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Descriptive Summary

Identifier    ICU.SPCL.SALISBURY
Title         Salisbury, Rollin D. Papers
Date          1880-1922
Size          7.5 linear feet (15 boxes)
Repository    Special Collections Research Center
              University of Chicago Library
              1100 East 57th Street
              Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract      Rollin D. Salisbury, Professor at the University of Chicago, Dean of the
               Ogden School of Social Science, and Head of the Department of Geography
               was one of the scholars on the Peary Relief Expedition. Salisbury's papers
               consist of fifteen boxes containing personal correspondence, legal and
               financial records, professional correspondence, notebooks, lecture outlines,
               manuscripts, speeches, clippings, photographs, and postcards.

Information on Use
Access         No restrictions.

Citation       When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Salisbury, Rollin D. Papers,
                 [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note
Rollin D. Salisbury (1858-1922), a native of Spring Prairie, Wisconsin, graduated from Beloit
College (Ph.B., 1881) as a student of Thomas Chrowder Chamberlin, professor of geology.
When Chamberlin resigned his post at Beloit in 1882 to become chief of the Glacial Division of
the U.S. Geological Survey, Salisbury assumed his position on the faculty, completed a second
degree (A.M., 1884), and remained at Beloit until 1891 teaching geology, zoology, and botany.
In 1891, Chamberlin, as president of the University of Wisconsin, brought Salisbury to Madison
as a professor of geology with a concentration in geographic geology. Their joint tenure at
Wisconsin was brief, however, for in 1892 both left to join the faculty of the recently organized
University of Chicago, Chamberlin as first Head Professor of the Department of Geology, and
Salisbury as Professor of Geographic Geology in the Department.

Once in Chicago, Chamberlin and Salisbury turned their energies to the formation of the new
Department and the launching of a professional publication, the Journal of Geology, which
Salisbury served as managing editor and editor for geographic geology. Salisbury’s abilities soon brought him other University positions as well: he was named Dean of the University Colleges (1894-1896), University Examiner (1895-1898), and Dean of the Ogden Graduate School of Science (1899-1922), a post giving him general administrative supervision of the University’s graduate programs in physics, chemistry, biology, geology, and astronomy. In 1903, Salisbury’s duties as professor and dean were enlarged by his appointment as the first Head of the Department of Geography, the first graduate department of its kind at an American university. Patterned after a proposal submitted by J. Paul Goode in 1902, the Department marked a decisive step in the development of academic geography from a specialization within geology to an independent discipline with its own field of inquiry. Drawing on his work in the geographic and physiographic aspects of geology, Salisbury recruited faculty and guided the curriculum of the Department of Geography for the next fifteen years, while continuing to offer courses both there and in the Department of Geology and Paleontology as Professor of Geographic Geology. In 1919, with the retirement of Chamberlin, Salisbury assumed the position of Head of the Department of Geology and Paleontology, an administrative post he held until his sudden illness and death in 1922.

Although Salisbury’s most substantial contributions were in teaching and administration, he also devoted himself to a wide range of field projects in geology and geography. During the school year 1887-1888, while on leave from Beloit to study at the University of Heidelberg, he traveled extensively in Germany and made careful notes on Pleistocene formations in the north German lowlands. In 1895, having been recommended by Chamberlin, he was able to make further observations on glacial activity as geologist with the Peary Relief Expedition in northern Greenland. He served for many years as assistant geologist (1882-1892) and geologist (1892-1910) with the U.S. Geological Survey, and for much of that time (1891-1910) was supervisor of the Pleistocene Division of the Geological Survey of New Jersey. In 1919, as a result of his considerable experience, Salisbury was named a member of the Board of Commissioners of the Illinois State Geological Survey. Publications generated by his field and survey work included the Preliminary Paper on the Driftless Area of the Upper Mississippi Valley (1885) written with Chamberlin; a series of reports on the geology of New Jersey which appeared from 1892 to 1917; a text in the American Science Series, Geology (3 vols., 1904-1906), written with Chamberlin; and Physiography, a text issued in five editions between 1907 and 1919.

Salisbury’s specialization in geographic geology and his direction of the first graduate department of geography gave him important responsibilities in the development of professional geography. The first president of the Geographic Society of Chicago (1898-1899), Salisbury was also a charter member (1904), vice-president (1908), and president (1912) of the Association of American Geographers, and a chairman and vice-president (1917) of Section E (Geology and Geography) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. His most lasting impact on geography, however, was felt through the work of his students, who in the early decades of the twentieth century composed nearly a third of the membership of the A.A.G. and included such figures as Wallace Atwood, Wellington Jones, Charles Colby, Harlan Barrows, Robert Platt, and Carl Sauer. While these scholars, all leaders in the first generation of academic geography, produced theories and methods that eventually diverged widely from Salisbury’s
model, they nevertheless remained faithful to the spirit of his weekly student-staff seminars and found their careers shaped by his insistence on the importance of rigorous field research.

