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## Rowland Robbins McElvare Papers, 1936-1967

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <a href="mailto:osiaref@si.edu">osiaref@si.edu</a>
<b>Title:</b>	Rowland Robbins McElvare Papers
<b>Identifier:</b>	Record Unit 7236
<b>Date:</b>	1936-1967
<b>Extent:</b>	1.5 cu. ft. (1 record storage box) (1 document box)
<b>Creator::</b>	McElvare, Rowland Robbins, 1893-1976
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7236, Rowland Robbins McElvare Papers

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## Historical Note

Rowland Robbins McElvare (1893-1976), an amateur lepidopterist, was born in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from Columbia College in 1913, and, after taking advanced degrees at Columbia University and Harvard, entered the banking profession in 1917. Two years later he married Lillian Adele Waring, with whom he spent the rest of his life. McElvare became prominent in the field of banking and finance, eventually rising to the position of Director of the Public National Bank and Trust Company of New York, as well as serving as President of the Savings and Loan Division of the American Banking Association. He was also a member of the faculty of the Graduate School of Banking.

McElvare's interest in lepidopterology had its beginnings early in his life under the guidance of George P. Englehardt of the Brooklyn Museum. In the mid-1930s, McElvare decided to focus his attention on the noctuid subfamily Heliiothiinae, a day-flying moth, principally found in the Southwest, which hitherto had attracted little scholarly interest. He began compiling information on this variety of insect, a difficult task due to the lack of material. Few institutions held useful collections of Heliiothiinae, and extensive field work was still needed to obtain complete specimen collections, as well as gathering data on the life cycle of Heliiothids. McElvare, in the course of his studies, which were conducted after business hours until his retirement in 1953, assembled one of the most comprehensive collections of Heliiothiinae extant, and in addition supplied type and paratype specimens to the United States National Museum and the British Museum (Natural History). During the period most heavily represented in this collection, 1940-1960, Rowland Robbins McElvare was the foremost American authority on Heliiothiinae.

McElvare published numerous journal articles on his work, including several describing new species of Heliiothiinae and on the synonymy of a species hitherto thought valid. The majority of his publications appeared in the *Journal of the Brooklyn Entomological Society*, of which he was President from 1945 to 1947.

## Descriptive Entry

This collection documents McElvare's activities in the field of lepidopterology. Of principal interest is the correspondence between McElvare and numerous amateur and professional lepidopterists, both in this country and abroad. These letters deal predominantly with insect collection and exchange, as well as the sharing of information on Heliiothiinae and lepidopterology in general. McElvare took extensive notes on the species of Heliiothiinae, drawn from personal examination of his collection, as well as his study of institutional collections throughout North America. These, and the transcripts of original descriptions of type insects found in classic works of lepidopterology, comprise the bulk of the remainder of the collection.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Entomologists
- Entomology

Types of Materials:

- Black-and-white negatives
- Black-and-white photographs
- Manuscripts

Names:

- American Banking Association
- British Museum (Natural History)
- Brooklyn Entomological Society
- Brooklyn Museum
- Columbia College (New York, N.Y.)
- Columbia University
- Englehardt, George P.
- Harvard University
- McElvare, Lillian Adele Waring
- McElvare, Rowland Robbins, 1893-1976
- Public National Bank and Trust Company of New York
- United States National Museum

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: CORRESPONDENCE, 1936-1967. ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY.

This series consists of McElvare's correspondence with amateur and professional lepidopterists. Much has to do with the exchange of specimens and the collection conditions in various parts of the country.

#### Box 1

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 1 A-B   |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 2 American Museum of Natural History. Includes correspondence with Freder H. Rindge and Charles Michener.                     |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 3 Henry Bird, 1936-1957   |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 4 A. Blanchard, 1963-1966   |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 5 Botanists. Correspondence with botanists pertaining to the identification of plants associated with Heliothiinae            |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 6 Louis H. Bridwell, 1940-1952  |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 7 C-E   |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 8 John Cadbury, 1940-1951. Includes correspondence with E. T. Cresson during Cadbury's wartime absence.                       |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 9 John Frederick Gates Clarke, 1936-1952, 1961-1967. For additional correspondence see Box 1, Folder 38, and Box 2, Folder 3. |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 10 John A. Comstock, 1936-1961  |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 11 William C. Cook, 1937-1950   |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 12 William H. Evans, 1949-1961  |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 13 F-G  |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 14 Richard J. Fitch, 1942-1951  |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 15 D. S. Fletcher of the British Museum, 1952-1961  |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 16 William T. H. Forbes, 1944-1956  |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 17 John G. Franclemont, 1942-1963   |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 18 H. Avery Freeman, 1942-1947  |
| Box 1 of 2 | Folder 19 Stanley V. Fuller, 1955-1962   |

