



THE HISTORY OF THE ATOMIC ERA, RADIOLOGY, AND ATOMIC ENERGY IN PHILATELY



Long before Albert Einstein's Theory of Relativity led to the realization of nuclear energy, Jules Verne (1828-1905) conceived of a submarine, The Nautilus, powered by an inexhaustible force. This has become a reality in our time, with atomic reactors supplying power to ships and submarines. The United States submarine "Nautilus" was launched in 1955, the first nuclear-powered craft to be constructed. This vessel is honored philatelically for her epochal North Pole passage. The Russian 16,000-ton icebreaker, "Lenin", launched in 1955, was the first surface craft built to operate by means of nuclear power. From West Germany came the first atomic freighter, the 16,870-ton "Otto Hahn", which made its maiden voyage in October 1960 and immortalizes the name of the great German nuclear physicist. Additional nuclear powered ships are to be found in the British, Japanese and American fleets.

From the abstractions of Democritus to our present nuclear reactors and accelerators, from the Rontgen machine and "little Curies" to our modern therapeutic and diagnostic units, man has succeeded in harnessing the power of the atom -- to be used for peaceful, beneficial purposes -- or, alternately, as a means of self-destruction.