

# Johns Hopkins, 1795 – 1873

**“A certain testament,  
happily free from all  
definite ideas.”**

*Charles S. Peirce*

**The Founder**



Cummins, ca. 1860

# Whitehall



ca. 1920

- **Birthplace and boyhood home of Johns Hopkins, Anne Arundel County**

# 18 West Saratoga Street



THE HOPKINS MANSION AT 18 WEST SARATOGA STREET; THE HOUSE IN WHICH JOHNS HOPKINS DIED IN 1873

From: Helen Hopkins Thom, *Johns Hopkins: A Silhouette*, 1929

# 1873 – 1876

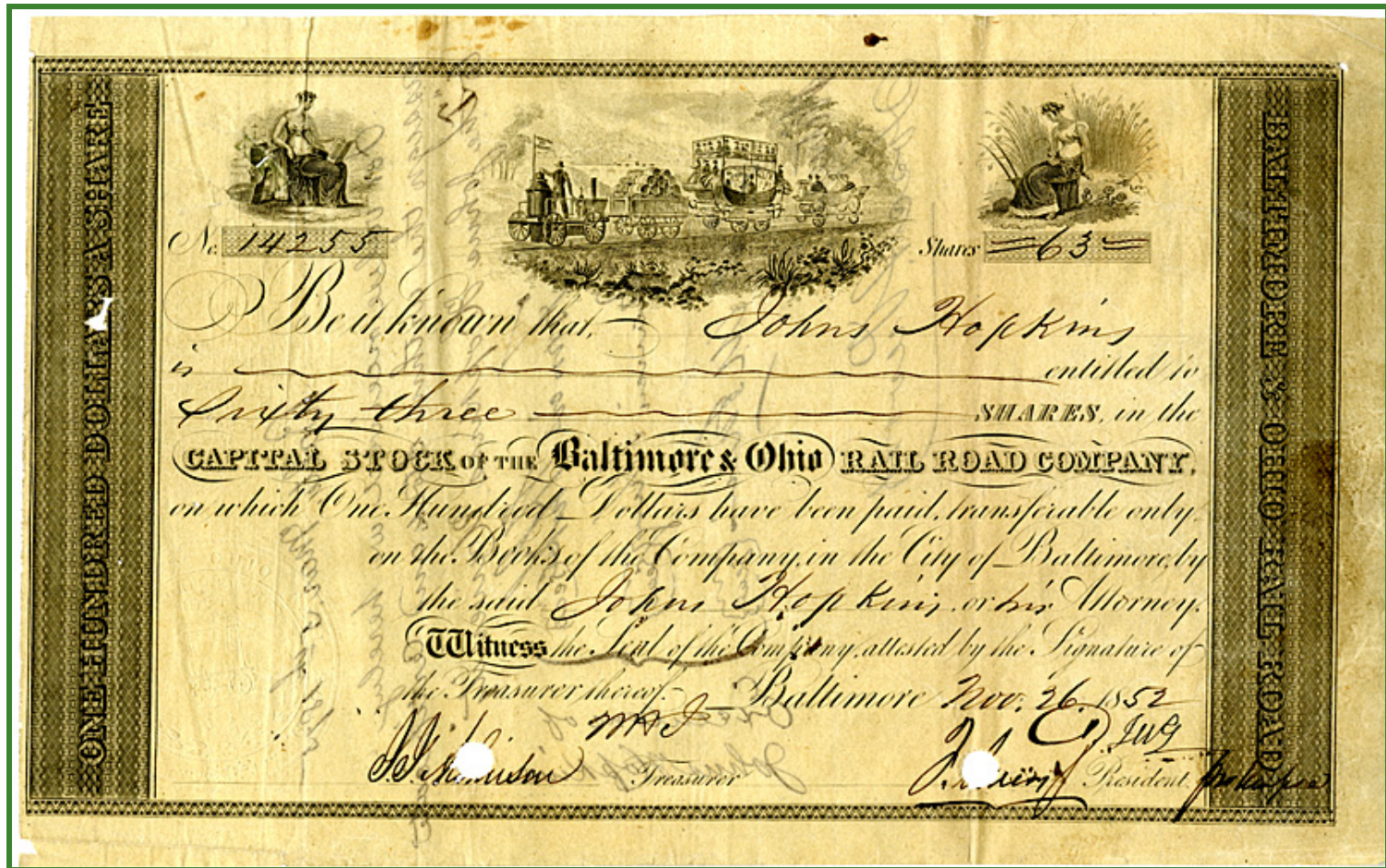
**“To many the magnitude of our founder’s bounty seems its principal value; that is, in fact, but half its glory. With a self-renunciation which is rare and noble, he attached to the gift no burdensome condition or personal whim.”**

