

Guide to the Lafayette Benedict Mendel Papers

MS 1146



compiled by William E. Brown, Jr.

January 1982

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 1146

CREATOR: Mendel, Lafayette B. (Lafayette Benedict), 1872-1935

TITLE: Lafayette Benedict Mendel papers

DATES: 1879-1941

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 6.75 linear feet (17 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers are composed of family and professional correspondence, writings, diaries, scientific notebooks, research files, photographs, and memorabilia which relate to Lafayette Mendel's research on nutrition and growth. Professional correspondents include both Yale colleagues and scientists and nutritionists from around the world. Topical files also document his activities as chairman of the Department of Physiological Chemistry (1920-1935).

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1146>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1146>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Richard L. and Robert F. Herrmann, 1980, and Benjamin Katzin, 1997.

Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

Lafayette Benedict Mendel Papers. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Biographical / Historical

Lafayette Benedict Mendel was born in Delhi, New York, on February 5, 1872. He received a Ph.D. from Yale University in 1893 and remained at Yale all his professional life, attaining the rank of professor of physiological chemistry in 1903. His research focused on nutrition, particularly the amino acids of proteins and the importance of vitamins in diet. He served on the Inter-Allied Scientific Food Commission during World War I and was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. Mendel died in New Haven, Connecticut, on December 9, 1935.

Scope and Contents

Lafayette B. Mendel achieved international prominence as a scientist and educator for his research and teaching in the specialized areas of nutrition and diet. Although the Mendel Papers reflect the career interests of Mendel, they lack any comprehensive research data relative to his scientific investigations. The papers are divided into four series:

- I. CORRESPONDENCE
- II. WRITINGS, NOTES, AND MEMORABILIA
- III. TOPICAL FILES
- IV. PHOTOGRAPHS

Series I is divided into select and general correspondence, as originally maintained by Professor Mendel. Select correspondence consists of letters to and from his wife Alice and with nieces and other relatives. (An asterisk next to a name on the folder lists indicates that the folder contains ten or more items.) In addition there are letters of introduction written on behalf of Mendel by Herbert Hoover and F. C. Walcott, as officials of the United States Food Administration. General Correspondence (1905-1940) is arranged chronologically. Mendel corresponded with many of his Yale colleagues as well as with scientists and nutritionists around the world. Individuals of note include: James R. Angell, F. C. Bing, W. B. Cannon, Russell H. Chittenden, Harvey Cushing, R. H. Hubbell, Jacques Loeb, Graham Lusk, Clemens Pirquet, Anson Phelps Stokes, Thomas A. Storey, Victor C. Vaughan, Carl Voegtlin, William H. Welch, and R. S. Woodward. The subjects of this correspondence were often routine matters of lectures, conferences, and congratulatory notes on publications. A smaller portion of this correspondence does focus on the exchange of scientific information and thought relative to Mendel's work in areas of nutrition and growth. This material is incomplete, however, as the research data and enclosures, which are the subject of many of the letters, are missing from the papers. Additional correspondence is also located in Series III, again, as originally maintained by Mendel.

Series II contains the professional writings, student papers, and memorabilia of Mendel. Professional writings include drafts and printed copies of the author's scientific investigations. The subjects of diet, digestion, growth, food economics, nutrition, and Vitamin "A" are some of the areas of research represented. Material here ranges from an early manuscript entitled "Growth" (folders 26-27), to experimental notes and assignments (folders 28-30), to the two-volume edition of *Collected Papers* (1901-1907), edited by Mendel and Russell H. Chittenden (folders 31-32). Articles published by Mendel are arranged chronologically and have been cited in the various bibliographies (folder 23) compiled and maintained by the author. The articles in the collection are not a total representation of Mendel's work. Files relating to "Physiological Seminary" (folders 40-41) consist of lists of papers reviewed by students and faculty of the Physiological Chemistry Department at Yale. These papers dealt with a variety of nutritional and scientific subjects.

