

Carnegie Institution of Washington Administration Records, 1890-2001



**Carnegie Institution of Washington
Administration Archives
Washington, DC**

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ADMN-2004-01

Introduction

Abstract: This collection contains the administrative records of the Carnegie Institution of Washington which was established in 1902 by Andrew Carnegie. Fifteen departments, divisions, and programs are represented. The records illustrate the founding and establishment of this Institution through grant applications, financial records, correspondence, president's files, and department director's files.

Extent: 352 linear feet: 162 records center cartons; 34 document boxes; 4 half-document boxes; 7 card file boxes; 5 map case drawers; 108 feet of personnel records; 61 feet of bound materials.

Acquisition: These records have been in the possession of the administrative offices since their creation.

Access Restrictions: The use of this collection is governed by the general restrictions policy.

Copyright: Copyright is held by the Carnegie Institution of Washington. For permission to reproduce or publish please contact the archivist at the Administration Archives.

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Processing: This collection was processed through the generous support of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission by Charles Hargrove and Jennifer Snyder from 2003-2004.

Vannevar Bush papers and reprints not directly related to the work of the Carnegie Institution of Washington were deaccessioned and transferred to the National Academies and the Library of Congress respectively.

Languages: Some documents in the collection are written in languages other than English. The majority of these foreign language documents are Spanish and German.

Other Copies: Many photographs that were once located in these records have been moved to the publications office and digitized. Please contact the Web Manager for access to the Image Database located at: http://www.carnegieinstitution.org/archives_image_db_find.html.

Historical Note

"It is proposed to found in the city of Washington, an institution which...shall in the broadest and most liberal manner encourage investigation, research, and discovery [and] show the application of knowledge to the improvement of mankind..."

—Andrew Carnegie, January 28, 1902

Andrew Carnegie founded the Carnegie Institution of Washington (CIW) in 1902 as an organization for scientific discovery. His intention was for the institution to be home to exceptional individuals—men and women with imagination and extraordinary dedication capable of working at the cutting edge of their fields. The institution would be “an independent research organization that would support investigation and discovery simply for the sake of increasing knowledge.” (Trefil 21)

The Administration Building of the Carnegie Institution located at the corner of 16th and P Streets in northwest Washington, D.C.. Constructed during 1908 and 1909 this building continues to serve as the headquarters for administrative operations of the Institution. Individuals working at this site have funded researchers through grants, developed programs and departments and served as a coordinating body for the various departments and divisions.

Good Seeing, a commemorative book published to coincide with the Centennial of the Institution in 2002, is an excellent overview of the Institution. In it the authors point out: “The Carnegie Institution has supported 11 departments at various times over the years.... [There] have been many “starts” and “stops” during the last century.... Less obvious on the surface but equally important to the Institution’s work are starts and stops that occurred within individual departments.... Questions change over time. So does an institution.” (Trefil 37-8). An invaluable resource in tracing the chronology of individual departments is John Strom’s article, “Sources for the History of the Carnegie Institution of Washington and the Office of Administration” included in *The Earth, the Heavens, and the Carnegie Institution of Washington*.

As in any organization departments are created, disbanded and reconfigured; the brief departmental histories that follow describe the major starts and stops.

Department/Division of Historical Research (1903-1958)

“[The] original articles of incorporation of the Carnegie Institution called for the establishment of an organization that would promote ‘original research in science, literature and art.’... But the ride would be a bumpy one. Indeed, the history department fought for its life for over 50 years....” (Trefil 44) The department was originally organized as the Carnegie Bureau of Historical Research in 1903 and became an official department in 1905. It was terminated as a department and became the Section of United State History in a new Division of Historical research in 1930. The archaeological work begun by Sylvanus G. Morely and Earl E. Morris continued under this heading. In 1951, the Division became the Department of Archaeology; the Division was closed in 1958.

Department of Plant Biology (1903-)

The Desert Botanical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution in Tucson, Arizona—the precursor to the department—was, in 1903, the first facility the institution opened for research. It was intended as an outdoor laboratory to study plants in their natural habitats. A smaller program was begun in photosynthesis, led by Herman Spoehr, a leading investigator in the field at that time. Though it remained unofficially “the Desert Laboratory,” in 1905 it became officially titled the Department of Botanical Research. (Trefil 193) In 1921, Spoehr and his colleagues moved to Carmel, California, to the Laboratory of Plant Physiology, which was originally a field station of the Desert Lab. Seven years later, in 1928, the name was changed to the Division of Plant

Biology, with Spoehr as director. In 1929, new headquarters were built on the campus of Stanford University, and operations at the Desert Laboratory were phased out.

