Finding Aid for the Frederick Johnson Papers, 1948-1968

Collection number: 1295

UCLA Library, Department of Special Collections
Manuscripts Division

Los Angeles, CA

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Frederick Johnson Papers,
Date (inclusive): 1948-1968
Collection number: 1295
Creator: Johnson, Frederick, 1904-
Extent: 9 boxes (4.5 linear ft.)
Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library. Dept. of Special Collections.
Los Angeles, California 90095-1575
Abstract: Frederick Johnson (b.1904) was an anthropologist and curator of the R.S. Peabody Foundation. He became chairman of the Committee on Radioactive Carbon 14 set up by the American Anthropological Association. Johnson later became president of the Radiocarbon Dates Association. The collection consists of correspondence and papers relating to Dr. Frederick Johnson in the development of the radiocarbon 14 dating method.
Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library, Department of Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.
Language: English.

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Restrictions on Access
COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Advance notice required for access.

Provenance/Source of Acquisition
Gift of Frederick Johnson, 1982.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Frederick Johnson Papers (Collection 1295). Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

UCLA Catalog Record ID
UCLA Catalog Record ID: 4233219

Biography
Johnson was an anthropologist and curator of the R.S. Peabody Foundation; became chairman of the Committee on Radioactive Carbon 14 set up by the American Anthropological Association, and charged with providing archeological and geological advice and assistance to Dr. Willard F. Libby in his research on radiocarbon dating, for which he was awarded the 1960 Nobel Prize in chemistry; Johnson later became president of the Radiocarbon Dates Association.
**Scope and Content**

Collection consists of correspondence and papers relating to Dr. Frederick Johnson, anthropologist and R.S. Peabody Foundation curator, in the development of the radiocarbon 14 dating method. Includes information on assembled samples, the progress of the study, and scholarly reaction to Johnson's work as Chair of the Committee on Radioactive Carbon 14 set up by the American Anthropological Association. Also contains material related to various conferences as well as organizational materials, correspondence, and financial records relating to the subsequent Radiocarbon Dates Association, of which Johnson was president.

**Organization and Arrangement**

Arranged in the following series:

3. Conferences on radiocarbon dating: correspondence and papers (Boxes 2-5).
4. Committee for distribution of radiocarbon dates files (Box 5).
5. Financial material and correspondence with John Ramsden and Robert Pollard, 1959-64 (Box 6).
6. Correspondence regarding errors (Boxes 6-9).

The papers relate to the professional involvement of Dr. Frederick Johnson, anthropologist and curator of The R.S. Peabody Foundation, in the development of the radiocarbon 14 dating method. They fall into 3 categories:

1. Papers, chiefly correspondence, of Johnson as Chair of the Committee on Radioactive Carbon 14 which was set up by The American Anthropological Association at the request of Willard F. Libby.
2. The other members of the Committee were Donald Collier, Richard Foster Flint and Froelich Rainey.
3. The Committee's purposes included the provision of suitable test samples for Libby's research into radiocarbon dating, then in its initial stages. The papers give information not only on the samples assembled but also on progress of the work and reactions to it by the scholarly community.
4. Correspondence and related materials about various conferences in the U.S. and elsewhere on radiocarbon dating which Dr. Johnson helped to organize.
5. Papers, including organizational materials, correspondence and financial records relating to the Radiocarbon Dates Association Incorporated, of which Dr. Johnson was President. The Association grew out of the Committee's work and provided card sets for dating purposes.

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog. Johnson, Frederick, 1904- --Archives. Anthropologists--United States--Archival resources. Radiocarbon dating--Archival resources.

**Related Material**

Willard F. Libby Papers (Collection 1276). Available at Department of Special Collections, UCLA.

| **Conferences** | |
| Box 2 | re radiocarbon dating: correspondence and papers, 1955-1959. |
| Box 3 | 1953-1956. |
| Box 4 | 1956-1962. |
| Box 5 | 1953-1956. |
| Box 5 | Committee for distribution of radio carbon dates, files re finances and production problems, 1958-1963. |
| Box 5 | Committee for distribution of radio carbon dates files: 1957-1964. |
| Box 6 | Financial material and correspondence with John Ramsden and Robert Pollard, 1959-1964. |
| **Correspondence re Errors** | |
| Box 7 | A - G. |
| Box 8 | H - S. |
| Box 9 | S - Z. |
Box 9

“Subject file.”

Scope and Content Note
Comprises material about incorporation, including articles of incorporation, minutes and correspondence.