

CONTENTS

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	<i>xiii</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>xv</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>xix</i>

PART ONE A NEW SCIENCE

1. The Beginnings	3
The Setting	3
Rays and Radiation	8
Becquerel's Discovery	12
2. The Curies	18
Maria Sklodowska	18
A Consequential Meeting	21
New Elements!	26

3. Rutherford, Soddy, Particles, and Alchemy?	34
Rutherford and the Rays	34
Where Did the Energy Come From?	37
Material Rays? Discovery of the Beta Particle	41
Thorium's Rays	46
Vanishing Radioactivity	47
Transmutation!	51
A Missed Discovery	57
Reactions	64
Atomic Energy?	67
Tragedy	70
More Rays	72
The Alpha Particle	73
4. The Radioactive Earth	77
The Prospectors	77
How Old Is the Earth?	79
A New Property of Matter?	82
5. Speculations	84
Early Theories	84
Radioactivity and Probability	86
Kinetic Models of the Atom	89
6. Radioactivity and Chemistry	93
The Rise of Radiochemistry	93
Radioactive Genealogy	95
Chemistry of the Imponderable	96
Inseparable Radioelements	98
Isotopes	100
Displacement Laws	105

The End of the Lines	108
More Isotopes	110
7. Inside the Atom	112
Building Blocks	112
Bombarding Atoms	113
The Nuclear Atom	115
The Nucleus and the Periodic Table	116
The Gamma Rays	119
Theories of the Nucleus	121
8. Sequel	124
War!	124
Radioactivity During World War I	126
From Radioactivity to Nuclear and Particle Physics	128
PART TWO	
MEASURING AND USING RADIOACTIVITY	
9. Methods and Instruments	135
Crucial Choices	135
Standardizing the Measures	137
Innovations	139
Size, Money, and Machines	143
10. Radioactivity, Medicine, and Life	146
Unpleasant Surprises	146
From Burns to Treatments	147
Rays and other Organisms	150
Miracle Cure?	151

CONTENTS

Radioactive Spas	152
Dangers in the Laboratory	156
11. New Industries	161
Early Industry	161
Soaring Demand and New Institutions	164
Paint that Glowed in the Dark	168
A New Poison	169
Fission, Bombs, and the Uranium Rush	172
Radioactivity and the Oil Industry	174

PART THREE
BEYOND THE STORY

12. Radioactivity's Prime Movers	179
Technology, Resources, and Professional Changes	179
Individuals	180
Research Groups	181
Scientific Ideals and Culture	182
Mentors and Models	183
Age, Attitudes, and Ambition	186
Nationalism	187
13. Radioactivity and Timeless Questions:	
The Quest for Understanding	192
Models and Theories for Radioactivity	193
Patterns in Radioactivity's Development	196
Radioactivity and Ideas about Change	198
Radioactivity and Ideas about Matter and Energy	200

CONTENTS

Radioactivity and Ideas about Continuity and Discontinuity	203
Eternal Conundrums	206
14. The Imaginative Appeal of a Discovery	208
Mythological and Romantic Dimensions of Radioactivity	209
An Ongoing Task	213
Appendices	
1. Glossary of Rays and Radiations	215
2. Family Trees for Radioactive Elements	217
3. Radioactivity's Elusive Cause	223
4. Nobel Prize Winners Included in This Book	225
5. Radioactivity's Web of Influence	227
6. Timeline	228
<i>Notes</i>	235
<i>Selected Bibliography</i>	245
<i>Index of Persons</i>	251
<i>Index of Subjects</i>	258