Guide to the University of Chicago Department of Physics Records 1937-2002

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Table of Contents

Descriptive Summary 3
Information on Use 3
Access 3
Citation 3
Scope Note 3
Related Resources 5
Subject Headings 5
INVENTORY 5
Series I: General Correspondence 5
Series II: Administrative Records 38
Series III: Reprint File 39
Series IV: Textbook and Course Materials 42
Subseries 1: Annotations by A.E. Shaw, Texts for Physics 105-6-7 42
Subseries 2: Course Materials 42
Subseries 3: Course Materials and Miscellaneous Notes 44
Series V: Cosmic Ray Study 45
Subseries 1: Correspondence, Notebooks, and General Data 45
Subseries 2: R.M.M.S. “Aorangi” Data 46
Subseries 3: Capetown, Chelttenham, and Huancayo Data 47
Subseries 4: Christchurch Magnetic Observatory Data 47
Subseries 5: S.S. Talune, Teoloyucan, and Mexico Data 47
Subseries 6: General Data 48
Series VI: Blueprints 49
Series VII: Physics Teaching Center 50
Subseries 1: Proposals and Reports 50
Subseries 2: Correspondence and Press 51
Subseries 3: Building Specs and Maps 51
Subseries 4: Notes 51
Subseries 5: Building Problems and Equipment 52
Series VIII: Audio-Visual Material 52
Subseries 1: VHS Recordings 52
Subseries 2: DVD and CD Recordings 54
Series IX: Oversize 55
Subseries 1: Cosmic Ray Study, Correspondence, Notebooks, and General Data 55
Subseries 2: Cosmic Ray Study, R.M.M.S. “Aorangi” Data 56
Subseries 3: Cosmic Ray Study, Capetown, Chelttenham, and Huancayo Data 56
Subseries 4: Cosmic Ray Study, Christchurch Magnetic Observatory Data 56
Subseries 5: Cosmic Ray Study, S.S. Talune and Teoloyucan and Mexico Data 56
Subseries 6: Cosmic Ray Study, General Data 57
Series X: Restricted 57
Subseries 1: Student Evaluative Material 57
Subseries 2: Budget Material 59
Descriptive Summary

Identifier  ICU.SPCL.PHYSICSDEPT
Title       University of Chicago. Department of Physics. Records
Date        1937-2002
Size        26 linear feet (42 boxes)
Repository  Special Collections Research Center
            University of Chicago Library
            1100 East 57th Street
            Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
Abstract    Contains correspondence, records, reports, reprints, scientific data and
            recordings that originated in the Department of Physics primarily in
            1937-1947 and 1972-1985. Includes data from the Cosmic Ray Study
            directed by Arthur H. Compton, documents student and faculty interactions
            with Department, optical grating transactions, the impact of World War II
            on the Department and profession, renovation and building construction.

Information on Use

Access

Series X contains files to which access is restricted, including student evaluative material
restricted for eighty years and one file of budget material restricted for fifty years. Series VIII,
Audio-Visual, does not include access copies for part or all of the items in the series. Researchers
must consult with staff before requesting these materials. The remainder of the collection is open
for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: University of Chicago.
Department of Physics. Records, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center,
University of Chicago Library

Scope Note

This collection contains correspondence, records, reports, reprints, scientific data and recordings
that originated in the Physics Department primarily, but not exclusively, between the years

Series I. General Correspondence, contains correspondence concerning a variety of matters
relating to the Department, the University, and the world of science. Arranged alphabetically,
much of the correspondence relates to students, fellowships, assistantships, optical grating transactions, and a textbook revision.

Series II. Administrative Records, includes chronologically arranged materials documenting faculty activities and department functions.

Series III contains reprints of articles by faculty members including A. H. Compton, Carl Eckart, Henry Gordon Gale, Harvey B. Lemon, and A. A. Michelson.

Series IV. Textbook and Course Materials contains annotated textbooks, notes, class records, student papers, and experiment data and results. While representative, this file is by no means an inclusive record of all courses offered by the Department during these years.

Series V contains data from the Cosmic Ray Studies conducted in the later 1930s under the general direction of A. H. Compton. Of special interest are the notebooks kept by Compton while aboard the R.M.M.S. Aorangi. Also included are charts, graphs, and tables of data recorded at magnetic observatories in Cheltenham, England; Christchurch, New Zealand; Huancayo, Peru; and Teoloyucan, Mexico, as well as logs, charts, and data taken on board the Aorangi and the S.S. Talune. The last three boxes of the series contain calculations and photographic records not identified with a particular study location. This series is organized into six subseries: Correspondence, Notebooks, and General Data; R.M.M.S. “Aorangi” Data; Capetown, Cheltenham, and Huancayo Data; Christchurch Magnetic Observatory Data; S.S. Talune, Teoloyucan, and Mexico Data; and General Data. Material from the Cosmic Ray Studies may also be found in Series IX, Oversize.

Series VI includes blueprints for equipment and laboratories built in Ryerson Hall in the 1930s, including instruments that were of interest to the U.S. Navy.

Series VII documents the construction of the Physics Teaching Center from the early proposals in 1962 to completion in 1985. It is divided into 5 subseries: Proposals and Reports, which contains both official and unofficial proposals for discussion by faculty and staff; Correspondence and Press, which includes internal correspondence within the University of Chicago and articles written about the project; Building Specs and Maps, which includes maps of building floors, space and room requirements and the lecture hall layout at CERN; Notes, which includes meeting minutes and handwritten notes about the construction project; Building Problems and Equipment, which includes notes and memos sent regarding problems that need to be addressed as the Physics Teaching Center was being constructed and the equipment within the building, from hardware and furniture to specialty machine equipment.
Series VIII includes audio and video recordings of lectures, symposia and other events hosted by the Department of Physics, primarily in the 1990s.

Series IX contains oversized data graphs from the Cosmic Ray Study.

Series X contains files to which access is restricted, including student evaluative material restricted for eighty years and one file of budget material restricted for fifty years.

**Related Resources**
The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

**Subject Headings**
- Compton, Arthur Holly, 1892-1962
- Shaw, Albert Edward
- University of Chicago. Department of Physics
- Physics -- Study and teaching

**INVENTORY**

**Series I: General Correspondence**

- **Box 1**
  - **Folder 1**
    - Ab, 1941-1942
      - Abbitt, W. H.
  - **Box 1**
  - **Folder 2**
    - Accounts, 1943-1944
  - **Box 1**
  - **Folder 3**
    - Ad, 1936-1938
      - Adams, R.
      - Adams, W.
  - **Box 1**
  - **Folder 4**
    - Admission to Candidacy – applications, 1941-1942
  - **Box 1**
  - **Folder 5**
    - Air Materiel Command, 1947
  - **Box 1**
  - **Folder 6**
Al, 1937-1946
• Allen, J. S.
• Allen, W. W.
• Allison, S. K.

Box 1
Folder 7
   Alumni File, 1941-1942

Box 1
Folder 8
   Alvarez, L., 1936

Box 1
Folder 9
   Am, 1937-1947
   • American Association for the Advancement of Science
   • American Association of Physics Teachers
   • American Association of University Professors
   • American Astronomical Society

Box 1
Folder 10
   American Institute of Physics, 1935-1947

Box 1
Folder 11
   American Institute of Physics, bulletins- War policy, 1942-1945

Box 1
Folder 12
   American Institute of Physics, questionnaire - 1943

Box 1
Folder 13
   American Physical Society, 1937-1947

Box 1
Folder 14
   American Physical Society, bulletins, 1936-1947

Box 1
Folder 15
   American Physical Society, proceedings, 1937-1938

Box 1
Folder 16
   American Society for X-Ray and Electron Diffraction, 1946-1947

