Register of the Chauncey Depew Leake Papers, 1912-1978 MSS.78.6

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Note
History --History, California --GeneralBiological and Medical Sciences --Pharmacology and Pharmacy
Chauncey Depew Leake was born on September 5, 1896, in Elizabeth, New Jersey. He received the Litt.B. degree from Princeton in 1917, having studied philosophy, chemistry and biology in a famous class that included such distinguished writers as John Peale Bishop, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Edmund Wilson. When the United States entered World War I, he enlisted in the New Jersey National Guard. He served in a machine gun company, where he rose to the rank of first sergeant, and later was transferred to the Chemical Warfare Service. After the war, he continued investigations he'd begun into war gases at the University of Wisconsin, where he earned his M.S. (1920) and Ph.D. (1923) in pharmacology and physiology. At Wisconsin he also began teaching in the three areas that would occupy him throughout his career: he was an instructor in physiology (1920-1923), an assistant professor (1923-1925) and later associate professor (1925-1928) of pharmacology, and, beginning in 1921, he began teaching and writing on the history of science and medicine.

In 1928 Dr. Leake came to the University of California School of Medicine, where he established the Department of Pharmacology and served as a professor in that department. Later, he served as the librarian to the medical school and established the Department of the History of the Health Sciences, where he served as a senior lecturer. In 1942 he became executive vice-president of the University of Texas, where he established its Medical Branch at Galveston. In 1955 he went to the Ohio State University as a professor of pharmacology and lecturer in the history and philosophy of medicine. Returning to the University of California at San Francisco in 1962, he directed the research training program for medical students (1962-1965), lectured in pharmacology and the history and philosophy of medicine, and was a professor of medical jurisprudence at Hastings College of the Law (1963-1965).

Dr. Leake's research at UCSF covered a wide range of topics in the field of pharmacology. He was especially noted for work on anesthesia, and in the development of tranquillizers. A prolific writer, Dr. Leake produced over 25 books and more than 600 articles. His popular versions of Harvey's classic De Motu Cordis and Percival's Medical Ethics, the foundation for
modern bio-ethics, were both produced in the 1920s, have been translated into many languages and continue to be in demand. In 1960-1961, Dr. Leake held the American scientific community's highest honor, presidency of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, which he had previously served twice as vice-president. Among many other positions, he served as consultant to the National Research Council, the Public Health Service and the National Library of Medicine, and as chairman of the American Medical Association’s Section on Pharmacology. He also served as president of the History of Science Society and the Society for the History of Medicine. Chauncey Leake was an avid member of the Bohemian Club in San Francisco, where he died on January 11, 1978, just after the completion of a reading of his poems.

**Scope and Content**

Collection includes biographical materials, diaries, notes and poetry; correspondence (scientific and general), articles, reviews, lectures; syllabi and course materials; manuscripts (holograph and typescripts) of published and unpublished materials, student papers, and reprints. Another collection of Leake’s papers exists at the National Library of Medicine.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Medical papyri
Pharmacology
USSR—Travel, etc.
Bohemian Club
Chit Chat Club, San Francisco
Irwin Memorial Blood Bank, San Francisco
St. Luke’s Hospital, San Francisco
Alvarez, Walter
Evans, Herbert McLean
Harvey, William. De motu cordis
Hosack, David
Percival, Thomas
Porter, R. Langley
Valerius Cordus

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