

EDITH QUIMBY DIES; RADIATION EXPERT

Columbia University Professor
Helped Make Radioactivity
a Tool Against Cancer

By WOLFGANG SAXON

Dr. Edith H. Quimby, a physicist who helped develop radioactive techniques for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer, died Monday at her home in Manhattan. She was 91 years old.

In collaboration with Dr. Gioacchino Failla, chief physicist at the Memorial Hospital for Cancer and Allied Diseases in New York City, she began studying in 1919 the therapeutic use of X-rays and radium. Her principal concern was how to measure the penetration of radiation and determine the precise dosage for a patient with the fewest side-effects.

Dr. Quimby remained an associate of Dr. Failla, first at Memorial Hospital and then at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, for the next 40 years as a researcher, scientist and teacher. She moved to Columbia in 1942 and became a full professor in 1954. She retired from the college and its Radiological Research Laboratory in 1960 as professor emerita of radiology.

Dr. Quimby's work in establishing the properties of radium earned her the Janeway Medal of the American Radium Society in 1940, the first time the award had gone to a woman. After World War II, foreseeing the growing use of radioactive isotopes, she devoted



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Dr. Edith H. Quimby

much of her time to protecting those handling the dangerous substances from harmful exposure.

Dr. Quimby was born Edith Hinkley in Rockford, Ill., and graduated from Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash. While doing graduate work in physics at the University of California, she married a fellow student, Shirley L. Quimby. After working as a high school science teacher, she followed her husband to New York when he began teaching at Columbia University. She then joined the staff of Memorial Hospital.

Dr. Quimby is survived by her husband, a Columbia professor emeritus of physics. The burial will be private.