*Daniel Coit Gilman, 1876*

## **The Founding**



One of the B&O Railroad stock certificates, dated November 26, 1852. This is the earliest of the set of certificates that formed the original endowment given by Johns Hopkins.



# Gilman Becomes President

- Trustees advised to find a president
- Name most frequently mentioned is Daniel Coit Gilman, President of the University of California
- Trustees meet with Gilman, realize he is the person they need to build the University
- Gilman accepts trustees' offer on January 30, 1875

18  
Feb 11<sup>th</sup>  
1875

Reply of Mr. Gilman  
To the Trustees of  
The Johns Hopkins University  
Baltimore

Gentlemen:

Your letter of January 12<sup>th</sup> inviting me  
to become President of The Johns Hopkins University  
has been duly received and made known to the  
authorities of this University. Although  
I am reluctant to withdraw from my present work,  
or from the attractiveness of this state, the character  
of your trust and so peculiar and so good that  
I cannot decline your proposal. The careful  
manner in which your Board has been selected, the  
liberal views which you hold in respect to advanced  
culture both in literature and science, your corporate  
freedom from political and ecclesiastical alliances,  
the magnificent endowment at your control, and  
especially favorable to the organization of a new  
University; while the position of Baltimore among  
American towns, and the particular period in the  
educational development of the country when your  
work begins, are likely to give at an early day a  
national significance to your undertaking.

Fully sensible of the responsibilities I am to  
assume and confidently relying on the wisdom of  
your counsel and the certainty of your devotion  
to the trust, I accept your invitation and will  
enter upon your service as soon as arrangement  
can be made to relieve me from my present duties.  
I have reason to hope that this will be at an early  
day.

Allow me to add my heartfelt  
response to your desire that The Johns Hopkins  
University shall be forever free from sectarian bias  
and from political partisanship, and that all its  
resources shall be consecrated to the advancement  
of knowledge and the promotion of Christian civilization.

With a grateful recognition of your confidence  
I am, Gentlemen, Yours with high respect,  
Daniel C. Gilman

University of California  
Berkeley, Oakland Cal.  
January 30, 1875

# Daniel Coit Gilman

- Born July 6, 1831 in CT
- Educated at Yale as geographer
- State Department attaché in St. Petersburg, Russia
- President of University of California in 1872
- Relished opportunity to build a new university
- No one had greater influence over what JHU became
- Retired from Hopkins in 1901
- Died in 1908



G. D. Morse, San Francisco, 1875

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# Something New and Different

- **“What are we aiming at?**
- **“Religion has nothing to fear from science, and science need not be afraid of religion. Religion claims to interpret the word of God, and science to reveal the laws of God. The interpreters may blunder, but truths are immutable, eternal and never in conflict.**
- **“The best teachers are usually those who are free, competent and willing to make original researches in the library and the laboratory.**
- **“The best investigators are usually those who have also the responsibilities of instruction, gaining thus the incitement of colleagues, the encouragement of pupils, [and] the observation of the public.”**

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# Making Plans

- Method of instruction based on German model: Seminar, with students “learning by doing”
- Hopkins not the first university; first Research University, with students performing original research and presenting their findings to be critiqued by instructors and fellow students
- First campus not Clifton, but area bounded by Monument, Howard, Eutaw and Centre streets; trustees unwilling to spend principal of bequest on buildings, following founder’s wish
- Proximity to Peabody Library allowed access to excellent existing library

# 1876 – 1902

**“It is well to bear in mind that the most enlightened institutions in our country, and the most enlightened countries in Europe, are those in which educational discussions are now most lively; and it behooves us, as we engage in a new undertaking, to listen, ponder, and observe; and above all to be modest in the announcement of our plans.”**