Scope Note

Series I: PERSONAL PAPERS

The personal papers are organized into four sub-series: Personal Correspondence, Legal and Financial Correspondence, Legal and Financial Documents, and Biographical. Typescripts of early Salisbury letters found in were evidently prepared by Helen L. D. Richardson during her custody of the papers. Charles Keyes, in his obituary, reveals that while Salisbury commonly signed himself R. D. Salisbury, he had no middle name.

Series II: PROFESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE


Series III: NOTEBOOKS

Several notebooks in this series date from Salisbury’s year of study and travel in Germany, England, and other parts of Europe during 1887-1888. The notes collected on his tour of scientific buildings and laboratories at Johns Hopkins and Harvard in 1889 undoubtedly proved useful in equipping Walker Museum three years later. The remainder of the notebooks, while largely undated, reveal the range of Salisbury’s intellectual interests.

Series IV: LECTURES, NOTES AND MANUSCRIPTS

Material in this series has been arranged chronologically within seventeen topical categories. For the most part, these professional writings on geology and geography consist of outlines prepared for University courses or public lectures, although some are more substantial prose manuscripts. The records of the Society for Visual Education document Salisbury’s efforts to harness the new mass medium of motion pictures for the cause of socialization and popular enlightenment.

Series V: SPEECHES
In contrast to the lectures in Series IV, these speeches were prepared for specific occasions such as the presentation of the Geographic Society of Chicago’s Helen Culver Gold Medal or a high school graduation. The organization is chronological.

Series VI: TEACHING MATERIALS

While material in this series is miscellaneous in character, it focuses on subjects in which Salisbury considered himself to be an authority: administration and teaching. In his precise suggestions on the conduct of classes and communication with students, one encounters the conceptual basis for his formidable pedagogical reputation.

Series VII: PHOTOGRAPHS AND POSTCARDS

These photographs and postcards depict scenes of Salisbury’s travels and field excursions in Europe, South America, the Caribbean, and the western United States. Those from the Peary Relief Expedition to Greenland are identified on the verso in Salisbury’s hand.

Related Resources

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

Additional sources in the University Archives include the Presidents’ Papers; the papers of Harlan H. Barrows, J. Harlen Bretz, Thomas C. Chamberlin, W. F. E. Gurley, Robert S. Platt, and Stuart Weller; the records of the Department of Geography and of the Department

Subject Headings

- Willis, Bailey, 1857-1949
- Walcott, Charles D. (Charles Doolittle), 1850-1927
- Leverett, Frank, 1859-1943
- Gilbert, Grove Karl, 1843-1918
- Chamberlin, Thomas C. (Thomas Chrowder), 1843-1928
- Salisbury, Rollin D., 1858-1922
- University of Chicago. Dept. of Geology
- University of Chicago. Walker Museum
- Journal of Geology
- Geologists
- Geographers

INVENTORY

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• "The Work of the Wind," outline, 1905
• "Functions of the Atmospheric Elements," 1910
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• Atmosphere, outline, undated
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• "The History of the Great Lakes," outline, undated
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• "The Purposes of Geographic Instruction and the Phases of the Subject Best Adapted to These Purposes," outline, 1910
• "What is Geography?" outline, 1914
• "The Importance of Geography," outline, 1916
• "Why Geography is Important," outline, 1916
• "Mathematical Geography...The Atmosphere...The Ocean," outline, undated
• "Geography Teaching," outline, undated
• "The Earth in Its Relation to Man," outline, undated
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• "Vocational Aspects of Geology," outline, 1916
• Relation of geology to warfare, 1918
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• "Historical Geology," outline, undated

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• "Trip to the Grand Canyon," outline, 1897 Grand Canyon, outline, undated
• "The Canyon or Gorge," outline, undated

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• Lecture to Geological Club, outline, 1894 Review of G. Frederick Wright and Warren Upham, Greenland Icefields and Life in the North Atlantic (1896), undated
• "Geography of the West Coast of Greenland," outline, undated
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• "General Topography of the State," outline, undated
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• Information on The Mining World, 1912
• "Memorandum-Field Museum," outline, 1912
• "Memorandum," 1913
• Rock and gravel, outline, 1919
• Definitions of ‘mineral’ and ‘rock,’ undated

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Origin and History of the Earth
• "The Cosmical Aspects of Geology," outline, 1898
• "Great Changes of the Past," outline, 1908
• "Glimpses into Unfamiliar Chapters of the Earth’s History," outline, 1910
• History of the earth, outline, 1910
• Origin of the earth, 1910
• Origin and history of the earth, outline, 1911
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• "The Planetesimal Hypothesis," 1914
• Nebular hypothesis and planetesimal hypothesis, outline, undated
• Origin and history of the earth, outline, undated
• "The Great Changes in Our Conceptions of Earth History," outline, undated
• Origin and history of the earth and of life on earth, outline, undated
• Origin of the solar system, outline, undated "Tetrahedral Hypothesis," definition, undated