Student writings consist largely of college admission exams, papers, and poetry. Personal journals (1884-1935) and notebooks (1888-1909) also deal primarily, but not exclusively, with the student years of Mendel. Entries in both the journals and cashbooks (1906-1935) are perfunctory personal and financial accounts of activities and expenditures. Entries in the journals often consist of no more than a scribbled "At home" or "Laboratory" to denote the primary locale for the day in question. Notebooks (40 volumes) include class notes from Mendel's undergraduate and graduate subjects, and also contain experimental notes for the later years (1884-1909). The folders of Memorabilia include several eulogies of Mendel, by colleagues, students, and friends, which provide detailed biographical data. Clippings and programs from Yale activities and travel brochures from foreign visits are also present.

Series III contains Topical Files, a distinct set of files created by Mendel on a wide range of topics. These files include correspondence and papers on many specific activities and interests unmentioned or only superficially discussed in Series I. These files contain material on many committees and foundations of which Mendel was a member. Two examples are the American Medical Association's Committee on Foods, and the Commission on Medical Education. Extensive budgetary data and correspondence is present for the Department of Physiological Chemistry, which Mendel was a vital part of from 1892-1935. Additionally, there is correspondence on the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, relating to grant applications and memberships. Material on the Russell Sage Foundation focuses on the Institute of Pathology, as Mendel served there as director and secretary. Mendel also served as an advisor to the Protein and Nutrition Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Chemistry and Soils. Reports and recommendations are included in this file. Other topics of interest focus on the New York Food and Health Exposition of 1932-1933, the Pennsylvania State Emergency Relief Fund, 1933, and "personnel" files which include correspondence to and from Mendel relative to the staffing of academic positions around the world.

Series IV consists of photographs in the Mendel Collection and is a fine complement to the papers. Individual photographs of Mendel in his youth and as an adult, group poses, and individual photographs of the Mendel family, and moments with colleague Thomas Osborne, Mrs. Alice Mendel, Yale students, and while in Germany add a personal flavor to the collection.

The Mendel Papers were donated by Richard L. and Robert F. Herrmann. Additional material was transferred from the Yale Medical Library and the World War I Collection. Related collections holding material by or about Lafayette B. Mendel include the Russell H. Chittenden Papers, and the Sheffield Scientific School Papers. The Herrmann donation was accessioned in 1980.

Arrangement

Arranged in four series and one addition: I. Correspondence, 1905-1941. II. Writings, Notes, and Memorabilia, 1879-1937. III. Topical Files, 1895-1941. IV. Photographs, 1880-1935.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1905-1941

Select

b. 1, f. 1	Adolph, Edward F.	1917-1923
b. 1, f. 2	Mendel, Mrs. Alice (*)	1920-1936, undated
b. 1, f. 3	Mendel, Lafayette B.	1922-1935, undated
b. 1, f. 4	Selig, Amy	1924-1926, undated
b. 1, f. 5	Selig, Janet A. (*)	1930-1936, undated
b. 1, f. 6	Selig, Jules (*)	1919-1937, undated
b. 1, f. 7	United States Food Administration (Herbert Hoover and F. C. Walcott)	1918-1921

General

b. 1, f. 8	1905-1912	1905-1912
b. 1, f. 9-16	1915-1929	1915-1929
b. 2, f. 17-21	1930-1941	1930-1941
b. 2, f. 22	Undated	Undated