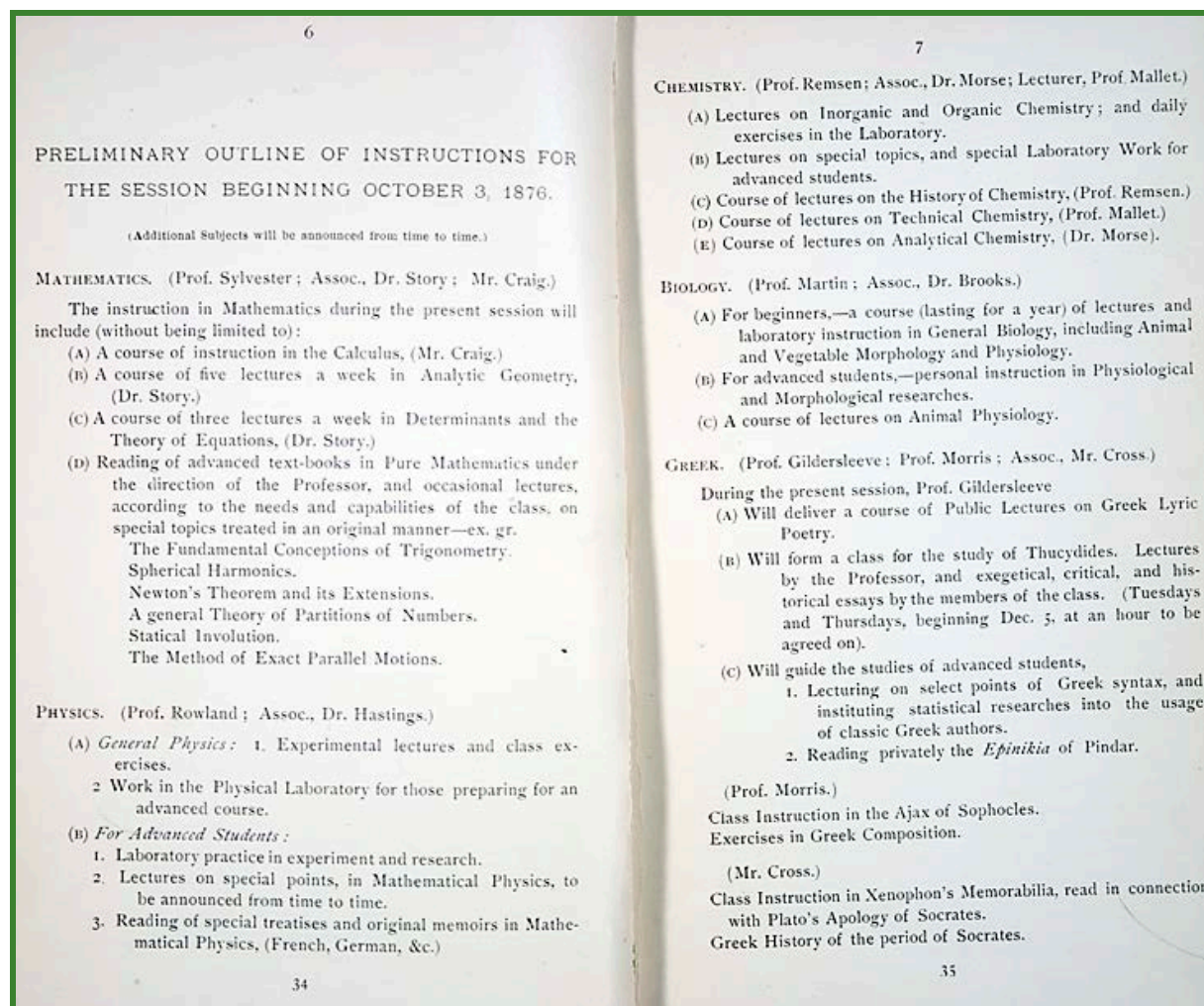
*Daniel Coit Gilman, 1876*

## **The Opening**



# Opening of Classes, October 3, 1876

- Undergraduates excluded from original planning; pressure from community forced Gilman to change his mind
- 12 undergrad students and 54 graduate students at opening
- Courses prescribed with no electives



