

**Collection:** The John Scott Haldane Manuscript Collection**Names:** Haldane, John Scott, 1860-1936**Description:** This collection of letters and other materials was acquired from Hugh Macdonald Sinclair. It contains nearly 100 letters, the majority being to Haldane from his mother, Mary Elizabeth Haldane (née Burdon Sanderson). There are in addition manuscripts of papers, some published and some not, and the manuscript of an unpublished book. All letters are A.L.S. (autograph letter signed) unless otherwise indicated.**Dates:** 1891-1926**Location:** Memorial Room Rare Cabinet 27**Items:** 30 cm of textual records

**Inventory:**

**Part One: Letters (Filed in Haldane Box A unless otherwise indicated)**

**I. Letters from Mary E. Haldane to John Scott Haldane**

- 1891 16 April; 3 August; 28 August; 16 October; 17 October; 19 October; 26 November; 30 November.
- 1913 30 April; 27 August; 17 October; 16 November.
- 1915 20 February; 7 April; 12 April; 3 June; 2 July; 17 September; 10 October; 1 November; 22 December.
- 1916 12 February; 18 March; 27 March; 24 April; 20 June; 6 August; 29 August; 24 September; 1 October; 10 November.
- 1917 7 February; 3 March; 7 March; 24 April; 30 April; 11 August; 27 August; 8 October.
- 1918 7 April; 2 May.
- 1919 21 March; 1 May.
- 1920 25 February; 30 April; 6 September.
- 1921 30 April; 9 November.
- 1922 8 March; 5 May; ?June; 22 October.
- 1923 23 April; 27 April; 18 July.
- 1924 6 March; 13 March; 14 March; 17 March; 3 July; 24 July; 10 September; 30 September.

**II. Letters from Mary E. Haldane to John Scott Haldane and Kathleen**

1. 9 September, 1916.
2. 12 June, 1922

### III. Letters from Mary E. Haldane to Kathleen

21 May, 1918(?); 1 undated; 4 February, 1916; 11 January, 1917; 24 March, 1917; 28 March, 1918; 26 June, 1918; 25 February, 1923; 7 March, 1925; 25 February, 1924.

### IV. Letters to JSH (2 exceptions)

1. From Geoffrey Mitchison to his grandfather (JSH), undated.
2. From Naomi Mitchison (N.) to "Uffer" (JSH) (typed, signed) 16<sup>th</sup> – (1925 or 1926).
- 3-7. From Sir John Burdon Sanderson: 1 undated; 2 June, 1883; 21 July, 1883; 19 August, 1883; 2 September, 1883.
- 8-9. From Hugh Ross: 25 February, 1883 to JSH and WSH(?); 9 March, 1883. (On church membership which they have allowed to lapse.)
10. Draft of reply by JSH to above.
11. From J. C. Ewart: 23 February, 1884.
12. From John Kemp: 2 August, 1887. (Year added by hand.)
13. From Coutts Trotter (future father-in-law): 11 August, 1891.
- 13a. From Kathleen Trotter (his fiancée): 17 August, 1891.
14. From Elizabeth Sanderson Haldane: 14 February, 1926.
15. From J.B.S. Haldane (boy): undated.
16. From Naomi Mitchison (N.): 17 October, 1916. (Date from postmark.)
17. From W.S.H. (?): 18 June, 1915.
18. From J. (?) – S. (Strassburg); 13 July, 1891.  
(Pencil note: No. 18 is from James Lorrain Smith (1862-1931), from 1912 Professor of Pathology at Edinburgh - Steve Sturdy)
19. Draft of a letter by JSH: 26 April (no year).