Box 1
Folder 17
   Ammiraju, P., 1946

Box 1
Folder 18
   Announcements and Course Description - 1931-33

Box 1
Folder 19
Announcements and Course Description - 1934-35
Box 1
Folder 20
  Announcements and Course Description - 1935-36
Box 1
Folder 21
  Announcements and Course Description - 1937-38
Box 1
Folder 22
  Announcements and Course Description - 1938-39
Box 1
Folder 23
  Announcements and Course Description - 1945-48
Box 2
Folder 1
  Application for Serial Number, Ryerson Physical Laboratory, 1943-1945
Box 2
Folder 2
  Argonne National Laboratory, 1946-1947
Box 2
Folder 3
  Armour Institute of Technology, 1936-1947
Box 2
Folder 4
  Army Chemical Center, 1947
Box 2
Folder 5
  Arnold, O. J., 1937
Box 2
Folder 6
  Astronomy Department, 1947
Box 2
Folder 7
  Atomic Energy Commission, 1947
Box 2
Folder 8
  Atomic Scientists of Chicago, 1946-1947
Box 2
Folder 9
  At-Ay, 1936-1979
  • Atterling
  • Auger, P.
  • Avrami, M.
  • Ayres, W.
Box 2
Folder 10
Bachelor of Science Degree, controversy, 1942

Box 2
Folder 11
Bachelor of Science Degree, correspondence with R. K. Hutchins, 1942

Box 2
Folder 12
Barometer, data, undated

Box 2
Folder 13
Ba, 1936-1945
• Bartky, W.
• Bastidas, J.
• Bauer, F. M.
• Bausch and Lomb Optical Co.
• Baxter, E.
• Baygood, M.

Box 2
Folder 14
Beardsley, N. F., 1940-1946

Box 2
Folder 15
Be, 1927-1942
• Beckwith, C. B.
• Bell Telephone Laboratories
• Belmont Smeltney, Inc.
• Bennett, C. D.
• Bennett, P. T.
• Bennett, R. D.

Box 2
Folder 16
Be, 1939-1947
• Benning, Russell
• Benson
• Bernas, R.
• Best, J. B.
• Bethe, H.
• Beutler, H. G.

Box 2
Folder 17
Bibliography, Ryerson Physical Laboratory, faculty and students July 1930 - Dec 1933

Box 2
Folder 18
Bibliography, Ryerson Physical Laboratory, faculty and students July 1930 - Dec 1933

Box 2
Folder 19
Bi-Bl, 1937-1946
• Biddle Co.
• Biggar, R. W.
• Bilie, J.
• Bishop, F. G.
• Bloch, I.
• Bloom, M. W.
• Bloom, S. W.

Box 2
Folder 20
Bo, 1937-1946
• Bodine Electric Co.
• Bohnert, H. G.
• Bone, C. W.
• Bonner, R. J.
• Borrow, S. M.

Box 2
Folder 21
Botany Department, 1946-1947

Box 2
Folder 22
Bo-Br, 1936-1947
• Bowe, J. C.
• Bracewell, K. H.
• Branch, W. M.
• Bridwell, O. F.
• Briggs, H.
• Brown, S. L.

Box 2
Folder 23
Budget - 1942-43

Box 3
Folder 1
Budget - 1946-47

Box 3
Folder 2
Buildings and Grounds Department, 1937-1947

Box 3
Folder 3
Bu, 1942-1945
• Burgess, L. W.
• Burgy, M.

Box 3
Folder 4
Bursar’s Office, 1936

Box 3
Folder 5
Bu, 1939-1946
  • Burton, E. F.
  • Burzynski
  • Butkow, K.

Box 3
Folder 6
  Business Manager, University, 1942-1947

Box 3
Folder 7
  Business Problems Bureau, 1942-1943

Box 3
Folder 8
  Ca, 1935-1946
  • Carlson, R. R.
  • Carpenter, O.
  • Carr, T.
  • Case, C. H.

Box 3
Folder 9
  Castings, notes and data, 1932-1934

Box 3
Folder 10
  Ca-Ce, 1937-1947
  • Cattell, J. M.
  • Central Administration

Box 3
Folder 11
  Central Shop, 1946-1947

Box 3
Folder 12
  Ch, 1938-1947
  • Chandrasekhar, S.
  • Chemistry Department
  • Chicago Association of Commerce
  • Chipman, R.
  • Christensen, A. R.
  • Christy, R. F.
  • Chu, F.

Box 3
Folder 13
  Cl, 1938-1945
  • Clark, G. R.
  • Clements, J. H.

Box 3
Folder 14
  Co, 1936-1940
• Coade, E.
• Coalinga Union High School
• Cockcroft, J. D.
• Coffee, A. T.
• Cogley, N.

**Box 3**
**Folder 15**
The College, 1946-1947

**Box 3**
**Folder 16**
College Physics, 1946

**Box 3**
**Folder 17**
Colloquia, Physics, 1943-1948

**Box 3**
**Folder 18**
Colwell, E. C., 1946

**Box 3**
**Folder 19**
Compton, A. H., 1935-1942

**Box 3**
**Folder 20**
Comptroller’s Office, 1936-1946

**Box 3**
**Folder 21**
Co, 1936-1938
• Comstock, G. C.
• Convey, J.

**Box 3**
**Folder 22**
Conwell, E., 1943-1945

**Box 4**
**Folder 1**
Co, 1937-1947
• Cook, E.
• Cook, J.
• Coon, J. H.

**Box 4**
**Folder 2**
Corning Glass Works, 1936

**Box 4**
**Folder 3**
Cosmic Ray projects, 1937-1944

**Box 4**
**Folder 4**
Co, 1938-1945
• Cotton, A. F.
• Coyle, J. P.

**Box 4**

**Folder 5**
- Cr, 1936-1937
- Craig, Frederich
- Crane, J.
- Crawford, J. M.
- Crawford, M. F.
- Crew, H.
- Cross, C.

**Box 4**

**Folder 6**
Crystallographic Laboratory, Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge, England, 1947

**Box 4**

**Folder 7**
- Cullwick, E. G., 1933

**Box 4**

**Folder 8**
- Curriculum, general, 1941-1943

**Box 4**

**Folder 9**
- Curriculum - 1943-44

**Box 4**

**Folder 10**
- Da, 1937-1946
  • Daniel, J.
  • Das, B.

**Box 4**

**Folder 11**
- Davey, W. P., 1938-1939

**Box 4**

**Folder 12**
- Davis, I. C., 1936

**Box 4**

**Folder 13**
- Dean, Physical Science Division, 1946-1947

**Box 4**

**Folder 14**
- Dean of Students, 1945-1946

**Box 4**

**Folder 15**
- Degrees, Divisional Masters, 1941-1942

**Box 4**

**Folder 16**
- Degrees, honorary, 1941-1942
Box 4
Folder 17
  Degrees, M.S. and Ph.D. - 1925-43
Box 4
Folder 18
  Degrees, M.S. - 1943-44
Box 4
Folder 19
  Degrees, Ph.D., 1925-1944
Box 4
Folder 20
  Dejardin, G., 1938
Box 4
Folder 21
  Dempster, A. J., 1935-1947
Box 4
Folder 22
  Departmental notices, 1946-1947
Box 4
Folder 23
  De, 1936-1945
  • Derieux, J. B.
  • Dershem
  • De Saix, C.
Box 4
Folder 24
  Di, 1936-1946
  • Dickey, D. R.
  • Dietze, A.
Box 4
Folder 25
  Directory, Ryerson Laboratory, 1941-1944
Box 4
Folder 26
  Divisional Master’s Program, 1941-1944
Box 4
Folder 27
  Do, 1936-1943
  • Doan, R. L.
  • Donnelly, T. E.
  • Doolittle, H. D.
Box 4
Folder 28
  Doring, Max, 1936
Box 4
Folder 29
Du, 1938-1942
- Duckwall, F. E.
- Duckworth, H.

Box 4
Folder 30
Dull, R., 1940

Box 5
Folder 1
E and E Account, 1941-1947

Box 5
Folder 2
Eastman Kodak Company, 1947

Box 5
Folder 3
Eckart, Carl, 1940-1947

Box 5
Folder 4
Eckart, C., requests for reprints, 1940-1941

Box 5
Folder 5
Ed-El, 1936-1946
- Edwards, C. W.
- Edwards, D. A.
- Electrical Research Products

Box 5
Folder 6
Electronics Division, 1943-1944

Box 5
Folder 7
El-Em, 1938-1946
- Ellickson, R.
- Emerson, A. E.