Johns Hopkins University Register, 1876

# Humble Beginnings

- Two converted rowhouses at corner of North Howard and Little Ross streets
- Hopkins Hall built behind Administration Building
- Other structures added gradually: Chemical Lab, Biological Lab, Physical Lab, Levering Hall, McCoy Hall, Gymnasium



Administration Building, ca. 1884

# Early Campus Views

- Levering Hall  
(foreground, left)
- McCoy Hall  
(background, left, with tower)
- Biological  
Laboratory on  
right
- Little Ross  
Street in center



ca. 1895

# Early Campus Views

- Left to right:  
Hopkins Hall,  
Chemical  
Laboratory,  
Biological  
Laboratory
- Original  
buildings follow  
admonition to  
“build men, not  
buildings”
- Intended to be  
temporary



ca. 1890

# Growing Pains

- Founder assumed campus would eventually settle at Clifton, in vicinity of Harford Road and Erdman Avenue
- Neighborhood contained many “saloons and houses of ill repute”
- Not easy to reach from city; dorms would have been required



ca. 1895

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# Financial Pressure

- Trustees assumed, despite drawbacks, campus would eventually relocate to Clifton
- Hoped to accumulate income from endowment to finance move and new buildings
- Hopkins' bequest left entirely as B&O Railroad stock; trustees maintained it this way
- Dividends ceased 1888-1890, leaving university without income and prompting “the most rigid economy,” raising tuition and cutting library and laboratory expenditures
- This situation prompted ....

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# The First Fundraising Campaign

- Baltimore merchant William W. Spence volunteered to guide fund raising
- Though the University was only twelve years old, the city already embraced it
- Emergency Fund quickly oversubscribed
- Gilman contributed \$5,000 of his \$7,000 salary (*Has anyone else since Gilman considered donating 70% of his salary?*)
- Salary cuts avoided
- Trustees came to appreciate diversification
- Clifton sold to city in 1895 for \$800,000

# Gilman Succeeded by Ira Remsen

- Gilman announces intention to retire in 1901 after serving 25 years as president
- Lived an active retirement until death in 1908
- Successor is Ira Remsen, first Professor of Chemistry, who assumes presidency in 1902
- Primary issues facing Remsen are lack of expansion options and finances



Memy, photographer, 1903

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# In Need of Space

- Without Clifton, no room for expansion
- Cousins William Keyser and William Wyman, along with owners of several smaller parcels, offer land at Charles Street and Merryman's Lane (now University Parkway) in 1901
- Homewood used primarily for athletics until 1915
- Two greenhouses built in 1908 and 1911 for botany and plant physiology labs
- Gatehouse, Wyman Villa, and Homewood House already on property

# Major Construction

- Trustees approve plans for “Academic Building” in 1912
- Construction of Gilman Hall begins 1913
- Completed and dedicated in 1915
- Initially housed all humanities and sciences offices and classrooms, along with the Library



ca. 1920

# First Dormitories

- From beginning, students expected to find own housing
- Homewood campus outside downtown area; student housing not as plentiful
- First dormitory built in 1923, named Alumni Memorial Dormitory in honor of those who died in First World War



ca. 1923

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# Early Engineering Training

- As early as 1887, training in “applied electricity” offered through Department of Physics, leading to Proficiency in Applied Electricity (PAE) certificate
- John B. Whitehead graduated from JHU in 1893 with PAE, AB in 1898, and PhD in 1902; worked under Henry A. Rowland, who had interest in electrical applications
- Louis Duncan (PhD 1885) taught applied electricity under Physics prior to Whitehead

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# Initial Opposition to School of Engineering

- Some saw incompatibility of “school for mechanics” with research university; might cause JHU to lose its originality
- Gilman not in favor of having “an excellent polytechnicum but not a university”
- He did regard a technical school as a legitimate part of university to produce “competent scientific engineers”
- Not opposed to engineering but did not have funds (or space) to pursue idea at the time

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# Engineering Hits the Ground

- By early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Trustees ready to consider engineering school
- Did not have funds; would need help from state
- Legislature passed bill in 1912 giving \$600,000 plus \$50,000 annually
- University in control of planning for engineering school but required to offer scholarships to Maryland students
- Planned for two buildings dedicated to engineering
- Began as Department of Engineering in 1913, not School until 1920