20. May 4, 1915  
From Thomas Wakefield, Hemsford, Fairford, Glos. To Dear Sir. He is not able to join the army and is "willing to be used for experiments" "if you are inventing any new methods, and expresses thanks "for your great kindness to me in the past."  
A.L.S. 2p.
21. Aug. 9, 1917  
From C. Gordon Douglas (1882-1963), G.H.Q. To Dear Haldane. Marked "Confidential." He complains about a lack of communication with other members of the forces - "If was not so hung up out here I should try and get over to England to see you, and to stir up others who could at least act as versuchstiere!" He has been experimenting on himself with treatments for gas induced injuries to the skin. He comments on observations and post mortem results of others.  
**Note:** *versuchstiere* is German for experimental animal.  
A.L.S. 6p.  
**Names:** Fletcher, Barcroft, Boycott, Peters, Hunt, Dunn, Elliott, Hartley.
22. Aug. 28, 1917  
From C. Gordon Douglas. To Dear Haldane. Describes an experiment on a cat concerning absorption and excretion of di-chlor-ethyl-sulphide (etc.).  
A.L.S. 4p.
23. May 24, 1918  
From C.G. Douglas, No.1 B.R.C. Hospital. To Dear Haldane. Douglas has been in hospital with a severe case of vertigo, but is recovering and hopes soon to be back at work. He is expecting some sick leave in England. He suggests a correction to an equation in a PV paper written by Haldane.  
A.L.S. 4p.  
**Names:** Barcroft
24. July 16, 1918  
From C.G. Douglas, c/o D.C.S., G.H.Q.,  
2nd Echelon, to Dear Haldane. He discusses the pros and cons of bloodletting for gas victims and criticizes Barcroft (Joseph, 1872-1947), whom he considers to be too anxious to use this treatment when it is not indicated. He mentions three pamphlets on gas poisoning: "... our revised pamphlet for Medical officers ...," a German one he has been having printed, and an advance copy of a revised French one.  
Typed letter with handwritten postscript, signed.  
2p.  
**Names:** Barcroft, Edkins, Bayliss.

25. No date.  
From C.G. Douglas, c/o D.G.S., G.H.Q.,  
2nd. Echelon, B.E.F. France. To Dear Haldane. He asks for some information  
regarding Aschoff (Karl Albert Ludwig? 1866-1942), a German pathologist in  
the military whose captured document Douglas is translating.  
A.L.S. 4p.  
**Names:** Aschoff

**Note:** Letters 20 to 25 are filed in Haldane Box B.

**Note:** A number of short letters and memoranda related to the research of the Miners' Nystagmus Committee of the Medical Research Council, of which Haldane was a member, are also to be found in Haldane Box B, folders VII and VIII.

#### **V. Other letters**

1. From E. DuBois-Reymond to Miss (Elizabeth Sanderson) Haldane declining her translation of one of his works: 21 May, 1887.
2. From Merete (?) in Lyngby, Denmark to Mrs. Haldane: 25 September, 1922.

This box also contains 2 pamphlets.

1. A letter to Edinburgh professors by a medical student. (J.S.H.) London. 1906.
2. Life and mechanism. London. 1906.

### **Part Two: Manuscripts and other documents (Filed in Haldane Box B)**

#### **VI. Haldane, J. S., Personal Documents**

1. Birth certificate.
2. University of Edinburgh, 1st class certificate of merit, moral philosophy, 1878-1979.
3. University of Edinburgh, 1st class certificate of merit, anatomy, 1881-82.
4. Certificate of merit in botany, written in German and signed by Professor Strasburger, 1897.

5. Diploma of election to the Royal Society, signed by M. Foster, dated June 4, 1897. (xeroxed)

#### **VII. Medical Research Council – Miners' Nystagmus Committee**

Two folders containing reports, tables, and correspondence, related to research into miners' nystagmus, an eye problem that afflicts many coal-miners. Haldane was a member of this committee and contributed part of their 1921 report.  
Approximately 262 1.

#### **VIII. Admiralty. Medical Department. Tuberculosis Conference**

A report. The "Members of the Tuberculosis Conference have duly considered and examined into the subject of Tuberculosis in the Royal Navy and have the honour to submit the following report."  
22 1.

