Descriptive Summary
Title: Alexis Carrel Scrapbook
Date (inclusive): 1908-1919
Collection number: 219
Extent: 1 box (0.5 linear ft.)
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library.Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library History and Special Collections for the Sciences
Los Angeles, California 90095-1490
Abstract: This collection relating to the French/American surgeon Alexis Carrel (1873-1944) contains materials which had been mounted or loosely inserted into a scrapbook. Most of the items are newspaper clippings, plus some manuscript letters and ephemera. Dr. Carrel, whose research in vascular suturing and the transplantation of blood vessels and organs in animals won him the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1912, also won him the enmity of anti-vivisectionists; a few of the letters and articles express their viewpoint vividly. As a French Army surgeon during the 1914-1919 war Dr. Carrel collaborated on important advances in the antisepsis of wound treatment. His work with tissue culture also contributed significantly to the understanding of viruses and the preparation of vaccines.
Physical location: UCLA Biomedical Library History and Special Collections for the Sciences
Language of Material: Collection materials in English,French
Access
The collection is open for use.
Publication Rights
Property rights in the physical objects belong to the UCLA Biomedical Library. Literary rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. It is the responsibility of the researcher to determine who holds the copyright and pursue the copyright owner or his or her heir for permission to publish if the Biomedical Library does not hold the copyright.
Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Alexis Carrel Scrapbook, 219, Louise M. Darling Biomedical Library History and Special Collections for the Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles.
Acquisition Information
The scrapbook was purchased from Scientia, 2009.
Biography
Dr. Alexis Carrel (1873-1944) was a complicated, multi-faceted individual. Here are some descriptors retrieved on a Google search of his name: surgeon, biologist, sociologist, Nobel laureate, vivisectionist, eugenicist, Nazi sympathizer, genius, innovator, believer in miracles, ideologist.
Carrel was born and educated in Lyon, France, and received his medical degree from the University of Lyon in 1900. In 1904 he went to the University of Chicago, then moved to the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in New York in 1906; he was affiliated with that institution until his retirement in 1939. His vacations were spent in France, and he maintained his French citizenship. During the 1914-1918 war he served as a military surgeon in the French Army. He died in Paris in 1944.
An exceptionally gifted surgeon, Carrel, from early in his career focused his research on devising innovative techniques for vascular suture and the transplantation of blood vessels and organs. It was this work which earned him the 1912 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine. During his years as an army surgeon he utilized a chlorine-based solution, originated by the English chemist Henry Drysdale Dakin, to minimize infection. For this major advance in the treatment of traumatic wounds Carrel was awarded the Légion d'honneur. His experiments also laid the groundwork for future developments in several related fields: his work with tissue culture contributed significantly to the understanding of viruses and the preparation of vaccines; and in the development of medical devices, the special sterilizing glass pump he and Charles A. Lindberg designed that could keep animal organs alive for several days or weeks was a significant trail blazer for the field.
Scope and Content
The collection includes ten leaves from a loose-leaf scrapbook which are covered with numerous clippings from English- and French-language newspapers, all dealing with the surgical work of Dr. Alexis Carrel. Also included are numerous items places loosely between the album pages: additional newspaper and magazine articles, six letters addressed to Dr. Carrel, and one unidentified snapshot of a young man. A copy of "Time" magazine (v. 26, no. 12, 16 Sep 1935), bearing a portrait of Carrel on its cover, has been added by the processing staff.
The letters divide four to two in attacking Dr. Carrel for vivisection, versus asking for help in medical problems through his newly perfected surgical methods. The newspaper articles invert that percentage, with approximately two thirds of the reports agog about the surgical marvels he was performing, and a third or less writing about individuals or groups decrying his work as cruel, against God's will, or unnecessary.

The majority of clippings are without identification of publication, place, or year.

UCLA Catalog Record ID
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Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects
Carrel, Alexis, 1873-1944 -- Manuscripts
Vascular Surgical Procedures -- Popular Works
Vivisection
Wound and Injuries -- surgery -- Popular Works

Genres and Forms
Scrapbooks

Folder 1
Scrapbook leaves. 1908-1919
Physical Description: 10 leaves
Scope and Content Note
numerous newspaper clippings glued to one or both sides of the leaves, taken from English- and French-language publications
Note
a minority of the reports deal with antivisection attacks and activities directed against Dr. Carrel and his work; the majority either consist of neutral reporting or are overtly admiring

Folder 2
Additional newspaper and magazine stories. 1910-1919
Scope and Content Note
more extensive newspaper stories in English and French, two of which focus partly on Mme. Carrel; an article from "The Outlook" by Earl Mayo, "Big battles against disease: the advance in surgery"

Box 3
Autograph letters. 1910
Scope and Content Note
not all letters bear a time or place of origin; four are dated 1910, and come from Ohio, New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia

Folder 4
Miscellaneous items.
Scope and Content Note
snapshot; Liberty Bonds flyer; envelope

Folder 5
"Time: the weekly newsmagazine". 1935 September 16
Scope and Content Note
cover portrait of Dr. Alexis Carrel, and story in "Medicine" section