Box 5
Folder 8
Employee Records - entry, cutoff, salary change - 1934-39

Box 5
Folder 9
Encyclopedia Brittanica, 1943

Box 5
Folder 10
Engineering, Science, Management, Defense Training (E.S.M.D.T.), 1942

Box 5
Folder 11
Engineering, experiments, undated

Box 5
Folder 12
Engineering, Radio Course, 1942

Box 5
Folder 13
   Enke, J. W., 1946

Box 5
Folder 14
   Equipment, loaned, 1945-1946

Box 5
Folder 15
   Equipment War Loss Claims, 1947

Box 5
Folder 16
   Examinations, Bachelor’s, 1936

Box 5
Folder 17
   Examinations, Master’s, 1940-1946

Box 5
Folder 18
   Examinations, Ph.D., 1941-1946

Box 5
Folder 19
   Examinations, M.A., Ph.D. - 1937

Box 5
Folder 20
   Examinations, Qualifying - 1941-42

Box 5
Folder 21
   Examinations, questions by Compton, Dempster, Gale, Michelson,
   • Millikan, and Monk, undated

Box 5
Folder 22
   Experimental Physics, 1946-1947

Box 5
Folder 23
   Fa-Fe, 1936-1946
   • Fahy, E. F.
   • Fang, S. M.
   • Fansteel Inc.
   • Farley, W. W.
   • Favill, J.
   • Felger, L.

Box 5
Folder 24
   Fellowship Recommendations - 1940

Box 5
Folder 25
Fellowships - 1941

Box 6
Folder 1
   Fellowship Awards - 1941-42

Box 6
Folder 2
   Fellowships - 1942-43

Box 6
Folder 3
   Fellowships, General - 1944

Box 6
Folder 4
   Fellowship Applications - 1945-46

Box 6
Folder 5
   Fellowships, General - 1946-47

Box 6
Folder 6
   Fellowship Applications - 1946-47 A-C

Box 6
Folder 7
   Fellowship Applications - 1946-47 D-F

Box 6
Folder 8
   Fellowship Applications - 1946-47 G-K

Box 6
Folder 9
   Fellowship Applications - 1946-47 L-M

Box 6
Folder 10
   Fellowship Applications - 1946-47 N-R

Box 6
Folder 11
   Fellowship Applications - 1946-47 S

Box 6
Folder 12
   Fellowship Applications - 1946-47 T-Z

Box 6
Folder 13
   Fellowship Recommendations - 1947-48

Box 6
Folder 14
   Fellowship Committee, 1941-1942

Box 6
Folder 15
   Fellowships - from institutions other than Chicago, 1941-1946
Box 6
Folder 16
Fellowships - from institutions other than Chicago, 1940-1945

Box 7
Folder 1
Fe, 1942-1945
• Ferance, M.
• Fermi, E.

Box 7
Folder 2
Fi, 1938
• Fielder, G. W.
• Filbey, E. T.

Box 7
Folder 3
Finance, miscellaneous - 1941

Box 7
Folder 4
Fi, 1937-1938
• Finch, D. M.
• Fisher, E. J.
• Fisher, H.
• Fitzpatrick, J.

Box 7
Folder 5
Fo, 1936-1945
• Ford, L. P.
• Forsythe, W. E.
• Foster, F.
• Foster, G. E.
• Fox, R.
• Folder 6: Fr, 1938-1946
• Franck, J.
• Frank, J.

Box 7
Folder 7
Fr-Fu, 1938-1945
• Freed, S.
• French, J. B.
• Friedman, M.
• Friedus, E. A.
• Froman, D. K.
• Fryer, O. G.
• Furniss, E. S.
Gaetner Scientific Corporation, 1944

Box 7
Folder 9
Gale, H. G., 1936-1938

Box 7
Folder 10
Ga-Ge, 1942-1946
- Galos, G.
- Geiger Counters

Box 7
Folder 11
General Electric Company, Accelerator Research, 194-1945

Box 7
Folder 12
General inquiries, A-G, 1942-1946

Box 7
Folder 13
General inquiries, H-K, 1935-1946

Box 7
Folder 14
General inquiries, N-R, 1936-1944

Box 7
Folder 15
General inquiries, S-Z, 1938-1945

Box 7
Folder 16
Ge-Gi, 1936-1945
- Germain, L. S.
- Gibson, R. E.
- Gilchrist, L.

Box 7
Folder 17
Gilmore Corporation, diamonds, 1933-1940

Box 7
Folder 18
Gi-Gl, 1936-1945
- Gingrich
- Ginn, Inc.
- Glathart, J.
- Glynn, H. L.

Box 7
Folder 19
Go, 1936-1946
- Gonzalez, E.
- Goodheart, M. F.
- Goodrode, M. H.
• Goodwin, H. M.
• Gottlieb, M.

Box 7
Folder 20
Graduate Students - 1940-45

Box 7
Folder 21
Graduate students available for positions - 1941-44

Box 7
Folder 22
Gratings, optical, inquiries - 1936-37

Box 7
Folder 23
Gratings, optical, inquiries - 1938-39

Box 7
Folder 24
Gratings, optical, inquiries - 1940-42

Box 7
Folder 25
Gratings, optical, Transactions - 1930-37

Box 8
Folder 1
Gratings, optical, Transactions - 1938

Box 8
Folder 2
Gratings, optical, Transactions - 1939

Box 8
Folder 3
Gratings, optical, Transactions - 1941-42

Box 8
Folder 4
Gratings, optical, Transactions - 1941-42

Box 8
Folder 5
Gratings, optical, Transactions - 1942-45

Box 8
Folder 6
Gratings, optical, materials, 1939-1941

Box 8
Folder 7
Gratings, optical, Photographs, undated

Box 8
Folder 8
Griffing, B. L., 1945-1946
Ha, 1936-1945
- Hahn, E.
- Hahn, T. M.
- Hall, D. B.
- Hall, L. G.
- Hallahan, J.

Box 8
Folder 10
Ha, 1936-1940
- Hands, A. P.
- Hanna, L. E.
- Hanson, F. B.
- Harden, J.
- Harkins, W. D.
- Harrison, G. R.
- Hart, M. L.

Box 8
Folder 11
He, 1937-1945
- Hemingway, F. S.
- Hendricks, B. C.
- Henniger, W. F.
- Henry, E. G.
- Henshaw, C. L.

Box 8
Folder 12
He, 1937-1946
- Hermans, P. H.
- Hermistane, J. S.
- Hertel, K. L.
- Herzberg, G.
- Herzog, G.
- Hess, D. C.

Box 8
Folder 13
Hi, 1937-1942
- Hickock, N.
- Hilberry
- Hill, H.

Box 8
Folder 14
Ho, 1936-1946
- Hoag, B.
- Hodges
- Holger, R. E.
- Holmes, M. C.
• Horle, C.

Box 8

Folder 15
Hoyt, F. C., 1945-1947

Box 8

Folder 16
Hs, 1939-1946
• Hsiang, J.
• Hsieh, Y.

Box 8

Folder 17
Hu, 1936-1942
• Hughes, A. L.
• Hull, E.

Box 8

Folder 18
Hunter College of the city of New York, Dept. of Physics, 1931-1940

Box 8

Folder 19
Hu, 1936-1945
• Hutchins, R. M.
• Hutchinson, R. O.
• Hutchinson, R. C.
• Huth, C. F.

Box 8

Folder 20
Hutton, E. H., 1946-1947

Box 8

Folder 21
Hydrodynamics, 1941

Box 9

Folder 1
Il-In, 1942-1947
• Illinois College Physics Teacher’s Association
• Indiana Technical College
• Ingersol, L. K.