The Division of Plant Biology maintained a focus on photosynthesis research under successive directors C. Stacy French (1947-1973) and Winslow Briggs (1973-1993). Along the way, other, related programs in experimental taxonomy, physiological ecology, and molecular biology were added. In 1951, the name changed to the Department of Plant Biology. Today, under the leadership of Christopher Somerville, scientists at the department tackle a broad range of fundamental questions in plant biology using molecular genetics and related methods.

Department of Economics and Sociology (1904-1916)

This department was organized in 1904 and terminated in 1916. Established by Carroll D. Wright, the Secretary of Labor and a CIW trustee. “Wright’s goal was to discover the laws that contributed to the success of the American system of Production and government. To this end he established 11 subdivisions of investigation, each to be overseen by an expert and staff based in various academic institutions and federal agencies around the country.” (Trefil 52) Unfortunately, “the purview of the department was too sweeping to be reduced to the simplicity of ‘natural laws.’ In addition, the directors had little control over the sprawling confederation of investigators...As early as 1911 these problems were noted in the Institution’s annual reports.” (Trefil 53) In 1916, the trustees voted to terminate the Department despite President Woodward’s objections.

Department of Genetics (1904-1971)

The Station for Experimental Evolution was established in 1904 at Cold Spring Harbor in Long Island by CIW under the suggestion of Charles B. Davenport. He would become the department’s first director. The name changed to the Department of Experimental Evolution in 1906 and combined with the Eugenics Record Office (ERO) in 1921 to form the Department of Genetics. During these years, researchers studied how genetic information was passed through familial lines. “They also studied human traits, and that is where Davenport ran into trouble. He became a leader among eugenicists, who sought to use scientific principles of heredity to solve social problems...This shameful initiative was ended by Vannevar Bush almost as soon as he became president of the Institution.” (Trefil 49)

Two Nobel Prize winners came from the Department: Alfred Hershey for his DNA work, and Barbara McClintock for her work on transposons. In 1963 the department was reorganized and renamed the Genetics Research Unit. The unit closed in 1971.

Department of Marine Biology (1904-1939)

The Marine Biology Laboratory was established on the Dry Tortugas Islands on Loggerhead Key in Florida in 1903. “Two portable laboratories and two small outbuildings were built in New York, then shipped to the Tortugas...A 60-foot ketch-rigged yacht...was also commissioned for research purposes...” (Trefil 50) “The site...quickly became the best-equipped marine biological station in the tropical world.” (Trefil 51) through the years, over 150 researchers used the facilities to perform a wide range of research. In 1923, the name of the Department was changed to the Tortugas Laboratory. Hurricanes were a constant worry on the island and the laboratory suffered major damage during a storm in 1910. “By 1939, the Institution concluded

that, while the installation was well suited to summer research, its short season of operation and its distance from the mainland rendered its maintenance uneconomical. The facility was closed in 1939.” (Trefil 51)

The facility no longer stands and is now represented by a plaque Today Loggerhead Key is a part of the National Park Service, Dry Tortugas National Park.

Department of Terrestrial Magnetism (1904-)

The Department of Terrestrial Magnetism (DTM), was founded in 1904 to conduct magnetic surveys of the earth and to serve as an international coordinating bureau for geomagnetic research. Over the years the research direction shifted, but the historic goal—to understand the Earth and its place in the universe—has remained the same.

Louis A. Bauer, a scientist studying the Earth's magnetic field, was selected by the board of trustees to direct the new department, initially named the Department of International Research in Terrestrial Magnetism. "Observers," as they were called, made worldwide expeditions to gather magnetic field data. The department also commissioned two ships, the *Galilee* and the *Carnegie* (which was fashioned entirely of nonmagnetic parts) to map the magnetic field over the oceans. By 1929, DTM researchers had collected volumes of data that were used to correct navigational charts and quantify the mysterious temporal variations in the geomagnetic field.