- Box 1 of 2 Folder 20 Edward Guedet, 1936-1940, 1946-1951, 1957
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 21 H-K
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 22 David F. Hardwick. For more correspondence on relations between Hardwick and McElvare see Box 1, Folder 38.
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 23 Theodore W. Hower, 1937-1954
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 24 Charles P. Kimball, 1953-1963
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 25 George F. Knowlton, 1937-1938
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 26 Louise Knoebel, 1936-1937
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 27 L-R
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 28 Roy Latham, 1936-1956, 1966
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 29 James Halliday McDunnough, 1937-1954, 1961
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 30 Lloyd M. Martin, 1949-1952, 1957
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 31 William P. Medlar, 1941-1953
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 32 National Park Service, 1936-1940
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 33 North Carolina Department of Agriculture, Division of Entomology, 1941-1953. Predominantly the correspondence of D. L. Wray.
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 34 William Proctor, 1938-1950
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 35 Edward P. Ross, 1941-1952
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 36 S-Z
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 37 John A. Sperry, 1937-1952
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 38 United States National Museum, 1937-1966. Includes correspondence with E. L. Todd, Carl Frederick William Muesebeck, and Carl Heinrich.
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 39 Edward P. Van Duzee, 1938
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 40 Herbert H. Walkden, 1937-1942
- Box 1 of 2 Folder 41 Alex K. Wyatt, 1937-1957

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**Series 2: NOTES ON HELIOTHIINAE.**

This series consists of various compilations of data on the close to 300 species of Heliiothiinae. The notes fall into two groups. The first consists of notes on type and distribution data, as well as notes from the literature. These are arranged by McDunnough number, a system of classification drawn from James McDunnough's Check List of the Lepidoptera of Canada and the United States, Vol. 1, p. 103 (California, 1938-1939). The second group consists of the contents of two smaller looseleaf binders, and is composed of data, both observed and reported, on the habits of Heliiothids. Most of this material is arranged by McDunnough number as well, but supplementing observations on such matters as classification, food plants and locality records form an additional folder. Finally, the last two folders contain other material, as described.

**Box 1**

- Box 1 of 2                      Folders 42-48 contain the contents of the formal notebooks Heliolonche Grt. - Meliclepteria honesta Grt.
- Box 1 of 2                      Folder 42 McDunnough Numbers 2892-2915. A copy of the McDunnough Check List will be found at the beginning of each folder.
- Box 1 of 2                      Folder 43 Melaporphyria immortua Grt. - Heliiothis honesta Grt. McDunnough Numbers 2916-2933.
- Box 1 of 2                      Folder 44 Canthylidia scutosa Schiff. - Bessula luxa Grt. McDunnough Numbers 2934-2955.
- Box 1 of 2                      Folder 45 Schina cumatilis Grt. - Schina alensa Sm. McDunnough Numbers 2956-2994.
- Box 1 of 2                      Folder 46 Schina unimacula Sm. - Schinaia limbalis Grt. McDunnough Numbers 2995-3040.
- Box 1 of 2                      Folder 47 Trichosellus cupes Grt. - Neogrotella macdunnoughi B. & B. McDunnough Numbers 3041-3059.
- Box 1 of 2                      Folder 48 Neotropical Heliiothids and Allied Genera
- Box 1 of 2                      Folder 49 Handwritten notes on Heliiothids, arranged by McDunnough number
- Box 1 of 2                      Folder 50 General observations on the habits of Heliiothiinae

**Box 2**

- Box 2 of 2                      Folder 1 Tabulations of the Heliiothiinae held by the United States National Museum as of 1937. 113 handwritten pages are arranged by the Barnes and McDunnough checklist; an earlier system than the one described above.
- Box 2 of 2                      Folder 2 Miscellany. Includes checklists, notes, Iowa Insect Survey Cards with notations, and a set of 3x5 cards of the species of Heliiothiinae, in McDunnough number order, with penciled-in geographic locations, perhaps indicating where specimens were collected.

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### Series 3: PUBLICATIONS, 1938-1966. ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY.

This series consists of copies of typewritten drafts, some showing signs of revision, and reprints of the journal articles authored by McElvare. When possible, a published copy of the article has been clipped to the typed drafts.

#### Box 2

Box 2 of 2

Folder 3 Drafts of journal articles. Additional correspondence with J.F. Gates Clarke on the revision of "Validity of the Species *Heliiothis sublexa* (GN) Lepidoptera" will be found in Box 1, Folder 9; and correspondence with John Hansen on the revision of "New Heliiothid Moth from Central Florida (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae)" will be found in Box 1, Folder 21.

Box 2 of 2

Folder 4 Reprints of published material, 1938-1966

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## Series 4: PHOTOGRAPHS.

### Box 2

#### Box 2 of 2

Folder 5 Photographs of various Heliethids. Some were used as illustrations for journal articles and are identified, but the majority are not. Includes three photographs of people, only one of which, that of Dr. John A. Comstock, is identified.

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