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• Peary Relief Expedition of 1895

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"Lieutenant Peary’s Work in the Arctic Regions," 1895
• "Repairing the Atlantic Cable," 3 copies, undated
• "The Trip of 1895," outline, undated
• Account of the course of the Expedition, outline, two versions, undated
• The Expedition and South Greenlanders, three versions, undated
• Physiography, General

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• The importance of physical geography, 1910
• "Physiographic Subdivision of the United States," outline, 1911
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• "Physiography: Teacher’s Outline," undated
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- "Use of Motion Pictures," outline, 1919
- "Americanization Program," 1920
- Topics for films on science, 1920
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- "Comments on 'Our Government' Film; Dairy Film; The Wasp Film" 1922
- "Notes on Reels," 1922
- List of officers and members of advisory board of the Society, undated

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• George Washington, February 22, 1889
• Relation of geology and geography to other disciplines, 1894
• "Address of Professor Salisbury at the Presentation of the Bust of Professor Chamberlin," February 7, 1903
• Presentation of Helen Culver Gold Medal to Robert E. Peary, January 26, 1910

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• Presentation of Helen Culver Gold Medal to Sir John Murray, April 27, 1911
• Given at dinner honoring Angus Hibbard, May 4, 1911
• Unveiling of portrait of T. C. Chamberlin, Beloit College, June 13, 1911
• Presentation of Helen Culver Gold Medal to William Morris Davis, February 18, 1913
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• Dedication of Thomas Arnold Greene Memorial Museum, Milwaukee, October 31, 1913

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• Lane Technical High School graduation, June 16, 1916
• Remarks at Dune Park hearing, November 20, 1916
• Acceptance of Helen Culver Gold Medal, 1917
• Unveiling of Salisbury portrait, February 8, 1917
• "Prepared for Mich. Sch. of Mines, but something else given instead," April 12, 1917
• Printing school graduation, October, 1917
• American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting, Pittsburgh, December, 1917

Box 14
Folder 2
Speeches, 1918-1919
• Promoting sale of Liberty Bonds, April, 1918
• Role of science in warfare, Whitewater Normal School, June 8, 1918
• Presentation of Helen Culver Gold Medal to Vilhjalmur Stefansson, March 10, 1919
• Beta Theta Pi dinner, May 2, 1919
• Beloit College vespers, May 4, 1919
• Retirement of T. C. Chamberlin, June 10, 1919

Box 14
Folder 3
Speeches, undated
Series VI: Teaching Materials

Box 14
Folder 4
University administration and curriculum, 4 untitled manuscripts and miscellaneous notes, 1898 and undated

Box 14
Folder 5
Classes
- "Conduct of Classes," 4 copies, 1910-1919
- "Suggestions Relative to Conduct of Classes," outline, 1912
- Proper classroom attitudes and methods, outline, 1913
- Miscellaneous notes on conduct of classes, undated

Box 14
Folder 6
Communication with students in the classroom, manuscript and typed transcript, 1889

Box 14
Folder 7
Syllabi of RDS University Extension Division courses, 1894-1902
- Dept. of Geology course offerings, 1922-1923

Box 14
Folder 8
Exams
- Examination questions, 1894, 1913
- Examination paper by James Perry Cook, May 20, 1904

Box 14
Folder 9
Field trips
- "Notes Relative to Value of Field Trips," 1901
- "Field School of Geology, Bulletin No. 1," 1911

Box 14
Folder 10
Laboratory exercises
- The Interpretation of Topographic Maps - Laboratory Manual, by RDS and A. C. Trowbridge (1913), galley proofs
- Laboratory exercises used by A. C. Trowbridge at the State University of Iowa, 1922

Box 14
Folder 11
Bibliographies on geology, 1911-1912 and undated

Series VII: Photographs and Postcards

Box 14
Folder 12
    "Caracoles en los Andes"
Box 14
Folder 13
    Europe, scenery and friends
Box 14
Folder 14
    Garden of the Gods, Colorado Springs, Colorado
Box 15
Folder 1
    Grand Canyon
Box 15
Folder 2
    Hawes, Rollin B.
Box 15
Folder 3
    Peary Relief Expedition, 1895
Box 15
Folder 4
    Puerto Rico
Box 15
Folder 5
    Western United States (includes RDS field party, Indians, stagecoach, and Yellowstone National Park)
Box 15
Folder 6
    Yosemite Valley
Box 15
Folder 7
    Yosemite and California, postcards