Box 9

Folder 2
Institute for Nuclear Studies, 1946-1947

Box 9

Folder 3
Institute for Nuclear Studies, glassblowing facilities, 1947

Box 9

Folder 4
Institute for Nuclear Studies, personnel, 1946-1947

Box 9
Folder 5
  Institute for Nuclear Studies, procedures, 1947
Box 9
Folder 6
  Institute for the Study of Metals, 1945-1947
Box 9
Folder 7
  Interdepartmental correspondence, general, 1942-1946
Box 9
Folder 8
  Iona, M., 1946
Box 9
Folder 9
  Ja-Jo, 1937-1946
  • Jacobson, B.
  • Jehle, H.
  • Jesse, W. P.
  • Johnson, P. A.
  • Johnson, T. H.
  • Johnson, W. C.
  • Joyce, L.
Box 9
Folder 10
  Ka, 1937-1947
  • Kalberg, I.
  • Karbler, J. P.
  • Katzer, M.
Box 9
Folder 11
  Ke, 1936-1946
  • Keen, R. C.
  • Keener, J. D.
  • Kenner, W. G.
Box 9
Folder 12
  Ke-Ki, 1936-1942
  • Kerwin, B.
  • Keys, D. A.
  • Kiefer, J. A.
  • Kilner, F. R.
  • Kinsley, C.
Box 9
Folder 13
  Ki-Ku, 1935-1947
  • Kirkpatrick, G. R.
  • Klebach, J. J.
• Kliver, W. H.
• Koch, H. W.
• Kolin, A.
• Kothari, D. S.
• Kraybill, H. L.
• Kishkamaki, T. T.
• Kuonen, C.

Box 9
Folder 14
  Ku-Ky, 1943-1946
  • Kusaka, S.
  • Kwei, P. C. T.

Box 9
Folder 15
  La, 1937-1946
  • Laing, G. J.
  • Lamb, A. B.
  • Lark-Horovitz
  • Lavery, P. E.

Box 9
Folder 16
  La, 1945-1947
  • Lawson A. W.
  • Lazarus, D.

Box 9
Folder 17
  Lemon, H. B., 1936-1947

Box 9
Folder 18
  Le, 1937-1945
  • Lesch, L.
  • Levi, G.
  • Levi, J. S.

Box 9
Folder 19
  Library, 1942-1944

Box 9
Folder 20
  Li-Lo, 1933-1947
  • Lindly, G. T.
  • Loomis, F. W.
  • Lowrie, A. B.
  • Loyola University

Box 9
Folder 21
  Lu-Ly, 1937-1939
• Luby, W. A.
• Lucas, R. L.
• Lyman, T.

Box 9
Folder 22
  Machine Shop, 1941-1947

Box 9
Folder 23
  Ma, 1936-1947
  • Mackay, A. D.
  • Magnolia Inc.
  • Maizlish, I. P.
  • Mallory, P. R.
  • Mann, C. R.
  • Marbaker, E.
  • Markhanen
  • Marshall, J.

Box 9
Folder 24
  Ma, 1936-1939
  • Marshall, T.
  • Mattoon, R.
  • Maxfield, L. S.
  • Maze, H. W.

Box 9
Folder 25
  Mc, 1934-1947
  • McDonald Observatory
  • McEvey, D. G.
  • McGraw-Hill, Inc.
  • McKenly, W. A.
  • McMurray, H. L.
  • McPherson, A. I.

Box 9
Folder 26
  Mc, 1937-1947
  • Meggers, W. F.
  • Metallurgy Department
  • Meteorology Department

Box 9
Folder 27
  Meteorology Institute, 1940-1942

Box 9
Folder 28
  Metropolis, N., 1946-1947

Box 9

24
Folder 29
   Michelson, A. A., 1931-1946
Box 9
Folder 30
   Michelson, A. A., Velocity of Light Experiment at Irvine Ranch - 1930-1931
Box 9
Folder 31
   Miller, D. L., 1938
Box 9
Folder 32
   Miller, F., 1939
Box 9
Folder 33
   Millikan, R. A., 1936-1937
Box 10
Folder 1
   Mo, 1938-1978
   • Molander, A.
   • Moldavan, A.
   • Monk, George D.
Box 10
Folder 2
   Molecular Spectra Research, 1942-1943
Box 10
Folder 3
   Monk, G. S., 1942-1947
Box 10
Folder 4
   Moody Lecture Committee, 1942
Box 10
Folder 5
   Mo, 1936-1947
   • Mooney, A. A.
   • Moore, D. C.
   • Morehead College
   • Morscher, L. N.
   • Morse, R. S.
Box 10
Folder 6
   Mrozowski, S., 1945
Box 10
Folder 7
   Mulliken, R. S., 1932-1947
Box 10
Folder 8
   Mu-My, 1936-1943
• Murrell, V. G.
• Museum of Science and Industry
• Myers, B. E.

Box 10
Folder 9
   National Research Council, fellowships, 1936-1947

Box 10
Folder 10
   National Roster of Scientific and Specialized Personnel, 1941-1943

Box 10
Folder 11
   National Youth Assistance Program, 1937-1938

Box 10
Folder 12
   Natural Science, 1946

Box 10
Folder 13
   Navy Program, 1943-1947

Box 10
Folder 14
   Navy Yard Contract, roof prisms, 1940-1941

Box 10
Folder 15
   News Releases - 1939

Box 10
Folder 16
   Ne-Ny, 1939-1946
• Newell, G.
• Nier, A. O.
• Novak, J. A.
• Nye, E. E.
• Nyswander, R. E.

Box 10
Folder 17
   Optical Society of American, 1938

Box 10
Folder 18
   Optical Shop, 1943-1944

Box 10
Folder 19
   Optical Shop, personnel, 1941-1942

Box 10
Folder 20
   Optical Shop, program, 1940-1945

Box 10
Folder 21
Or-Os, 1936-1938
• Orr, R. S.
• Osgood, T. H.

Box 10
Folder 22
Pa-Pe, 1938-1947
• Packard, L. E.
• Pake, G. E.
• Pearlman, F.
• Pearlman, H.

Box 10
Folder 23
Pearson, Fred, 1939-1943

Box 10
Folder 24
Pearson, Velocity of light materials, 1931-1933

Box 10
Folder 25
Pe, 1938-1945
• Peck, E. R.
• Penrod, E. B.
• Perkins, R. S.
• Pershing, A. V.

Box 10
Folder 26
Personnel, departmental, non-academic, 1940-1943

Box 10
Folder 27
Personnel, departmental, non-academic, 1936-1944

Box 10
Folder 28
Pe-Ph, 1943-1945
• Pettit, R. T.
• Philbrick, F. A.

Box 11
Folder 1
Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi, 1940-1945

Box 11
Folder 2
Photoelectric data, 1930-1931

Box 11
Folder 3
Physical Science Division, 1941-1946

Box 11
Folder 4
Physics Club, 1942-1946
Box 11
Folder 5
  Pi, 1941-1946
  • Pinney, L. E.
  • Pitts, W.

Box 11
Folder 6
  Placement Office, 1940-1942

Box 11
Folder 7
  Platt, J. R., 1946-1947

Box 11
Folder 8
  Po, 1938
  • Pogrund, R.
  • Polk, O. E.

Box 11
Folder 9
  Positions available, 1942-1943

Box 11
Folder 10
  Positions available, 1946-1947

Box 11
Folder 11
  Positions available, academic, 1940-1942

Box 11
Folder 12
  Positions available, government, 1941-1942

Box 11
Folder 13
  Positions available - 1943-46

Box 11
Folder 14
  Positions available - 1947

Box 11
Folder 15
  Positions desired - 1941-42

Box 11
Folder 16
  Positions desired - 1943-46

Box 11
Folder 17
  Po, 1936-1938
  • Potter, A. S.
  • Potter, R. C.
  • Poulter, T. C.
Box 11  
Folder 18  
Premeteorology staff, 1943-1944

Box 11  
Folder 19  
Program recommendations, 1942-1944

Box 11  
Folder 20  
Purchasing Office, miscellaneous purchase items, 1936-1947

Box 12  
Folder 1  
Q, 1941-1942  
• Quadrangle Club  
• Quinn, R. B.

Box 12  
Folder 2  
Radio Course, 1942

Box 12  
Folder 3  
Ra, 1937-1946  
• Randall, C.  
• Randall, H. M.  
• Rao, A. S.

Box 12  
Folder 4  
Rasetti, F., 1944-1945

Box 12  
Folder 5  
Re, 1939-1942  
• Redi, I. G.  
• Reeves, C. S.

