Catalogue of the papers and correspondence of

EDMUND JOHN BOWEN, FRS

(1898-1980)

Compiled by Jeannine Alton and Julia Latham-Jackson

Deposited in the Museum of the History of Science,
Oxford

CSAC 81/5/81

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INTRODUCTION

PROVENANCE

The material was received from Mrs. E. Bowen (widow) and Dr. H.J.M. Bowen (son).

DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION

Dr. Bowen kept almost no records of his scientific work in the field of photochemistry, though see the reprints in A.17. The surviving documents, other than biographical, relate mainly to his interests in the history of science, and of Oxford University and City.

Section A contains mainly personal material, including an autobiographical account of Bowen's childhood, service in the First World War and subsequent career to 1929 (see A.3); Section B consists of drafts and background material relating to Bowen's keen interest in the history of science, including some interesting reminiscences of Oxford chemistry between the First and Second World Wars.

LOCATION OF FURTHER MATERIAL

A copy of Bowen's history of University College, Oxford (of which he was a Fellow from 1922), is held in the College Library.

SUMMARY OF CAREER

b. 1898	Parish of St. John in Bedwardine, Worcester
Educated	Worcester Royal Grammar School
1915 - 1916	Balliol College, Oxford
1917 - 1919	Lieutenant, No. 13 Siege Battery, R.G.A.
1919 - 1920	Balliol College, Oxford
1921	Lecturer, University College, Oxford
1922 - 1965	Fellow, University College, Oxford
1924	Married Edith Moule
1935	Fellow of the Royal Society
1938 - 1952	Demonstrator in Chemistry, Oxford University
1952 - 1965	Aldrichian Praelector in Chemistry, Oxford University
1963	Davy Medal (Royal Society)
1965	Honorary Fellow, University College, Oxford

SECTION A BIOGRAPHICAL AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL A.1 - A.17

- A.1 Copy of obituary published in The Times, 22 November 1980.
- A.2 Photocopy of Bowen's Curriculum Vitae and List of Publications.
 10 pp. typescript.
- Reprints of some of Bowen's publications appear at A.17.
- A.3 Autobiographical reminiscences prepared by Bowen in 1973.
 This is a photocopy of the autograph manuscript, 24 pp.
 covering the period from Bowen's childhood up to 1929.
 A large part of it is devoted to Bowen's experiences in
 the trenches during the First World War.
- A.4 'Notes on Research Work of E.J. Bowen et al.'
 11 pp. typescript, n.d., describing research completed
 up to c. 1957.
- A.5-A.9 Letters of congratulation on Bowen's election as a Fellow of the
 Royal Society, 1935.
- A.5-A.7 Letters from colleagues. The correspondence is arranged in
 alphabetical order and indexed.
- A.5 A - E
- A.6 F - L
- A.7 M - S
- A.8 Letters from staff and classmates of the Royal Grammar School,
 Worcester. In alphabetical order. (Not indexed.)
- A.9 Letters from friends and relatives; the majority of these are
 from Oxford addresses. Unidentified correspondents are
 included at the front of the folder. (Not indexed.)
- A.10 Correspondence re honours and awards, 1960-68. Includes
 letter from the Royal Society announcing the award of the Davy
 Medal, 1963.

Biographical and autobiographical

A.11-A.16 Personal correspondence, 1931-80.

Mainly letters of thanks for hospitality, gifts of specimens, lectures, letters of congratulation, etc. The correspondence is arranged in chronological order and indexed, except in the case of first name or illegible signatures.

A.11	1931, 1936-37
A.12	1942-44, 1946-48
A.13	1952-53, 1956-57, 1959
A.14	1960, 1962-63, 1967, 1969
A.15	1970-72, 1974-75
A.16	1980, n.d.

A.17 Large envelope containing a set (incomplete) of reprints of Bowen's publications in the field of photochemistry, 1921-63.

There is a bibliography of Bowen's publications in A.2.

SECTION B HISTORICAL WRITINGS B.1 - B.29

B.1-B.5 General History of Science

- B.1 Ms. draft on the history of atomic and molecular concepts in chemistry.

12 pp., n.d.

- B.2 'Notes on the concepts of the Electron, Atom, Molecule, etc.'

Envelope containing 3 sets of ms. notes, all undated.

- B.3 'The Progress of Photochemistry'

Ms. draft, n.d.

- B.4 'Notes on early spectroscopy'

4 pp. ms., n.d.

- B.5 'The Beginning of the Royal Society', by M. Purver and E.J. Bowen.