In 1925 two DTM physicists, Gregory Breit and Merle Tuve, were already exploring new areas. They wanted to prove the existence of the ionosphere. The department managed a worldwide network of stations to monitor the condition of the ionosphere that allowed accurate prediction of the propagation of shortwave radio communications, an advance that was to become vitally important during World War II.

During the 1930s and 40s, studies in physics dominated research at the department, which was a world-class center for nuclear physics. In 1939 the uranium atom was split for the first time in the U.S. on DTM's campus in the Atomic Physics Observatory. Wartime activities included the development of the proximity fuze which revolutionized warfare for the United States during World War II. The fuze allowed an artillery shell to detonate when it was near its intended target. This allowed for more precise targeting and optimal effectiveness.

After the war, DTM physicists began some of the earliest work in biophysics using radioactive tracers. Later came ventures in seismology, astronomy, theoretical astrophysics, planetary formation and evolution, and radioisotope geochronology. Since 1998 the Department has also been involved in investigation in astrobiology.

The Department maintains its own archives on its research campus in northwest Washington, D.C.

The Observatories of the Carnegie Institution of Washington (1904-)

The Mount Wilson Solar Observatory was founded in 1904 by George Ellery Hale with funding from the Carnegie Institution. It “transformed the world of astronomy...Edwin Hubble, widely recognized as the one of the greatest astronomers since Galileo, captured the attention of the

world with his discoveries that galaxies are distant, vast clusters of stars and that the universe is expanding.” (Trefil 56) Mount Wilson was unified with the Palomar Observatory in 1948. They were jointly operated by the Carnegie Institution and the California Institute of Technology. In 1970 the name changed to the Hale Observatories. The joint arrangement continued until 1980, when Caltech assumed sole administration of the Palomar Observatory.

In 1969, the Las Campanas Observatory was established in Chile's Atacama Desert on 20,000 hectares acquired from the Chilean government. The 100-inch duPont and 40-inch Swope reflecting telescopes were built at the site. In 1980, The Carnegie Observatories organized as Mount Wilson and Las Campanas Observatories, to include Carnegie's Southern Hemisphere Observatory (CARSO). In 1989, the name changed once more to the Observatories of the Carnegie Institution (OCIW). The brief history on the Observatories Website states, “As light pollution encroached from the Los Angeles basin, the historical telescopes on Mount Wilson were placed in semi-retirement, and Las Campanas became Carnegie's principal observing site. The newest additions there, twin 6.5-meter reflectors, are remarkable members of the latest generation of giant telescopes.”

Department of Meridian Astrometry (1905-1938)

Lewis Boss served on Carnegie's astronomy advisory committee and won funding for his dream project—charting the stars in order to understand the structure of the universe. His idea was to “create a state-of-the-art catalog of the positions and motions of stars as seen from Earth.” (Trefil 62) The Dudley Observatory Records finding aid found at the American Institute of Physics states,

"In 1906, The Carnegie Institution of Washington made the Dudley Observatory (Albany, NY) the Department of Meridian Astrometry. This funded the studies and observations which were eventually published in 1937 as the General Catalogue of 33,342 Stars. In order to complete the necessary observations, an observatory was built in San Luis, Argentina to record Southern Hemisphere data. The instruments were dismantled in Albany and shipped by boat to the site. The observations were completed in 1911 and the instruments were returned to Albany."

“Observing was only the beginning of the astrometer's work. For every measurement taken in the field, 20 hours of computation were required.”(Trefil 64) Three catalogue volumes were issued as a result of this work. But the field of astronomy was changing. In 1936, the Department became the Committee on Meridian Astrometry. The Institution terminated its work in 1938

Geophysical Laboratory (1905-)

The Geophysical Laboratory (GL) was organized in 1905, and officially opened in 1907 under the direction of Arthur L. Day. Construction on the laboratory building was completed in 1907 on Upton Street in northwest Washington, D.C. The Geophysical Laboratory flourished and rapidly established a reputation for excellence in physical-chemical studies of rocks and minerals. Programs in volcanology, seismology, high pressure research, and experimental petrology followed in the 1910's and 20's, driven by great contributions by such renowned Laboratory staff members as N. L. Bowen. In addition, GL developed improved forms of optical glass during WWI as part of the war effort. Crystal structure determinations using X-ray diffraction were initiated in 1919 under R. W. G. Wyckoff. Upon Philip Abelson's arrival as director in 1953, the Geophysical Laboratory broadened its investigations to include

biogeochemistry. In the 1970's and 80's, a flourishing mineral physics program was begun. High-pressure and high-temperature research continues to be key areas of investigation at the Laboratory. In 1990 the Geophysical Laboratory was moved, in a co-location project with the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, to the research campus at Broad Branch Road.