#### **IX. MSS. of papers written by Haldane and C.G. Douglas**

1. Douglas, C. Gordon and Haldane, J. S., "The regulation of normal breathing", *Journal of physiology*, v. 38, p. 420-440.  
13 1. [numbered 1-26, 16A-271]
2. Douglas, C. Gordon and Haldane, J. S., "The regulation of normal breathing", *Journal of physiology*, v. 38, p. 420-440.  
13 1. [numbered 16A-27]. Includes Summary.
3. Douglas, C. Gordon and Haldane, J.S., "The effects of previous forced breathing and oxygen inhalation on the distress caused by muscular work", *Journal of physiology*, v.39, p.i-iv.  
6 1. [numbered 1-2; 5-6; 2 unnumbered]
4. "Discussion of the results."  
3 1. [numbered 20-221] (Not known to what paper this belongs.)

#### **X. MS Drafts and notes**

MS. drafts and notes for the classical paper describing the expedition (with Douglas, Yandell Henderson, and Schneider) to Pike's Peak, 1913; *Phil. Trans. Roy. Soc.*, 203, 308. There are many corrections to the tables and to the drafts of the text.

## **XI. Lectures and addresses (MS) almost entirely unpublished**

H.M. Sinclair says of these: “Mrs. Haldane told me that her husband destroyed his MS as soon as the paper was published, and these lectures and addresses to various societies were not published. Haldane always wrote his addresses out in full, and this collection is mainly written in full in his own hand.”

1. MS *A physiological criticism of the Darwinian theory* – an address to “the Club.” 30 1.
2. MS of *The composition and functions of sweat, the additions to it from the skin surface, and the diffusion of water through the skin surface*. Referred to by Haldane in the MS as a “Communication”, with no information as to whom it was addressed.  
12 1. numbered 1-5, 5A, 5B, 6-10
3. MS of *Natural selection as a mechanical theory of development* – address given to the Biological Club, June 9, 1900.  
19 1.  
Draft copy?--has many corrections.
4. Proof of an article, *Vitalism*, by John Haldane, to be published in *The nineteenth century* in 1898. Some handwritten marginal notes.  
14p.
5. MS of *The kinetic theory of gases* – lecture given at Birmingham University, July 14, 1925, to Technical School Teachers' Association.  
4 1. (1 blank)
6. MS of *The vitalistic and physico-chemical conceptions of life* – address presented at a joint meeting of the Philosophical Society and the Biological Club, January 26, 1902.  
36 1.
7. MS of an address entitled *Vitalism*, presented to the Manchester University Pathological Society, October 11, 1911. Haldane summarizes his position thus:
  - a. Biology has made no progress whatever in the direction of a physico-chemical theory of life.
  - b. From the nature of the facts to be explained in connection with life a physico-chemical explanation of them is inconceivable.
  - c. The conception of the living organism as such is the root-conception on which alone biology as a science can be based. This conception is not reducible to anything simpler, and apart from it the facts of biology are a mere chaos. 21 1.

8. MS of an address entitled *The supposed physical basis of life* – presented to the Exeter College Dialectical Society, June 13, 1912. Further remarks on his views of the impossibility of explaining living organisms solely in terms of physics and chemistry.  
28 1.
9. MS of an address entitled *Some recent investigations on the hygiene of subterranean and subaqueous work* – presented at the General Meeting of the International Congress of Hygiene, Berlin, September 26, 1907.  
29 1. [including 3 fragments]
- 10a MS of an address entitled *The aims of physiology* — presented to the Biological Club, Oxford, 1893.  
50 1. [including fragments]
- 10b MS another copy of *The aims of physiology*, with slight differences in wording.  
51 1. [including fragments]
11. MS of an address entitled *The mechanicalistic and vitalistic theories of life* – presented to the British Association, Nottingham, September 15, 1893.  
17 1. [including fragments]
12. MS of *The aims of biology* – an address to “the Club.”  
“I wish to ... state broadly ... what the real ground conceptions of Biology appear to me to be, and what the reasons are which make it very difficult to accept the proposition that the ultimate aim of Biology is to furnish physical and chemical explanations of the phenomena of life.”  
24 1. incomplete.
13. Typescript of *The effects on man of vitiated atmospheres* — a lecture to the Scottish Natural History Society, Edinburgh, January 10, 1896.  
Contains some handwritten notes, and sketches on verso of some leaves.  
45 1.
14. Typescript of *The causes and prevention of death by suffocation in mines* – an address to ? British Association, ? 1894.