Series II: WRITINGS, NOTES, AND MEMORABILIA, 1879-1937

<u>Professional</u>		
b. 2, f. 23	Bibliographies	1894-1935
b. 2, f. 24-25	"On the Proteolysis of Crystallized Globulin," Ph.D. thesis (2 drafts) English	1893
b. 2, f. 26	"Growth," pp. 1-71 English	undated
b. 2, f. 27	"Growth," pp. 72-151 English	undated
b. 3, f. 28	Experiment notes	1898-1918
b. 3, f. 29-30	Experiment assignments and reference material	1924-1934
b. 3, f. 31	<i>Collected Papers</i> , edited by R. H. Chittenden and L. B. Mendel (vol. I) English	1901-1904
b. 3, f. 32	<i>Collected Papers</i> , edited by R. H. Chittenden and L. B. Mendel (vol. II) English	1904-1907
b. 3, f. 33	Articles	1896-1904
b. 4, f. 34-38	Articles	1917-1930, 1932- 1934, undated
b. 5, f. 39	Speech notes	1917-1918
b. 5, f. 40-41	Physiological Seminary, list of papers	1904-1919
<u>Student</u>		
b. 5, f. 42	Delaware Academy, Delhi, New York (publications)	1886-1887
b. 5, f. 43	List of books owned by L. B. Mendel	[ca. 1887]
b. 5, f. 44	Yale College admission exams	1887, 1893
b. 5, f. 45	Yale College exam booklets	1887-1892
b. 5, f. 46	Papers and essays	1890-1893, undated
b. 5, f. 47	Poems	undated
<u>Journals</u>		
b. 6, f. 48	1884-1889 (6 vols.)	
b. 6, f. 49	1890-1892 (3 vols.)	
b. 6, f. 50	1893-1895 (3 vols.)	
b. 6, f. 51	1896-1898 (3 vols.)	
b. 6, f. 52	1899-1904 (6 vols.)	

Journals (continued)

b. 7, f. 53	1905-1909 (5 vols.)
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b. 7, f. 54	1910-1912 (3 vols.)
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b. 7, f. 55	1913-1917 (5 vols.)
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Cashbooks

b. 7, f. 56	1906-1921 (2 vols.)
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b. 7, f. 57	1922-1935 (3 vols.)
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Notebooks

b. 8, f. 58	1888-1890 (4 vols.)
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b. 8, f. 59	1890 (4 vols.)
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b. 8, f. 60	1890-1891 (4 vols.)
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b. 8, f. 61	1891 (4 vols.)
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b. 9, f. 62	1892-1893 (3 vols.)
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b. 9, f. 63	1894 (2 vols.)
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b. 9, f. 64	1895-1896 (5 vols.)
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b. 9, f. 65	1895-1896 (5 vols.)
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b. 9, f. 66	1897-1900 (2 vols.)
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b. 10, f. 67	1903 (1 vol.)
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b. 10, f. 68	1908 (2 vols.)
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b. 10, f. 69	1908 (1 vol.)
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b. 10, f. 70	1909 and undated (2 vols. and loose papers)
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Memorabilia

b. 11, f. 71-72	Eulogies	1925-1937
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b. 11, f. 73	Clippings	1891, 1926-1936, n.d
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b. 11, f. 74	Yale programs	1890-1891
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b. 11, f. 75	Scrapbooks (clippings)	1879
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b. 11, f. 76	Menus, travel brochures, mailing lists	1887, 1911-1918, n.d,
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Series III: TOPICAL FILES, 1895-1941

b. 12, f. 77	American Medical Association, Committee on Foods	1933-1934
b. 12, f. 78	American Gastro-Enterological Association <i>Transactions</i>	1935
b. 12, f. 79	Announcements of lectures	1923, 1930
b. 12, f. 80	Associated Grocery Manufacturers of America, award	1935
b. 12, f. 81	Chemical monographs	1929-1935
b. 12, f. 82	<i>Chemical Reviews</i> English	1930-1935
b. 12, f. 83	Commission on Medical Education	1929-1933
	Department of Physiological Chemistry	
b. 12, f. 84	Appointments and recommendations	1921-1929
b. 12, f. 85-86	Budgets	1921-1925
b. 13, f. 87	Budgets	1926-1934
b. 13, f. 88-90	Correspondence	1920-1936
b. 13, f. 91	Doctoral recipients	1895-1935
b. 13, f. 92	Graduate School program	1919-1933
	Guggenheim Memorial Foundation	
b. 13, f. 93-95	Correspondence	1930-1934
b. 14, f. 96	<i>Journal of Nutrition</i> English	1932-1935
b. 14, f. 97	New York Food and Health Exposition	1931-1933
b. 14, f. 98	Pasteurized milk	1931
b. 14, f. 99	Pennsylvania State Emergency Relief Fund	1932-1933
b. 14, f. 100-101	Personnel	1922-1934
b. 14, f. 102	Pharmacology	1933-1934
b. 14, f. 103	Resignations	1935-1936
b. 14, f. 104	Rose, Mary Swartz (eulogy)	1941
b. 14, f. 105	Russell Sage Institute	1926-1935
b. 14, f. 106	U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Chemistry and Soils	1930-1935
b. 14, f. 107	Writings (by other scientists)	1887-1931

