
Guide to the Richard Hawley Tucker papers MS.253

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Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: University of California, Santa Cruz

Title: Richard Hawley Tucker papers

creator: Tucker, R. H. (Richard Hawley)

Identifier/Call Number: MS.253

Physical Description: 2.53 Linear Feet6 boxes

Date (inclusive): 1879-1939

Conditions Governing Access

Collection is open for research.

Arrangement

This collection is organized into five series:

1. Correspondence
2. Writings and research files
3. San Luis, Argentina expedition files
4. Memorabilia
5. Photographs

Materials within each series are arranged in chronological order.

Biographical / Historical

Richard Hawley Tucker was an astronomer at the Lick Observatory during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Tucker was born in 1859 in Maine, and began studying civil engineering and astronomy at Lehigh University in 1875 at age 15. Upon graduation in 1879, he started working as Assistant at the Dudley Observatory in Albany, New York, where he remained for four years before becoming Instructor of Mathematics and Astronomy at Lehigh University. A year later, Tucker began assisting in a survey of the southern skies at the Argentine National Observatory in Cordoba with Dr. B.A. Gould and John H. Thorne. He remained there until 1893, when he was offered a staff astronomer position at the Lick Observatory to oversee the study of precise star positions using the Meridian Circle. In 1908, Tucker left the Lick Observatory to lead a three-year expedition in San Luis, Argentina, where he and his team collected 87,000 observations of the positions of 15,000 stars. He returned to Lick in 1911 and remained an astronomer there until he retired and became Professor Emeritus in 1926. Tucker married Ruth Standen in 1914, and they had two daughters, Mary and Jane. Tucker died in 1952 in Palo Alto, California.

For more information: [Richard Hawley Tucker: Lick Observatory](#)

Preferred Citation

Richard Hawley Tucker papers. MS 253. Special Collections and Archives, University Library, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Related Materials

Additional Tucker correspondence from 1893-1916 can be found in Series 1 of the Lick Observatory records:

[UA.036 Series 1: Correspondence](#)

The Tucker family papers are available at the Historic New England Library and Archives:

[MS033 Tucker family papers](#)

Scope and Contents

This collection contains the personal and professional papers of Richard Hawley Tucker, an astronomer who worked at the Lick Observatory from 1893 to 1926. It includes family letters, professional correspondence, research materials, manuscripts, reprints, memorabilia, and photograph albums showing life on Mount Hamilton around the turn of the century, as well as Tucker's travels in South America.

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Subjects and Indexing Terms

Astronomy
Lick Observatory
Tucker, R. H. (Richard Hawley)
Tucker, R. H. (Richard Hawley)

Correspondence 1879-1939

Scope and Contents

This series contains Tucker's personal and professional correspondence, as well as letters from his time working for the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey in New York.

Box 1, Folder 1-8
Box 1, Folder 9
Box 6
Box 1,
Folder 10-15

Family letters 1879-1906

New York State Coast and Geodetic Survey 1880, 1939

Professional correspondence 1896-1904

Professional correspondence 1905-1911

Writings and research files 1879-1912

Scope and Contents

This series contains writings by Tucker, including personal diaries, research manuscripts, proofs and drafts of publications, and reprints. Also included are charts, logs, observations, reductions, notes, and other research materials related to his work with the Meridian Circle.

Box 1,
Folder 16-18

Diaries 1879-1888

Scope and Contents

Includes Tucker's personal daily records while at Dudley Observatory, Lehigh University, and the Argentine National Observatory.

Physical Characteristics

3 diaries

Box 2, Folder 1-3
Box 2, Folder 4
Box 2, Folder 5
Box 2, Folder 6

Manuscripts 1893-1900

Personal notes 1894-1900

"Meridian Circle Observations made at Lick Observatory" 1896-1901

"Meridian Circle Observations of Reference Stars for the Planet Eros, at Opposition" 1900

"Plan for Division Error Determinations" circa 1900

"The San Luis Observatory of the Carnegie Institution," *Publications of the Astronomical Society of the Pacific* 1912

Box 2, Folder 7
Box 2, Folder 8

"The Star Lists of 99 Stars Between -10 and +15 Declination" undated

Box 2, Folder 9

San Luis, Argentina Expedition 1908-1911

Scope and Contents

This series contains materials from Tucker's direction of an expedition to San Luis, Argentina, from 1908 to 1911. It includes financial documents, itineraries, correspondence, details on the construction of the observatory at San Luis, and records of astronomical observations conducted there.

Box 2, Folder 10
Box 2, Folder 11
Box 2, Folder 12
Box 2, Folder 13
Box 2,
Folder 14-17
Box 2, Folder 18

Steamship trip to San Luis 1908

Construction at San Luis 1908, 1910

Finances 1908-1909

Astronomical observations and calculations 1908-1910

Correspondence 1909-1911

Social events 1909-1911

Box 2, Folder 19

Memorabilia 1893-1922

Scope and Contents

Tucker's memorabilia includes clippings, invitations, schedules, newsletters, and other collected ephemera.

Box 3, Box 4,
Box 5

Photographs 1884-1926

Physical Characteristics

6 albums and 1 folder of loose photographs

Scope and Contents

This series contains photographs of Tucker's personal life and travels, including albums of his family and Lick Observatory staff on Mount Hamilton from 1918 to 1926, a trip to Alaska in 1900, and various travels to Chile, Cordoba and San Luis in Argentina, and other parts of South America around the turn of the 20th century.