
William H. Wright Papers

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William H. Wright Papers

Collection number: MS 266

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Descriptive Summary

Title: William H. Wright papers

Dates: 1894-1959

Collection number: MS 266

Creator: Wright, William H.

Collection Size: 4 document boxes

Repository: University of California, Santa Cruz. University Library. Special Collections and Archives
Santa Cruz, California 95064

Abstract: This collection includes lecture notes and manuscripts.

Physical location: Stored in Special Collections & Archives: Advance notice is required for access to the papers.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

Collection open for research.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

William H. Wright papers. MS 266. Special Collections and Archives, University Library, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Acquisition Information

Gift of the Wright Family

Biography

William Hammond Wright (November 4, 1871 - May 16, 1959) was an American astronomer. He was director of the Lick Observatory from 1935 until 1942.

After graduating in 1893 from the University of California, he became Assistant Astronomer at Lick Observatory. From 1903 to 1906 he worked on establishing the "Southern Station" of the Observatory at Cerro San Cristobal near Santiago de Chile. It only took him 6 months to start with observations from this new site, and he recorded a large series of radial velocity measurements of stars in the southern sky. In 1908 he was promoted to Astronomer. From 1918 to 1919 he was stationed at Aberdeen Proving Ground working for the ordinance section of the United States Army. He then returned to the Lick Observatory and worked there until his retirement.

He is most famous for his work on radial velocity of stars in our galaxy, and his work with a spectrograph he designed himself. He obtained spectra of novas and nebulae. In 1924 he made photographic observations of Mars in multiple wave lengths. From these pictures he concluded that its atmosphere was about 60 miles (100 km) deep.

In 1928 he received the Henry Draper Medal, and in 1938 the Gold Medal of the Royal Astronomical Society. A crater on Mars is named in his honor.

Wikipedia

A more extensive biography can be found at

[Title: University of California: In Memoriam, Index "W"](#)

[Date: 1960](#)

Scope and Content of Collection

This collection contains some biographical material, private diaries, correspondence, notes and manuscripts of articles, lectures and books by Wright.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Wright, William H. (William Hammond)--Archives

Lick Observatory--History

Gaseous nebulae

Stars, New

Astrophysics

Campbell, William Wallace, d.1862-1938

Other Finding Aids

UA 36 Ser.6 Lick Observatory Records: Glass Plates

box-folder 1:1-3; 4:5	Biographical material
box-folder 1:1	Family genealogy, resumes, n.d.
box-folder 1:2	Military Service, 1916-1919
box-folder 1:3	Honors, awards, etc., 1917-1923
box-folder 4:5	National Academy of Sciences - Henry Draper Medal 1928
box-folder 1:4-13	Correspondence
box:folder 1:4	1895-1900
box:folder 1:5	1901-1910
box:folder 1:6	1911-1920
box:folder 1:7	1921-1925
box:folder 1:8	1926-1930
box:folder 1:9	1931-1940
box:folder 1:10	1941-1950
box:folder 1:11	1951-1953
box:folder 1:12	1954-1955
box:folder 1:13	1956-1959
box-folder 2:1-4:4	Writings
box-folder 2:01	"Orbit of Comet Swift, Nov. 1894 computed by Oppolzer's Method" Nov. 1894
box-folder 2:02	"Issac Newton's 2nd law", 1896
box-folder 4:01	"Hydrodynamics [ca. 1900-1902]" & "Santiago Diary 2/28/1903 - 5/13/1903", ca. 1900-1903
box-folder 4:02	"Private diary - Santiago, 6/13/1904 - 8/1/1904" 1904
box-folder 4:03	"Private diary - Return trip from Chile, 3/19/1906 - 3/27/1906" 1906
box-folder 2:03	"Account of Spectrographic Observations of Halley's Comet", 1909
box-folder 2:04	"Reply to Stratton Questions on Hydrogen Lines", 1912
box-folder 2:05	"The Relation between the Wolf-Rayet Stars and the Planetary Nebulae", ca. 1913-1914
box-folder 2:06	"On the occurrence of A4686 ... Planetary nebulae" ca. 1913-1914
box-folder 2:07	"The Spectra of the Gaseous Nebulae and some points of correspondence between them and other Celestial Spectra", ca. 1915
box-folder 2:08	"The Draper Quartz Spectrograph of the Lick Observatory and some observations recently secured with it", 1916

