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Robert H. Goddard

The United States Government this fall issued an airmail stamp commemorating the pioneer rocket research of Robert H. Goddard. Pictured on the stamp are Dr. Goddard, an Atlas rocket, and a launching tower at Cape Kennedy. In a year or so the McGraw-Hill Company will publish *The Papers of Robert H. Goddard*. It seems an appropriate time to relate a bit of history involving Dr. Goddard and the A.A.A.S.

Early in 1924 the Association's Committee on Grants approved a grant to Dr. Goddard for the full requested amount of \$190. (The Association at that time made small research grants, and still does, but now the money is all handled by affiliated academies of science and is chiefly used to assist students in their research projects.)

In accepting the grant, Dr. Goddard wrote: "This assistance comes at a time which makes it particularly valuable, inasmuch as some of the facilities which we now have will be available for but a limited time."

On the day before Christmas of 1924, Dr. Goddard submitted a progress report which read in part:

"The work for which assistance has been necessary is the construction and test of a small rocket model, made with the intention of demonstrating the feasibility of using liquid propellants. This work, which has been supported during the past year by the Smithsonian Institution, the A.A.A.S., and Clark University, involves but two main classes of expenditure: the salary of a skilled instrument maker, and liquid oxygen. I have an arrangement with a large oxygen concern by which liquid oxygen can be obtained at practically no expense for a very limited time. I have therefore kept the grant from the A.A.A.S. intact in order that it might be used when the funds now available from the other sources (most of which must be used within a year from the time the appropriation is made) have been used. It is not possible at the present time to predict for which of the above two expenditures the A.A.A.S. grant can be used to best advantage.

"During the past year an engine to be used in connection with the rocket has been designed, tested, and perfected. A feeding device to be used with this engine has also been developed, although considerable time was consumed because of the small scale upon which the work is being carried out. A final, complete model is now being constructed, with the weight reduced to the smallest possible amount.

"I trust that this report of progress will be satisfactory to the Committee on Grants, and wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Association for assisting in this work. I hope that the forthcoming results will justify their confidence."

The results amply justified that confidence. We can all be proud of the fact that the Association was able to help Dr. Goddard in the lean years of his pioneer work.—DAEL WOLFLE