# Maryland Hall

- Mechanical & Electrical Engineering Building; re-named for Maryland in 1931 in appreciation
- Second major building constructed at Homewood; completed in 1915
- Actually completed before Gilman Hall



Hughes Company, photographer, 1915

# Latrobe Hall

- Completed in 1916
- Known as Civil Engineering Building until 1931, when named for Benjamin Latrobe
- Note the tennis courts where Ames Hall now stands, and the convenient parking



December 1932

# First Faculty: Charles J. Tilden

- Professor of Civil Engineering, 1913-1919
- BS Harvard 1896
- Research focused on reinforced concrete, concrete highway bridges and the kinetic effects of crowds
- Left Hopkins for Yale



# First Faculty: Carl C. Thomas

- Professor of Mechanical Engineering, 1913-1920
- PhD Zurich 1882
- Inventor of gas meters
- Left Hopkins to go into private consulting



ca. 1933

# First Faculty: John B. Whitehead

- Professor of Electrical Engineering 1910-1942
- Dean of Engineering 1920-1938
- PAE (1893), AB (1898), PhD (1902) Johns Hopkins
- Known for “getting the most” out of his graduate students
- Whitehead Hall named for him in 1948

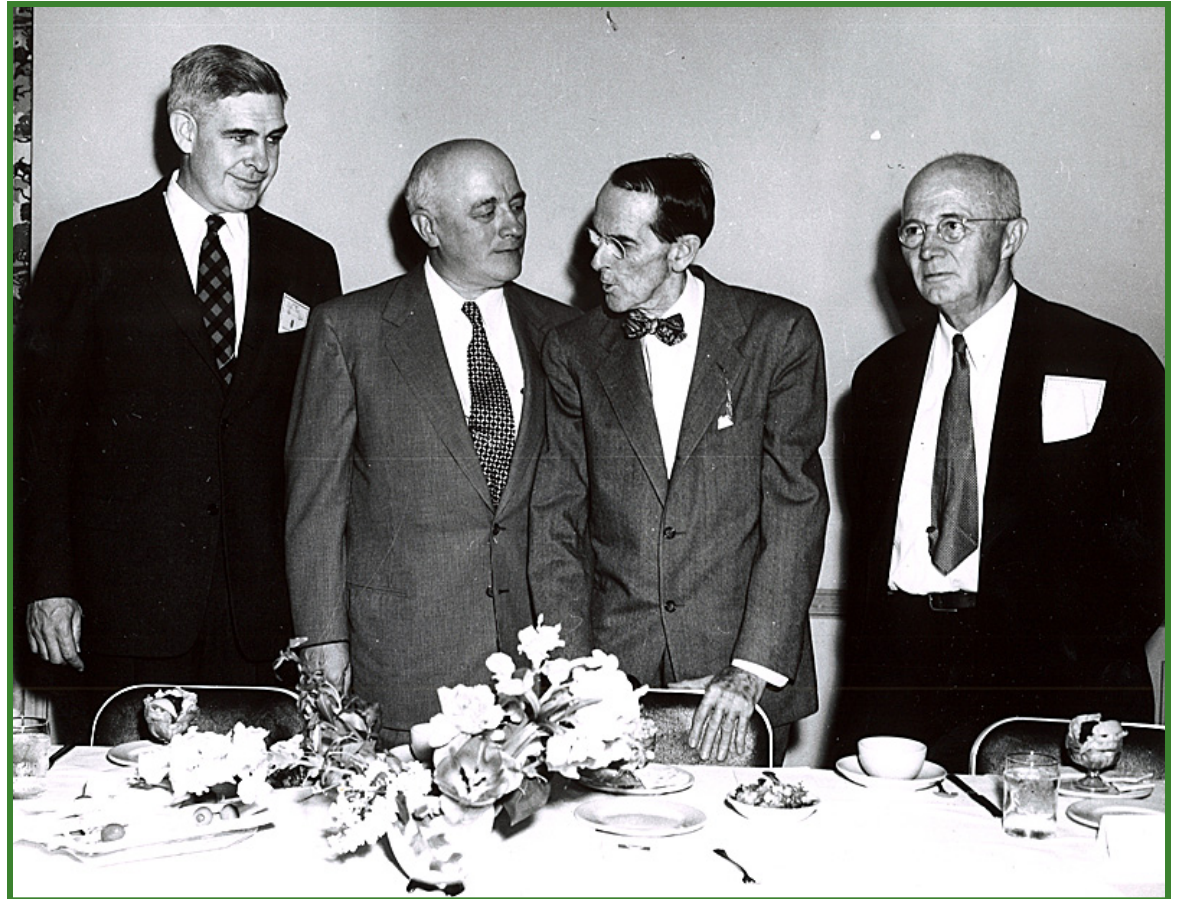
1930



# Four Engineering Deans

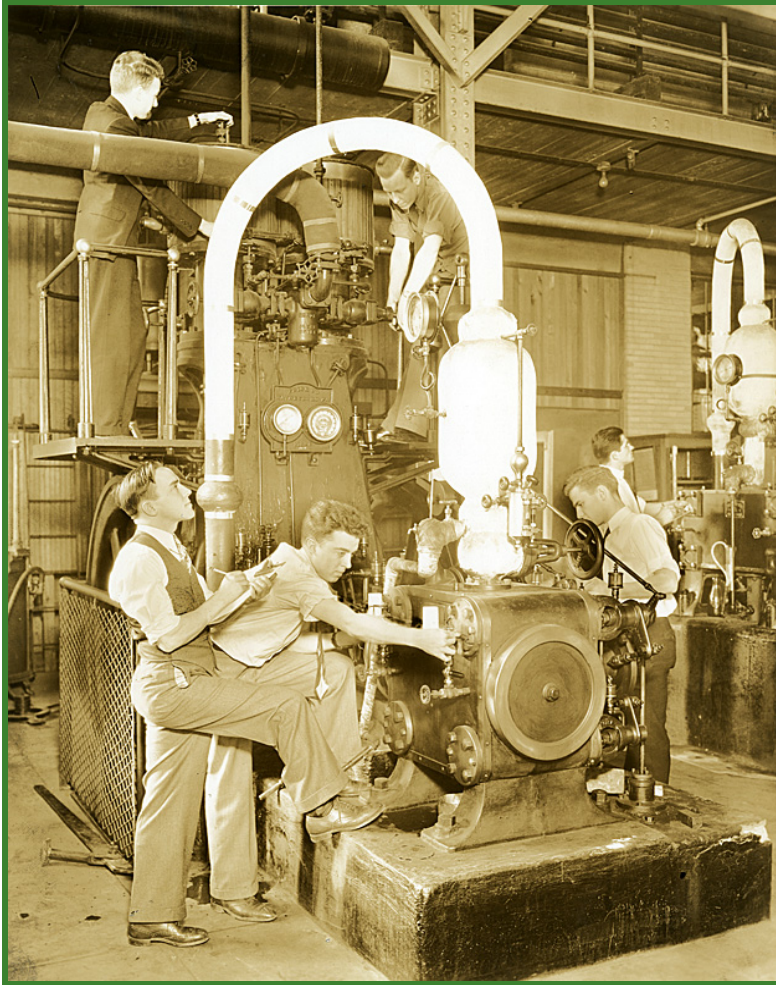
Left-to-Right:

- Robert H. Roy, 1953-1966
- John Harold Lampe (North Carolina State), former JHU faculty
- John B. Whitehead, 1920-1938
- William B. Kouwenhoven, 1938-1953