Box 12  
Folder 6  
Regener, V. H., 1942-1946

Box 12  
Folder 7  
Registrar’s Office, 1938-1947

Box 12  
Folder 8  
Regulations, laboratory hours, 1941

Box 12  
Folder 9  
Reprint lists, 1942-1944

Box 12  
Folder 10  
Reprints, mailing lists, 1942-1944
Box 12
Folder 11
Reprints, requests, 1941-1943
Box 12
Folder 12
Reprints, requests, 1944-1946
Box 13
Folder 1
Residence records - 1937
Box 13
Folder 2
Ri, 1936-1943
• Rice, W. E.
• Richards, H. C.
• Richtmeyer, F. K.
• Ringo, R.
Box 13
Folder 3
Ro, 1936-1945
• Rodgers, E.
• Rogers, F.
• Rogozinski, A. N.
• Root, L.
Box 13
Folder 4
Ro, 1936-1946
• Rosenwald Fund
• Rossiter, K.
• Royal Canadian Institute
Box 13
Folder 5
Ruling Machines, inquiries, 1943-1944
Box 13
Folder 6
Ru, 1937-1942
• Rulison, I. M.
• Runge, R.
• Rust, C. F.
• Rutherford, E.
Box 13
Folder 7
Sa-Sc, 1936-1946
• Sattgast, C. R.
• Saunders, F. A.
• Saur, A. J.
• Schaub, B. H.
• Scheenberg, B.

Box 13
Folder 8
  Schein, Marcel, 1946-1947

Box 13
Folder 9
  Sc, 1936-1947
  • Schlesinger, H. I.
  • Schmeing, G. M.
  • Schmidt, T. A.
  • Schneck, J. W.
  • Schneller, L. G.
  • Schremp, E. J.
  • Schuman, J. F.

Box 13
Folder 10
  Se, 1935-1945
  • Seaton, R. W.
  • See, T. J.
  • Seely, W.

Box 13
Folder 11
  Selective Service System, bulletins, 1942-1944

Box 13
Folder 12
  Selective Service System, general, 1941-1942

Box 13
Folder 13
  Selective Service System, - 1941-42

Box 13
Folder 14
  Selective Service System, - 1943-44

Box 13
Folder 15
  Selective Service System, deferments and personnel transactions - A-H, 1941-1943

Box 13
Folder 16
  Selective Service System, deferments and personnel transactions - I-Q, 1941-1943

Box 13
Folder 17
  Selective Service System, deferments and personnel transactions - R-Z, 1941-1943

Box 13
Folder 18
  Se-Si, 1935-1946
  • Selove, W.
  • Semon Bache, Inc.
• Severinghaus, W. L.
• Seymour, J. K.

**Box 13**

**Folder 19**

Sh-Si, 1936-1947
• Shaw
• Sherman, W. B.
• Sherwin, C. W.
• Shortley, G. H.
• Shure, K.
• Siegel, D. T.
• Sigma Pi Sigma
• Sigma Xi (also see Phi Beta Kappa)

**Box 13**

**Folder 20**

Signal Corps, U. S. Army, 1942

**Box 13**

**Folder 21**

Si-Sl, 1936-1947
• Simon, A.
• Simpson, J. A.
• Sims, W. F.
• Slater, J. C.
• Slattery, R.

**Box 13**

**Folder 22**

Sm, 1936-1940
• Smith, A. W.
• Smith, H. R.
• Smith, N. F.
• Smith, N. M.

**Box 13**

**Folder 23**

Solar Eclipse, Photographs Sparks, F. M., January 24, 1925

**Box 13**

**Folder 24**

Spectograph Exhibit, news releases, 1941

**Box 13**

**Folder 25**

Spectroscopy, 1942-1944

**Box 13**

**Folder 26**

Spectroscopy Laboratory, quarterly report - Jun-Aug 1947

**Box 13**

**Folder 27**

Speculum, notes, undated
Box 13
Folder 28
  Speculum, notes, undated

Box 13
Folder 29
  Sp, 1936-1945
  • Sparks, F.M.
  • Spence, B. J.
  • Spencer, B.

Box 14
Folder 1
  Staff, Physics Department, 1937-1944

Box 14
Folder 2
  Staff, Physics, National Defense Activities, 1940-1941

Box 14
Folder 3
  Staff, prospective, 1941-1943

Box 14
Folder 4
  St, 1936-1947
  • Stanton, H. E.
  • Stavely, F. W.
  • Steadman, F. M.
  • Steel, H. R.
  • Steen, R. C.
  • Stein, C.

Box 14
Folder 5
  St, 1937-1946
  • Stephenson, R. J.
  • Sternheimer, R. M.
  • Stevens, A. C.
  • Stevens, E. N.
  • Stillwell, C.
  • Stockman, H.

Box 14
Folder 6
  St, 1935-1946
  • Stranathan
  • Strauss, H.
  • Stroud, W. G.
  • Struve, O.

Box 14
Folder 7
  Student inquiries - 1942-45
Box 14
Folder 8
  Student inquiries - 1946
Box 14
Folder 9
  Student petition, undated
Box 14
Folder 10
  Students, prospective, 1941-1944
Box 14
Folder 11
  Student inquiries - 1941
Box 14
Folder 12
  Student inquiries - 1947
Box 14
Folder 13
  Su-Sw, 1936-1946
  • Suhr, R. M.
  • Summerville, R.
  • Swainn, V. F.
Box 14
Folder 14
  Suzuki Transactions, 1938-1941
Box 14
Folder 15
  Symposia, programs, 1939
Box 14
Folder 16
  Ta-Th, 1938-1979
  • Tate, D.
  • Teller, E.
  • Tenney, A.
  • Theerman, Paul
  • Thomas, R.
  • Thompson, R. M.
Box 14
Folder 17
  Textbook, New Elementary Physics, Coyle, J. P., 1935-1938
Box 14
Folder 18
  Textbook, New Elementary Physics, Ginn and Co. - 1935
Box 14
Folder 19
  Textbook, New Elementary Physics, Ginn and Co. - Jan-Feb 1936
Folder 20
   Textbook, New Elementary Physics, Ginn and Co. - Mar-Dec 1936
Box 14
Folder 21
   Textbook, New Elementary Physics, Ginn and Co. - 1937-38
Box 15
Folder 1
   Textbook, New Elementary Physics, Millikan, R. A. - 1934-35
Box 15
Folder 2
   Textbook, New Elementary Physics, Millikan, R. A. - Jan-Feb 1936
Box 15
Folder 3
   Textbook, New Elementary Physics, Millikan, R. A. - Mar 1936 - Dec 1937
Box 15
Folder 4
   Textbook, New Elementary Physics, miscellaneous correspondence, 1930-1936
Box 15
Folder 5
   Textbook, New Elementary Physics, miscellaneous materials, undated
Box 15
Folder 6
   Ti-To, 1937-1947
   - Ticho, H. K.
   - Toralballa, L. V.
   - Tousey, R.
   - Townsend, H.
Box 15
Folder 7
   Treasurer’s Office, 1942
Box 15
Folder 8
   Tr-Ts, 1937-1945
   - Trotter, H. F.
   - Tsukamoto, K.
Box 15
Folder 9
   Un-Ut, 1935-1946
   - Universal Carloading Inc.
   - University Press (Chicago)
   - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Society for Cultural Relations)
   - Urey, Harold
   - Utterbach, C. L.
Box 15
Folder 10
   Va-Ve, 1936-1945
• Vanderberg, R. M.
• Vargus, J.
• Veeder, C. H.
• Venable, W. M.
• Venkateshwarlu, P.

**Box 15**
**Folder 11**
Veterans, 1946-1947

**Box 15**
**Folder 12**
Vi-Vo, 1938-1946
• Vital, M.
• Vocational Guidance Board

**Box 15**
**Folder 13**
Wa, 1943-1946
• Wager, A.
• Walker, T. L.
• Walling, C.

**Box 15**
**Folder 14**
Wa, 1943-1947
• War Department, United States
• War Manpower Commission

**Box 15**
**Folder 15**
Wa, 1936-1945
• Ward’s Natural Science Establishment
• Warner Company
• Washington, University of
• Watson, W. W.