Pamphlet, published by the Clarendon Press, 1960.

Folder also includes photocopy of ms. poem entitled 'Who founded the R.S.?'

B.6-B.17 History of Science at Oxford University

- B.6 'Science and Scientists at Oxford'

Ms. draft, variously paginated, tracing the history of Oxford science from the thirteenth century.

- B.7 Ms. notes and jottings mainly re history of Oxford science.

- B.8 'Oxford Physical Science from 1850'

Photocopy of 13 pp. typescript, n.d.

- B.9 'Chemistry at Oxford'

27 pp. typescript, with some ms. corrections, 1969.

A few loose papers were found tucked inside the front cover of the typescript and these have been removed to a separate folder for safe keeping (see B.10 below).

Historical writings

- B.10 Miscellaneous papers originally kept with B.9. They include:
- 1 p. ms. notes by Bowen.
- Summaries of careers of 2 Oxford scientists.
- Brief correspondence, 1934.
- Copy of agreement with D. Van Nostrand Company Limited, 8 February 1967, for publication of a book by Bowen entitled 'Luminescence in Chemistry'.
- Photocopies of pages 46, 48, 50, 52 of the ms. draft of B.9
- B.11 'The Alembic Club. The First Fifty Years'
- Spiral-bound ms. incorporating photocopies of some original documents relating to the Oxford University Alembic Club, n.d.
- B.12 Ms. notes, drafts and printed matter re the Alembic Club assembled by Bowen. Includes a note of material relating to the Alembic Club held by the Museum of the History of Science at Oxford.
- B.13 'Oxford University Chemical Club'
- 7 pp. ms., n.d.
- A photocopy of a humorous dinner menu of the club is also included in the folder.
- B.14 'The Balliol-Trinity Laboratories, Oxford 1853-1940', by E.J. Bowen.
- Offprint from Notes and Records of the Royal Society, 25, 2, 1970.
- B.15 Letters of thanks from colleagues on receipt of copies of B.14. Some of these contain interesting reminiscences of the Laboratories. The correspondence is arranged in alphabetical order and indexed.
- B.16 Duplicated typescript draft of B.14, 17 October 1969.
- Folder also includes 1 p. ms. notes and a photograph.
- B.17 Duplicated typescript draft with ms. annotations re Oxford science in the seventeenth century. The typescript is paginated from 17 to 25.

Historical writings

B.18-B.28 Biographical Writings

Mainly of Oxford scientists.

B.18 'Robert Boyle, 1627-1691'

21 pp. ms. draft, n.d.

B.19 'Dalziel Llewellyn Hammick, 1887-1966'

Offprint from Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the Royal Society, 13, 1967.

Folder also includes typescript and printed obituary notices of Hammick and letters from friends and colleagues, some containing additional comments and reminiscences.

B.20 'Sir Harold Hartley'

Ms. draft and proof of obituary by Bowen.

Folder also includes copies of printed obituaries by others.

B.21 'Sir Cyril Hinshelwood, 1897-1967'

Typescript draft and offprint of obituary by E.J. Bowen published in Chemistry in Britain, 3, 12, 1967.

Additional printed matter re Hinshelwood is also included in the folder.

B.22 Letters from colleagues commenting on Bowen's obituary of Hinshelwood.

B.23 'Dr. Bertram Lambert'

2 ms. drafts of obituary for publication in the Proceedings of the Chemical Society, 1963.

Folder also includes invitation to write the obituary and correspondence with colleagues from whom Bowen sought information or advice.

B.24 'Dr. Peter Pringsheim'

Offprint of obituary published in Nature, 205, March 1965.

Historical writings

- B.25 Dr. A.S. Russell
 Ms. drafts for obituary of Russell.

 Some printed matter is also included in the folder.
- B.26 Sir Harold Thompson
 4 pp. typescript biography of Thompson by Bowen.

 Some printed matter is also included in the folder.
- B.27 'The Right Reverend John Wilkins, F.R.S. (1614-1672)', by
 E.J. Bowen and Sir Harold Hartley.
 Offprint from Notes and Records of the Royal Society,
 15, 1960.
- B.28 L.A. Woodward
 Typescript draft and offprint of Preface to a Festschrift
 presented to Woodward on his retirement.

 Folder includes invitation to Bowen to write the Preface and
 misc. background material.
- B.29 Miscellaneous

 'Park Town, Oxford'
 Photocopy of 7 pp. ms. account of the history of Park
 Town, March 1976.

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