The Laboratory maintains its own archives on its research campus in northwest Washington, D.C.

Nutrition Laboratory (1907-1946)

The Nutrition Laboratory was organized in 1907 and opened in 1908, though the Institution began funding grants in nutrition as early as 1903. Francis G. Benedict was the laboratory's first director. He chose land near Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts for the site of the laboratory's building.

From the outset, the mission of the laboratory was "to conduct fundamental scientific investigations in vital activity with special reference to the laws governing total metabolism, heat production, heat elimination, and heat regulation." In other words, investigators were less interested in diets than in how animal processed food to produce heat for body processes and muscular activity. The term "animals" was interpreted in a broad sense. Human beings were studied intensively....

Scientists at the Nutrition Laboratory realized that data for humans could be supplemented by data for other animals, and they expanded their research program accordingly. (Trefil 66)

Scientists at the laboratory frequently worked collaboratively with colleagues at other institutions, and within the Carnegie Institution's other departments and laboratories. Benedict retired in 1937, and the lab never recovered the support it needed. The laboratory closed on 1 January 1946 as Vannevar Bush declared the Laboratory's work was "'ably supported by other agencies'." (Trefil 67)

Department of Embryology (1914-)

The Department of Embryology was founded in affiliation with the department of anatomy at The Johns Hopkins University in 1914. Its mission was to study biological development in humans. The Department's founder and first director was Dr. Franklin Mall, who was responsible for many advances in the study of embryology, including the development of the human intestine, heart, the structural unit of the liver, and blood vessels. Dr. Mall's famous human embryo collection grew with Carnegie to become the largest collection of human embryological material in the world. Over the next four decades, the scientists procured and studied a collection of some 10,000 human embryos, developing a fundamental description of human development and conducting path breaking experimental studies. The collection now resides at the National Museum of Health and Medicine.

Dr. George L. Streeter, director of the Department, from 1917-1940, defined the 23 Carnegie Stages, which are still used to categorize an embryo's developmental stages. James Ebert, director from 1956-1976, "attracted a number of creative your researchers. Using a variety of organisms, these scientists continued to tackle the central question of embryology; namely, how does a multicelled organism arise from a single egg?" (Trefil 69)

In 1960, the department moved from its location at the medical school to its current site on the Hopkins Homewood Campus. The move initiated a close relationship with the University's Department of Biology and a new research focus on understanding fundamental developmental mechanisms at the cellular and molecular levels. Department of Embryology faculty was first appointed Investigators of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in 1987. The department continues to thrive and a construction of a new building was completed in 2005.

Seismology Laboratory (1921-1934)

Harry O. Wood's first project in seismology funded by CIW came right after that San Francisco earthquake in 1906. He reported on his investigations of the damage. Technological and financial problems kept him from furthering his research in recording and predicting local earthquakes. By 1920, he had his project for a regional seismic monitoring program in California approved by the National Research Council. CIW decided to help fund the project and established the Carnegie Seismology Advisory Committee. Arthur L. Day became the chair and Wood was the research associate "in charge of day-to-day operations of the program." (Trefil 142) George E. Hale provided space at Mount Wilson for Wood; in 1923 he built the first torsion seismograph in collaboration with John Anderson, an astronomer and optics expert at Mount Wilson. A patent was issued for their device in 1925.

In 1926, the central station for seismology research was established in the new geology department at Caltech in a joint agreement with CIW. This new CIW funded program became the Seismology Laboratory at Caltech. Wood "transformed the study of seismology by promoting, then directing this unusual collaborative venture." (Trefil 1943) Under Wood, Beno Gutenberg and Charles Richter joined the laboratory and continued to advance the study of seismology. "The Institution began to withdraw from the Pasadena Seismology Project in 1934 and by 1941 it had turned to work over to Caltech entirely. By this time, the program had expanded from one focused on local geological events in California to one that grappled with the question of earth processes..." (Trefil 147)

Division of Animal Biology (1935-1939 [?])