Series IV: PHOTOGRAPHS, [ca. 1880-1935]

b. 15, f. 108	Mendel, L. B. (youth)	[ca. 1880-1891]
b. 15, f. 109	Mendel, L. B. (adult)	[ca. 1892-1935]
b. 15, f. 110	Mendel, L. B. (in groups)	1900-1918
b. 15, f. 111	Mendel, L. B. (with wife, Alice)	1925-1933
b. 15, f. 112	Mendel, L. B. (with students and faculty)	1899-1904
b. 15, f. 113	Mendel family (groups)	1885-1992
b. 15, f. 114	Mendel family (individuals)	1892-1905
b. 15, f. 115	Breslau, Germany (groups and buildings)	1895-1896
b. 15, f. 116	Delhi, New York (groups and buildings, including family business,)	undated
b. 15, f. 117	Yale--student rooms	1890
b. 15, f. 118	Yale and University of Virginia medical buildings (interiors and exteriors)	1901, 1926
b. 15, f. 119	Men	1896-1907, undated
b. 16, f. 120	Children	1895-1917, undated
b. 16, f. 121	Allantain photos [snowflakes?]	undated
b. 16, f. 122	Laboratory specimens and animals	undated

Accession 1998-M-099: Additional Material, 1917-1934, undated

This addition is composed of correspondence and writings from the office of Lafayette B. Mendel in the Department of Physiological Chemistry. The chairman of the department, Dr. C. N. H. Long, ordered the disposal of Mendel's files. Dr. Benjamin Katzin, then a graduate student, was allowed to look through the files and saved these few folders of material as a representative sample.

Correspondence comprises the bulk of this addition. It is arranged in chronological order. Letters of Elmer Verner McCollum and Harry Steenbock, fellow scientists interested in nutrition, are included.

b. 1, f. 1-7	Correspondence	1917-1934
b. 1, f. 8	Writings	1934
b. 1, f. 9	Fragments and unidentified	undated

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Educators
Medicine
Nutrition -- Physiological aspects

Occupations

Chemists

Names

Angell, James Rowland, 1869-1949
Bing, Franklin C. (Franklin Church), 1902-
Cannon, Walter B. (Walter Bradford), 1871-1945
Chittenden, R. H. (Russell Henry), 1856-1943
Cushing, Harvey, 1869-1939
Hubbell, R. H.
Loeb, Jacques, 1859-1924
Lusk, Graham, 1866-1932
McCollum, Elmer Verner, 1879-
Mendel, Lafayette B. (Lafayette Benedict),
1872-1935
Pirquet von Cesanatico, Clemens Peter, Freiherr,
1874-1929
Steenbock, Harry, 1886-1967
Stokes, Anson Phelps, 1874-1958
Storey, Thomas A. (Thomas Andrew),
1875-1943
Vaughan, Victor C. (Victor Clarence), 1851-1929
Voegtlin, Carl, 1879-1960
Welch, William Henry, 1850-1934
Woodward, Robert Simpson, 1849-1924

Corporate Bodies

Yale College (1887-). Class of 1891
Yale University. School of Medicine. Laboratory
of Physiology
Yale University -- Curricula
Yale University -- Faculty