

WALTER H. BRATTAIN  
Bell Telephone Laboratories, Inc.

Dr. Walter Houser Brattain, co-inventor with Dr. John Bardeen of the point-contact transistor, has been a member of the technical staff of Bell Telephone Laboratories since 1929. Initially his work was in the field of thermionics, particularly the study of electronic emission from hot surfaces. The results of this work led to greater knowledge of the effect of adsorbed films on electron emission. He then took up the study of electrical conductivity and rectification phenomena in semiconductors, with a major portion of his attention devoted to copper-oxide varistors. He also studied the properties of silicon and germanium.

During World War II Dr. Brattain was associated with the Division of War Research at Columbia University, where he studied magnetic detection of submarines. In 1952 he was a Visiting Lecturer at Harvard University.

Dr. Brattain was born in Amoy, China, on February 10, 1902 and spent his childhood and youth in the State of Washington. He received a B.S. degree from Whitman College in 1924, and M.A. from the University of Oregon in 1926, and the Ph.D. degree from the University of Minnesota in 1928.

Dr. Brattain received the honorary Doctor of Science degree from Portland University in 1952, and from Whitman College and Union College in 1955. In 1952 he was awarded the Stuart Ballantine Medal of the Franklin Institute and in 1955 he received the John Scott Medal for his work on the transistor. He is a Fellow of the


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American Physical Society, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a member of the Franklin Institute, Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi.

In 1935 Dr. Brattain married Keren Gilmore and they have one son, William Gilmore Brattain. The Brattains live in Chatham, N.J., near the Murray Hill, N.J., branch of Bell Telephone Laboratories.

Oct. 15, 1956

 NOTE: On November 1, 1956, the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences announced that the 1956 Nobel Prize in Physics has been awarded jointly to Dr. Brattain, Dr. John Bardeen and Dr. William Shockley. The prize was awarded to the three men for "investigations on semi-conductors and the discovery of the transistor effect."

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