

Directory of History of Medicine Collections

Organization Name: The Dibner Library of the History of Science and Technology

Organization Type: Library

Address: National Museum of American History 12th Street and Constitution Avenue N.W.

City: Washington

State/Province: District of Columbia

Zip/Postal Code: 20560

Country: United States

Telephone Number: 202-633-3872

Fax Number:

Web Site: <https://library.si.edu/libraries/dibner-library-history-science-and-technology>

Online Catalog: <https://sirir-libraries.si.edu/ipac20/ipac.jsp?profile=liball>

Other:

Abstract: Special Collections Department libraries are open for use by appointment only to Smithsonian curators, researchers, and other staff and by other scholars and researchers. In keeping with tradition, people making use of the collections in SIL Special Collections Dept. libraries are called "Readers." All books and manuscripts must be examined in the library reading room and cannot be checked out. There is no browsing in the library stacks. All books and manuscripts are kept in a secure area and readers need to ask for a specific item that is then brought out to them in the reading room. Materials are available for use at the discretion of library staff and may be restricted because of fragility or poor condition.

Holdings: The most widely recognized portion of the Dibner Library are the "Heralds of Science:" 200 works selected by Bern Dibner as the most significant titles in the formation and development of Western science and technology. They were presented (with apologies for other important works omitted) in his classic book, *Heralds of Science* (Norwalk, Conn.: Burndy Library, 1955; reprinted in 1969 by Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press; revised edition in 1980 by Burndy Library and Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution). Dibner came up with eleven general categories and briefly described his choices of the greatest works that represented those disciplines. The *Heralds of Science* website can be viewed here. The approximately 11,000 volumes of rare books and the 1,600 manuscript groups in science and technology donated by the Burndy Library in 1974 form the core of the Dibner Library's collection. Over the years the collection has been supplemented by the Smithsonian's own holdings and gifts from individuals and institutions and now numbers some 35,000 rare books and approximately 2,000 manuscript groups. The Library's holdings are contained within and searchable via the Smithsonian Libraries' online catalog, SIRIS.

Collection Subject Strengths: History of Anatomy; History of Anesthesiology and Anesthesia; History of Botany; History of Cardiology; History of Cookery and Nutrition; History of Dentistry; History of Dermatology; History of Epidemiology and Infectious Diseases; History of Gynecology and Obstetrics; History of Hematology; History of Homeopathy; History of Immunology; History of Inoculation Vaccination and Immunization; History of Medical Education; History of Medicine; History of Neurology; History of Pathology; History of Pharmacology and Pharmacy; History of Physiology; History of Radiology; History of Reproductive Health; History of Surgery; History of Veterinary Medicine; Materia Medica

Other Collection Subject Strengths:

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