**Box 15**
**Folder 16**
We, 1937-1947
• Weaver, A. B.
• Weaver, W.
• Webb, H. W.
• Weber, K. H.
• Wedel, J. F.
• Weimar, B. R.
• Weiss, P. H.
• Weksler, B.
• Westinghouse Corporation

**Box 15**
**Folder 17**
Wi, 1935-1946
• Wickenden, R. C.
• Wiley Company
• Wilkenson, R. G.
• Williams, V.
• Wilson, R. R.
• Wisegarver, F. H.

Box 15
Folder 18
Wo, 1939-1945
• Wolfenstein, L.
• Wollan, E. O.

Box 15
Folder 19
Wo-Wr, 1936-1939
• Works Progress Administration Grant
• Wright, W. R.

Box 15
Folder 20
Ya, 1936-1937
• Yagol, N.
• Yale University

Box 15
Folder 21
Yerkes Observatory, 1936-1945

Box 15
Folder 22
Yo-Yu, 1938-1947
• York
• Young, A. E.
• Yu, H.

Box 15
Folder 23
Zachariasen, W. H., correspondence, 1946

Box 15
Folder 24
Zachariasen, W. H., correspondence, January-April 1947

Box 15
Folder 25
Zachariasen, W. H., correspondence, June-August 1947

Box 15
Folder 26
Zachariasen, W. H., correspondence, September-December 1947

Box 15
Folder 27
Zachariasen, personal file, 1945-1946

Box 15
Folder 28
Ze-Zi, 1937-1946
- Zeiss, C.
- Zenith Company
- Zimmerman, E.
- Zinn, W. H.

Series II: Administrative Records

Box 16
Folder 1
1937
Box 16
Folder 2
1938
Box 16
Folder 3
1939
Box 16
Folder 4
1940
Box 16
Folder 5
January-April 1941
Box 16
Folder 6
May-August 1941
Box 16
Folder 7
September-December 1941
Box 16
Folder 8
January-March 1942
Box 16
Folder 9
April-June 1942
Box 16
Folder 10
July-September 1942
Box 16
Folder 11
October-December 1942
Box 16
Folder 12
January-March 1943
Box 16
Folder 13
April-June 1943
Box 16
Folder 14
July-December 1943
Box 16
Folder 15
January-June 1944
Box 16
Folder 16
July-December 1944
Box 16
Folder 17
1945-46
Box 16
Folder 18
1947
Box 16
Folder 19
Directories and Publication Listings, 1963-1977
Box 16
Folder 20
Division of the Physical Sciences, Reports, 1974-1979
Box 16
Folder 21
Articles on Enrico Fermi, 1987-1993
Box 16
Folder 22
Announcements and Program Guides, 1994-2000

Series III: Reprint File

Box 17
Folder 1
Compton, A.H., 1933-1936
• Compton, A. H. “Magnitude of Cosmic Ray Bursts,” 1934
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Box 17
Folder 2
Eckart, Carl, 1930-1939
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Box 17
Folder 3
Gale, Henry, 1910-1931
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Box 17
Folder 4
Lemon, Harvey, 1912-1925
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Box 17
Folder 5
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Box 17
Folder 6
Miscellaneous Authors, 1926-1946
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Box 17
Folder 7
Miscellaneous Authors, 1909-1939
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Subseries 1: Annotations by A.E. Shaw, Texts for Physics 105-6-7

Box 18
Lemon, H. B. and Michael Ference, Experimental Heat, Light and Sound, 1942
Box 18
Lemon, H. B. and Michael Ference, Experimental Electricity, Sixth Edition, 1942
Box 18
Box 19
Folder 1

Subseries 2: Course Materials

Box 19
Folder 2
Physics A-101, Fry, Elementary Differential Equations, Chapter 1, 1931
Box 19
Folder 3
Physics A-101, Fry, Elementary Differential Equations, Chapter VI, 1931
Box 19
Folder 4
Physics 105-6-7, examinations and quizzes, 1940-1943
Box 19
Folder 5
  Physics 107, student experiments, Nos. 6-9, undated
Box 19
Folder 6
  Physics 107, student experiments, Nos. 20, 22, 23, 25, 33, 35, and 40, undated
Box 19
Folder 7
  Physics 107, student experiments, Nos. 41, 42, and 43, 1942-1943
Box 19
Folder 8
  Physics 107, student experiments, Nos. 44-45, circa 1943
Box 19
Folder 9
  Physics 107, student experiments, No. 46, 1942-1943
Box 19
Folder 10
  Physics 107, student experiments, Nos. 49-50, 1943
Box 19
Folder 11
  Physics 107, student experiments, No. 51, 1943
Box 19
Folder 12
  Physics 107, student experiments, No. 52, 1943
Box 19
Folder 13
  Physics 107, student experiments, miscellaneous, 1937
Box 20
Folder 1
  Premeteorology, class records, undated
Box 20
Folder 2
  Premeteorology, discussion guides, 1943-1944
Box 20
Folder 3
  Premeteorology, rosters and room schedules, 1943-1944
Box 20
Folder 4
  Physics 250, Mechanics, undated
Box 20
Folder 5
  Physics 251, Mathematical Physics, notes taken by N. A. Riley, undated
Box 20
Folder 6
  Physics 253, Geometrical Optics, 1940
Box 20
Folder 7
Physics 262, Experimental Physics, student reports, Spring 1940
Box 20
Folder 8
Physics 262, 2 reports on the Stephan-Boltzman Constant, 1938
Box 20
Folder 9
Physics 264, Advanced Experimental Physics, F. Englemann, 1939
Box 20
Folder 10
Physics 264, Advanced Experimental Physics, C. Rennison, 1933
Box 21
Folder 1
Physics 301, Physical Optics, Michelson, undated
Box 21
Folder 2
Physics 302, Electromagnetic Theory, Michelson, undated
Box 21
Folder 3
Physics 302, Electromagnetic Theory, Michelson, undated
Box 21
Folder 4
Physics 308, Preliminary Optics, undated
Box 21
Folder 5
Physics 308, Electrodynamics, Dr. Bathe, undated
Box 21
Folder 6
Physics 321, Kinetic Theory of Gases, undated
Box 21
Folder 7
Physics 321, Kinetic Theory of Matter, A. J. Dempster (notes taken by Daniel Gunderson), Fall 1928
Box 21
Folder 8
Physics 326, Electron Theory I, A. E. Shaw, Spring 1932
Box 21
Folder 9
Physics 327, Electron Theory II, Dempster, Spring 1932

Subseries 3: Course Materials and Miscellaneous Notes
Box 22
Folder 1
Physics 342, Spectroscopy, student reports, 1938
Box 22
Folder 2
Physics 345, Technique of Electron and Nuclear Physics, A. E. Shaw. Experiments by Fagen, M. and Lake, L., 1941

Box 22
Folder 3
Physics 348-49, X-Ray Laboratory notes, undated

Box 22
Folder 4
Physics 349, Vector Analysis, Dr. Barthe, undated

Box 22
Folder 5
Physics 349, Vector Analysis, Dr. Barthe, undated

Box 22
Folder 6
Physics 356, Spectroscopy, undated

Box 22
Folder 7
Physics 356, Spectroscopy, 1928

Box 22
Folder 8
Physics 382, Advanced Mathematical Physics, Dr. Bartky, undated

Box 22
Folder 9
Crystal Structure notes, undated

Box 22
Folder 10
Definite Integrals 248, undated

Box 22
Folder 11
Electric Discharge in Gases, K. T. Compton, undated

Box 22
Folder 12
Quantum Mechanics, undated

Box 23
Folder 1
Course Outlines, 1964-1966

Box 23
Folder 2
Course Outlines, 1969-1971

Series V: Cosmic Ray Study

Subseries 1: Correspondence, Notebooks, and General Data

Box 23
Folder 3
Bennett, Brown, etc., Data, 1935

Box 23
Folder 4
Compton, A. H., Correspondence, 1936-1937
Box 23
Folder 5
Compton, R.M.M.S. “Aorangi,” Notebook No. 1, 1936
Box 23
Folder 6
Box 23
Folder 7
Box 23
Folder 8
Fleming, John A., Correspondence, 1938-1945
Box 23
Folder 9
Pacific Ocean, Cosmic Ray Calculations, 1936-1938