## XII. Reports and correspondence on the use of gas in World War I

H.M. Sinclair says of this collection: "A most important collection of papers relating to his and Douglas's researches in World War I when gas was first used. Included are long autograph letters from Douglas (who was in the field in France), very out spoken about the military authorities and giving full descriptions of the casualties and attempts to prevent them."

**Note:** only some items xeroxed.

1. Experiment no. 11, Saturday, May 22 (no year), conducted on a rabbit exposed to "arsenuretted hydrogen", written in an unidentified hand.  
1 1. (xeroxed)
2. See Haldane Letters, IV, 22. (xeroxed)
3. Typewritten report on the content of a German "gas" shell, signed by William Henry Perkin (1860-1929), dated July 31, 1914.  
2 1. (xeroxed)
4. Physiology (War) Committee of the Royal Society, *Notes on the pathology and treatment of the effects of pulmonary irritant gases*, dated September 1917. Printed, marked "Private and Confidential" and "Secret", Haldane's Copy, with handwritten comments .  
12p. (xeroxed)
5. Haldane, J. S., Meakins, J. C., Priestley, J. G., An interim report on the symptoms subsequent to irritant gas poisoning, with an investigation of reflex restriction of breathing—a condition hitherto undescribed. Printed.  
6p. 3 copies
6. Physiology (War) Committee of the Royal Society, *The pathology and treatment of the effects of pulmonary irritant gases*. June 20, 1917. Marked "Private and Confidential." Printed.  
20p.
7. Medical Research Committee, Reports of the Chemical Warfare Medical Committee, No. 9, *Treatment of patients suffering from effort syndrome by continuous inhalation of oxygen*. August, 1918. Marked "For official use only." Printed.  
20p.

8. Douglas, C. G., Captain, R.A.M.C., Physiological Advisor for Director of Gas Services, *Gas shell bombardment of Ypres*, July 12-13, 1917, Report M60 A/1. Typed MS.  
5p. (xeroxed)
9. Douglas, C.G., *Effects of a gas shell bombardment* (in continuation of Report M.60 A/1) dated 17.7.17. Report M.60 A/2. Marked "Secret."  
Typed MS.  
3p. (xeroxed)
10. Douglas, C.G., *Effects of a gas shell bombardment at Nieuport*. Report M.60 A/3. Marked "Secret." Typed MS.  
2p. (xeroxed)
11. *Gas poisoning in warfare with notes on its pathology and treatment*. Typed MS. (Authorship not established; ?C.G. Douglas)  
37p. (xeroxed)
12. Typewritten memoranda on asphyxiating gas.  
24 1. (final 1. torn and incomplete) (xeroxed)
13. See Haldane Letters IV, 20 (xeroxed)
14. See Haldane Letters IV, 21 (xeroxed)
15. See Haldane Letters IV, 23 (xeroxed)
16. See Haldane Letters IV, 24 (xeroxed)
17. See Haldane Letters IV, 25 (xeroxed)

**XIII. MS of unpublished book: *Outlines of a vitalistic physiology, by J.S. Haldane***

Of this work H.M. Sinclair says:

The first draft is copiously corrected . . . This has been entirely rewritten in nine chapters of the final draft. . . .

This very interesting book was never published, but illustrates the state of physiology at the turn of the century as seen by a young graduate of about 30 years.

First draft: approximately 320 l.

Second draft: approximately 381 l.

**Note:** These two items are filed in Haldane Box C