Charles H. Weber, photographer, May 8, 1953

# Engineers at Work



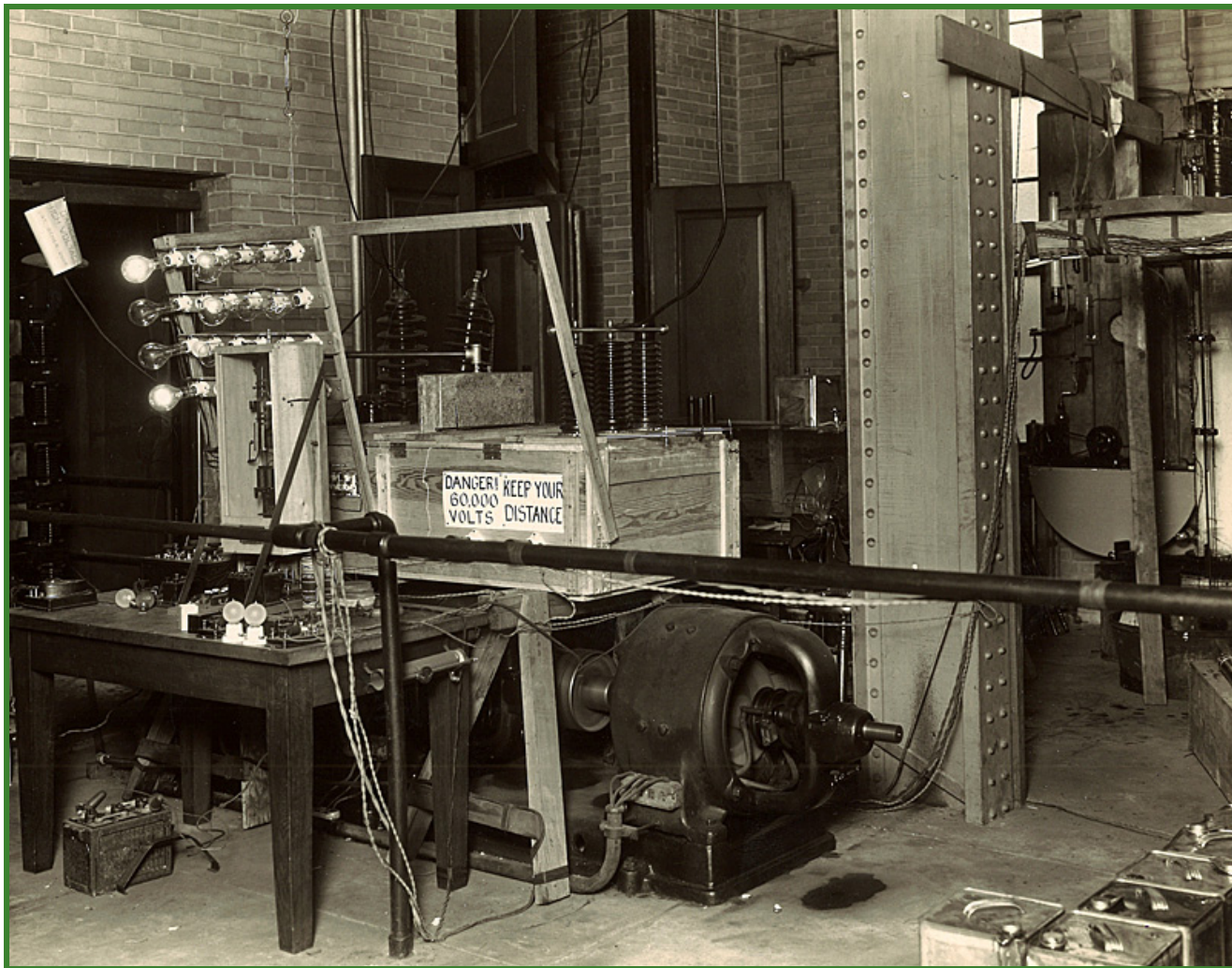
1936

(Left) Performing efficiency test on ice machine; (Below) Engineering faculty and graduate students



ca. 1920

# And One More – With a Warning!



Hughes Co.,  
photographer,  
n.d.

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# Ferdinand Hamburger Archives of The Johns Hopkins University

- Founded in 1971, named for Dr. Ferdinand Hamburger, Jr., Director of Centennial Planning (and Professor Emeritus of Electrical Engineering) in 1977
- Official archival repository for Arts & Sciences, Engineering, Carey Business School, School of Education, SAIS, and Central Administration
- Special Collections, M-Level, Brody Learning Commons
- Preserves records of most departments, offices, research institutes and provides reference services
- Maintains a photograph collection of over 16,000 images
- For further information, please contact [archives@lists.johnshopkins.edu](mailto:archives@lists.johnshopkins.edu)