Subseries 2: R.M.M.S. “Aorangi” Data
Box 24
Folder 1
Barograph and Thermograph Records, 1936-1937
Box 24
Folder 2
Barometer Calibrations, 1937-1938
Box 24
Folder 3
Barometer Corrections, 1938
Box 24
Folder 4
Cosmic Ray Calculations, 1936-1937
Box 24
Folder 5
Interpolations from ***graphs, 1937-38
Box 24
Folder 6
Pressure and Temperature Effects, undated
Box 24
Folder 7
Tables and Calculations Procedures, 1937-1938
Box 24
Folder 8
Tables for Data, 1936-1937
Box 24
Folder 9
Log of R.M.M.S. “Aorangi,” 1936-1937
Box 24
Folder 10
Log of R.M.M.S. “Aorangi,” 1937-1938

Subseries 3: Capetown, Chelttenham, and Huancayo Data

Box 24
Folder 11
Huancayo Observatory, miscellaneous cosmic ray data, 1936-1937

Subseries 4: Christchurch Magnetic Observatory Data

Box 24
Folder 12
Journal kept by J. W. Beagley, 1937-1940
Box 24
Folder 13
Absolute ionization, observations, 1936
Box 24
Folder 14
Ionization, hourly values of departure, 1936-1940
Box 25
Folder 1
Barometric pressure, hourly values, 1936-1940
Box 25
Folder 2
Cosmic ray “bursts”, hourly measurement, 1936-1940
Box 25
Folder 3
Indoor temperature, hourly readings, 1936-1940
Box 25
Folder 4
Outdoor temperature, hourly readings, 1936-1940
Box 25
Folder 5
Miscellaneous data, 1936-1937
Box 25
Folder 6
Greenland data, 1932-1933

Subseries 5: S.S. Talune, Teoloyucan, and Mexico Data

Box 25
Folder 7
S.S. Talune, barograph and thermograph records, 1937
Box 25
Folder 8
S.S. Talune, miscellaneous data, undated
Box 25
Folder 9
   Teoloyucan, correspondence, 1937-1941
Box 25
Folder 10
   Teoloyucan, auxiliary calculations, 1937-1940
Box 25
Folder 11
   Teoloyucan, barometric and temperature data, 1937-1938
Box 25
Folder 12
   Teoloyucan, B-I Studies, 1939-1940
Box 25
Folder 13
   Teoloyucan, camera clock corrections, 1937-1940
Box 25
Folder 14
   Teoloyucan, diurnal variations, 1937-1940
Box 25
Folder 15
   Teoloyucan, diurnal variations summary, 1937-1938
Box 25
Folder 16
   Teoloyucan, records and scaling, 1937-1939
Box 25
Folder 17
   S.S. Tulane Log, undated
Box 26
Folder 1
   Teoloyucan, seasonal, diurnal, monthly barometric and temperature data, 1936-1941
Box 26
Folder 2
   Teoloyucan, sidereal time calculations, 1937-1940
Box 26
Folder 3
   Teoloyucan (continued), solar diurnal variations in cosmic ray intensity, 1940-1941
Box 26
Folder 4
   Teoloyucan (continued), sunspot numbers, 1941
Box 26
Folder 5
   Teoloyucan (continued), tables and instructions, 1937-1941
Box 26
Folder 6
   Teoloyucan (continued), miscellaneous data, 1937-1940

Subseries 6: General Data
Box 26
Folder 7
Annual periods, 1937-1938
Box 26
Folder 8
Average data, Huancayo and Teoloyucan, 1936-1938
Box 26
Folder 9
Diurnal variations, auxiliary calculations, undated
Box 26
Folder 10
Instructions for installation and operation of model C. cosmic ray meter, 1935
Box 26
Folder 11
Reduction of data for Cheltenham, Christchurch, Huancayo, and Teoloyucan, 1935-1938
Box 26
Folder 12
Science Service Research Aid announcements, cosmic ray ursigrams, 1938-1942
Box 26
Folder 13
Seasonal variations at all stations, 1936-1938
Box 26
Folder 14
Solar data 1937-1938
Box 26
Folder 15
Solar and diurnal effects, 1937-1938
Box 26
Folder 16
Weights, Huancayo and Teoloyucan laboratories, 1940-1941
Box 26
Folder 17
Miscellaneous data, 1937-1940
Box 27
Calculations and Photographic Records, 1936-1937
Box 28
Photographic Records, R.M.M.S. “Aorangi,” 1936-1938,
Box 29
Box 30
Sums, 1939-1941
Box 31
Sums, 1937-1939

Series VI: Blueprints
Box 32
Folder 1
Blueprints, 1933-1943 (See Flat File)
• Ryerson Laboratory, 4th floor, 1934
• Ryerson Laboratory, Student Observatory, 1933
• Special Indoor Collimator for Height Finder, 1943
• Midget Gas Engine, 1936

Box 32
Folder 2
Blueprints, U.S. Navy, 1930-1942 (See Flat File)
• Optical Equipment, List of Drawings, 1942
• Periscopic Alidade Mk. I, 1930
• Viewing Instrument, Mk. III, 1940

Series VII: Physics Teaching Center
Subseries 1: Proposals and Reports
Box 32
Folder 3
Box 32
Folder 4
The Physical Sciences Central Facility, 1966-1967
Box 32
Folder 5
Program for the Physics Teaching Center for the Department of Physics Astronomy and Astrophysics, 1982
Box 32
Folder 6
Project Manual, Volume 1, 1983
Box 32
Folder 7
Box 32
Folder 8
Committee Reports, 1975-1980
Box 32
Folder 9
Drafts and Proposals, 1975-1983
Box 33
Folder 1
Center for Physics Summary, May 11, 1976
Box 33
Folder 2
Proposal for Converting the Accelerator Building into the Building for the Department of Physics and Space Requirements for the Enrico Fermi and James Franck Institutes, February 10, 1978
Box 33
Folder 3
   Center for Physics Report, 1980
Box 33
Folder 4
   Undated Drafts
Box 33
Folder 5
   Room Drafts, undated

Subseries 2: Correspondence and Press

Box 33
Folder 6
   Correspondence, 1974-1984
Box 33
Folder 7
   Duplicates of Architectural and Planning Correspondence, 1981-1983
Box 33
Folder 8
   Various Articles, 1965-1984

Subseries 3: Building Specs and Maps

Box 33
Folder 9
   Building Maps, 1973-1979
Box 33
Folder 10-11
   Schematics and Blueprints, 1929-1982
Box 33
Folder 12
   Space Requirements and Measurements, 1974-1985
Box 34
Folder 1
   Building Requirements, 1981-1986
Box 34
Folder 2
   Lecture Hall Lighting Specifics, undated
Box 34
Folder 3
   CERN Lecture Hall Photos, Layout and Blueprints, 1970-1981

Subseries 4: Notes

Box 34
Folder 4
   Meeting Notes, 1982
Box 34
Folder 5
  Meeting Notes, 1983
Box 34
Folder 6
  Meeting Notes, 1984
Box 34
Folder 7
  Meeting Notes, 1985-1986
Box 34
Folder 8
  Handwritten Notes, undated
Box 34
Folder 9
  Handwritten Notes, undated

Subseries 5: Building Problems and Equipment

Box 34
Folder 10
  Building Problems, 1985-1986
Box 34
Folder 11
  Security and Safety, 1977-1986
Box 34
Folder 12
  Building Hardware, 1983-1986
Box 34
Folder 13
  Audio-Visual Equipment, 1983
Box 34
Folder 14
  Lab and Machine Shop Equipment, 1981-1985
Box 34
Folder 15
  Air Compression System, 1983