box-folder 2:09	"The Quartz Spectrograph of the Lick Observatory and some observations recently secured with it" - Lick Observatory Bulletin, no.291, 1917
box-folder 2:10	Outline of paper read before a meeting of the Sigma Xc Society at Berkeley in 1918, 1918
box-folder 2:11	"The Orion Nebulae", ca. 1918
box-folder 2:12	"Observations of the Nebulae, Ch. 1" 1918-1920
box-folder 2:13	"Observations of the Nebulae, Ch. 2" 1918-1920
box-folder 2:14	Modern Astronomy, Course 11; Elementary Astronomy, I-II; General notes, Administration, etc., Jan-June 1919
box-folder 2:15	"A Preliminary Account of the Spectrum of Nova Ophiuchi", 1919
box-folder 2:16	Review of <i>The Spectrum of Nova Germanorum II</i> by F. J. M. Stratton, ca. 1920-1930
box-folder 2:17	"The Spectra of the Novae", 1920
box-folder 3:01	"Displacement Lines in Nova Gemini", 1920-1921
box-folder 3:02	"On the occurrence of the enhanced lines of nitrogen in the spectra of the Novae", 1921
box-folder 3:04	"The Ultra Violet Spectrum of [alpha] Cygni" - L.O. Bulletin, no.332, 1921
box-folder 3:05	"Further Notes on Lines in the Visual Spectrum of [alpha] Cygni", 1921
box-folder 3:06	"On Spectroscopic Binaries and the Determination of Parallax", 1921
box-folder 3:07	"On the Continuous Radiation found in some celestial spectra beyond the limit of the Balmer series of hydrogen", 4/11/1922
box-folder 3:08	G. Darwin Lecture - "Planets in Different Colors", 6/8/1922
box-folder 3:09	"The Spectrum of Nova Pictoris" 1926
box-folder 3:10	"Modern Astrophysics", 1926
box-folder 3:11	"Note on Photographs of Mars, 1926 by Ross", ca. 1927
box-folder 3:12	"Photographs of Venus made by infra-red and by violet light", March 22, 1927
box-folder 3:13	"What the wild light waves are saying about the Nebulae?", Nov. 14, 1927
box-folder 3:14	"Photographs of Mars made with Light of Different Colors", 1927
box-folder 3:15	"Photographs of Mars and Of Jupiter", 1927
box-folder 3:16	"Color photographs of the planets: An historical correction", 1929
box-folder 3:17	"Photographs of Jupiter as well as photograph captions", 1929
box-folder 3:18	"On Some Photographic Observations of Jupiter made at the Lick Observatory in 1928", 1929
box-folder 3:19	"The Moon as photographed by light of different colors", 1929
box-folder 3:20	"The Angular Diameter of the Sun, as measured during Partial Phase of the Eclipse of April 28, 1930", 1930
box-folder 3:21	"Viewing the Heavenly Bodies through Colored Glasses", March 22, 1932
box-folder 3:22	Lines in the Ultra-violet Spectra of Certain Planetary Nebulae 1934
box-folder 3:23	"On the focal length of the 36-inch refractor of the Lick Observatory, and the equivalent, in seconds of arc, of the revolution of the micrometer screw", 1934
box-folder 4:04	Private note book Feb-Aug 1935
box-folder 3:03	"Michelson's Method for the measurement of small angles and it's recent astronomical applications", ca. 1920-1930
box-folder 3:28	"A preliminary table of wave-lengths of the Nebulae lines", n.d.
box-folder 3:24	"A glance at the titles of the previous lectures of this series. . . ", n.d.
box-folder 3:25	"The practice of Astronomy. . . ", n.d.
box-folder 3:26	"In the last lecture we discovered the general characteristics of the spectra of stars and nebulae and gave brief outlines of the two current theories of stellar evolution", n.d.
box-folder 3:27	"I think I may assume for the purposes of this discussion that you are familiar with Dopplers' principal. . . ", n.d.
box-folder 3:29	Note on the effect of length of exposure of comparison standards in photometric measurements, n.d.
box-folder 3:30	"Note relating to early spectroscopic observation of the Nova Aquilae Nebula", n.d.
box-folder 3:31	"On the use of a spherical or partially-corrected mirror in the Cassegrain form of reflecting telescope", n.d.
box-folder 3:32	"Why Astronomy?", n.d.
box-folder 3:33	"A General report to the President . . . 1935-42", n.d.

box-folder 3:34	"Observing List: Stars having Typical Spectra", n.d.
box-folder 3:35	Interview with Wright, University Explorer program, Nov. 19
box-folder 3:36	Miscellaneous, unidentified items n.d.
box-folder 4:1	"Hydrodynamics" & "Santiago Diary", ca. 1900-1902, 2/28/1903-5/13/1903
box-folder 4:2	Private diary - Santiago, 6/13/1904-8/1/1904
box-folder 4:3	Private diary - Return trip from Chile, 3/19/1906 - 3/27/1906
box-folder 4:4	Private note book, February - April 1935