Series VIII: Audio-Visual Material

Subseries 1: VHS Recordings

Box 35
  VHS 1: James Cronin, “Prize Ceremony” and “Science of Man,” November 23, 1981
Box 35
Box 35
Box 35

Box 35

Box 35

Box 35

Box 35

Box 35

Box 35

Box 35

Box 35

Box 35

Box 36
Folder 1
Symposium on Black Holes and Relativistic Stars, December 14-15, 1996
- VHS 1: Friday Physics Lectures, Ugo Fano, “Current Outlook on Atomic and Molecular Physics, December 3, 1993
- VHS 4: Edward Witten, “Reflections Concerning the Fate of Space-Time,” February 24, 1994
- VHS 5: Martin Perl, “Courtenay Wright and the Physics of Leptons,” April 1, 1994
- VHS 7: Symposium on Black Holes and Relativistic Stars, #1 Saturday, Valorie & President Hugo Sonnenschein, December 14-15, 1996
• VHS 8: Symposium on Black Holes and Relativistic Stars, #2 & #3 Saturday, J. Freidman and K. Thorne, December 14-15, 1996
• VHS 10: Symposium on Black Holes and Relativistic Stars, #6 Saturday, December 14-15, 1996
• VHS 11: Symposium on Black Holes and Relativistic Stars, #7 & #8 Sunday, W. Israel and R. Wald, December 14-15, 1996
• VHS 12: Symposium on Black Holes and Relativistic Stars, #9 & #10 Sunday, Rafael Sorkin and James Hartle, December 14-15, 1996
• VHS 14: Symposium on Black Holes and Relativistic Stars, Last Sunday, E. Witten, December 14-15, 1996

Box 37
VHS 1: James Carlstrom, May 22, 1997

Box 37

Box 37

Box 37

Subseries 2: DVD and CD Recordings

Box 37

Box 37

Box 37
DISC 3: S. Chandrasekhar, “Newton’s Principia #2,” April 17, 1990

Box 37
DISC 4: S. Chandrasekhar, “Newton’s Principia #3,” April 24, 1990

Box 37
DISC 5: S. Chandrasekhar, “Newton’s Principia #4,” May 1, 1990

Box 37

Box 37

Box 37

Box 37

Box 37

54
Box 37
Box 37
Box 37
Box 37
DISC 14: Lalitha Chandrasekhar’s Celebration of her husband, Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar’s, 90th Birthday, October 19, 2000
Box 37
DISC 15: The Class of 2001 to 2008

Series IX: Oversize

Subseries 1: Cosmic Ray Study, Correspondence, Notebooks, and General Data
Box 38
Folder 1
Gill, P. S. - Data Sheets, 1935-1938
Box 38
Folder 2
Intensity Charts - Cosmic Rays, 1936-1942

Subseries 2: Cosmic Ray Study, R.M.M.S. “Aorangi” Data
Box 38
Folder 3
Geomagnetic Latitude and Longitude Graphs, 1937-1938
Box 38
Folder 4
Latitude and Longitude Graphs, 1936
Box 38
Folder 5
Latitude Curves, 1936-1937
Box 38
Folder 6
Latitude Curves, 1936-1937
Box 38
Folder 7
Miscellaneous Data, 1937-1938
Box 39
Folder 1
Intensity Charts, Cosmic Rays, 1936-1937
Folder 2
  Temperature Charts, undated (See Flat File)
Box 39
Folder 3
  Temperature Charts, undated
Box 39
Folder 4
  Temperature Charts, undated

Subseries 3: Cosmic Ray Study, Capetown, Chelttenham, and Huancayo Data

Box 38
Folder 8
  Capetown Observatory, data, 1935-1938
Box 38
Folder 9
  Cheltenham Observatory, data, April 1935 - September 1937
Box 39
Folder 5
  Cheltenham Observatory, Hourly values of departures from balance, 1936
Box 39
Folder 6
  Cheltenham Observatory, Bi-Hourly means of departure from balance, corrected to 760mm Hg., January- July 1940
Box 39
Folder 7
  Huancayo Observatory, Electrometer sensitivity and barometric pressure, 1936-1937

Subseries 4: Cosmic Ray Study, Christchurch Magnetic Observatory Data

Box 39
Folder 8
  Electrometer, sensitivity, daily values, 1937-1946

Subseries 5: Cosmic Ray Study, S.S. Talune and Teoloyucan and Mexico Data

Box 39
Folder 9
  S.S. Talune, data – 1937
Box 39
Folder 10
  Teoloyucan, daily mean Iº, 1937-1941
Box 39
Folder 11
  Coeffs, corrected and uncorrected for linear trend, 1937-1942
Daily mean I’s, 1937-1941

Box 40
Folder 2
   Intensity data, 1937-1939 (See Flat File)

Box 40
Folder 3
   Solar diurnal harmonic analysis, 1937-1939

Box 40
Folder 4
   Solar diurnal harmonic coeffs, undated

Subseries 6: Cosmic Ray Study, General Data

Box 40
Folder 5
   Diurnal variations, transformations from solar to sidereal time, undated

Box 40
Folder 6
   Miscellaneous data, 1937

Box 40
Folder 7
   Comptroller's reports of condition and expenditures for Cosmic Ray Study, 1938-1943

Series X: Restricted

Series X contains student evaluative material restricted until 2027 and budget material restricted until 2035.

Subseries 1: Student Evaluative Material

Box 41
Folder 1
   Misc. Student Standing, Grades and Student Information, 1937-1947

Box 41
Folder 2
   Spectroscope 356, February “C” Group final and midterm exam grades, 1943

Box 41
Folder 3
   Pretests, Physics 105-6-7, 1944-1946

Box 41
Folder 4
   Pretests, Physics 105-6-7, 1945

Box 41
Folder 5
   Pretests, Physics 105-6-7, 1944

Box 41
Folder 6
   Pretests, Physics 105-6-7, 1944-1945
Box 41
Folder 7
  Premeteorology, Section C, marked papers, 1944
Box 41
Folder 8
  Premeteorology, Section N, 1943-1944
Box 41
Folder 9
  Premeteorology, Section N, student papers, 1944
Box 41
Folder 10
  Student Recommendations, 1937-1946
Box 41
Folder 11
  Assistantships, applications - 1943-1944
Box 41
Folder 12
  Assistantships, applications - 1944
Box 41
Folder 13
  Assistantships, applications - 1944-1945
Box 41
Folder 14
  Assistantships, applications, Dead File, 1942-1943
Box 42
Folder 1
  Qualifying Exams, 1941-1942
Box 42
Folder 2
  Exams for M.A. and Ph.D., 1938-1943
Box 42
Folder 3
  Fellowship Awards, 1941-1943
Box 42
Folder 4
  Hunter College of the city of New York, Dept. of Physics, 1938-1942
Box 42
Folder 5
  Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi, 1940-1945
Box 42
Folder 6
Box 42
Folder 7
  Recommendations and Appointments - H-R, 1937-1940
Box 42
Folder 8
   Recommendations and Appointments - S-Z, 1940-1942
Box 42
Folder 9
   Recommendations - A-D, 1941-1942
Box 42
Folder 10
   Recommendations - E-G, 1941-1942
Box 42
Folder 11
   Recommendations - H-K, 1941-1942
Box 42
Folder 12
   Recommendations - L-Q, 1941-1942
Box 42
Folder 13
   Recommendations - R, 1941-1942
Box 42
Folder 14
   Recommendations - S, 1941-1942
Box 42
Folder 15
   Recommendations - T-Z, 1941-1942
Box 42
Folder 16
   Recommendations, graduate students by faculty members, 1940-1943
Box 42
Folder 17
   Recommendations, Students, 1943
Box 42
Folder 18
   Selective Service Deferments, 1941-1943
Box 42
Folder 19
   Medical Records, 1943
Box 42
Folder 20
   Premeteorology, class records, undated
Box 42
Folder 21
   Physics 264, Advanced Experimental Physics, Martin Bloom, 1940
Box 42
Folder 22
   Physics 264, Advanced Experimental Physics, miscellaneous student experiments, 1940

Subseries 2: Budget Material
Box 42
Folder 23
Physics Teaching Center, Building Project, Budget Material, 1976-1985