In 1935, President Merriam "orchestrated the unification of four of the Institution's biological departments—Embryology, Marine Biology, Genetics, and Nutrition—into a single [department] in the hopes that fruitful cross-disciplinary relationships would occur." (Trefil 72) George L. Streeter became the chair of the Division. In the 1935 *Year Book* he discusses the creation of the Division in his annual report, as does Merriam in his report. The division included "the various biological researches conducted by the Institution and primarily concerned with the physiology, anatomy, embryology, evolution, and heredity of animals." (Streeter 3)

Reports from the Division stop appearing in the *CIW Year Book* after the 1938-1939 edition.

Today, Carnegie scientists continue to be at the forefront of scientific discovery. Working in six scientific departments on the West and East Coasts, Carnegie investigators are leaders in the fields of plant biology, developmental biology, earth and planetary sciences, astronomy, and global ecology. They seek answers to questions about the structure of the universe, the formation

of our solar system and other planetary systems, the behavior and transformation of matter when subjected to extreme conditions, the origin of life, the function of genes, and the development of organisms from single-celled egg to adult.

Scope and Contents Note

This collection consists mainly of administrative records which document interactions between the main administrative body of the Institution and numerous research facilities, projects and programs. Historically the Institution has not collected its own records; instead it has encouraged everyone from the president to its scientists and researchers to find suitable repositories for their personal and professional papers. This collection does not represent an intentional gathering of records, rather it contains materials which by the late 1980s were assembled on compact shelving in a file room. Formats include correspondence, blueprints, photographs, reports, minutes, and financial ledgers.

Many photographs once found within the records have been removed; the location of most is unknown, but they may have been taken to the Division of Publications.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged in eight series which are based on pre-existing record divisions.

Series 1: Building History, 1902-1972 (bulk 1902-1938)

Series 2: Departments and Programs, 1901-1993

Subseries 1: Department of Plant Biology, 1902-1989

Subseries 2: Department/Division of Historical Research, 1904-1978

Subseries 3: Department of Genetics, 1902-1977

Subseries 4: Department of Marine Biology, 1902-1972 (bulk 1902-1939)

Subseries 5: Department of Economics and Sociology, 1903-1939 (bulk 1903-1916)

Subseries 6: Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, 1902-1987

Subseries 7: The Observatories of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1904-1987

Subseries 8: Geophysical Laboratory, 1902-1987

Subseries 9: Department of Meridian Astrometry, 1902-1940

Subseries 10: Nutrition Laboratory, 1902-1963 (bulk 1902-1947)

Subseries 11: Department of Embryology, 1913-1987

Subseries 12: Division of Animal Biology, 1934-1940

Subseries 13: Seismology Laboratory, 1921-1936, 1940

Subseries 14: World War I, 1918-1920

Subseries 15: World War II, 1941-1953, 1963

Series 3: Finance, 1904-1982

Series 4: General, 1890-1996

Series 5: Patents, 1902-1994

Series 6: Personnel, 1902-Present

Series 7: President's Files, 1902-2001

Series 8: Trustees, 1901-1993

Subseries 1: Trustees Information, 1901-1993

Subseries 2: Trustee Meetings and Committees, 1902-1993

Series 1: Building History, 1902-1972 (bulk 1902-1938)

This series is comprised of information about the construction, maintenance, and furnishing of CIW's administration building. The building was designed by Carrère & Hastings, who also created the New York Public Library. Included are blueprints of the building, its foundation, ironworks, and building engineering. The Delano & Aldrich design of the Elihu Root Hall addition to the main building is documented here, as well. This series contains information on the furnishings, flooring, woodwork, plumbing, heating, and lighting of the building. It also documents the dedication of the main building and the addition to the building.

Series 2: Departments and Programs, 1901-1993

The institution has supported eleven research departments since its creation. This series documents the various inceptions of the departments and programs, including the work done in support of the war effort during both World Wars I and II. The departments and programs are arranged chronologically by founding date. Within each subseries the files are mainly arranged alphabetically, with financial records for each appearing at the end of the files as its own section of records.

Series 2, Subseries 1: Department of Plant Biology (1903-), 1902-1989

The materials in this subseries are primarily administrative, containing the director's correspondence/chronological files and financial records. There is substantial material on Frederic Clements, considered the father of modern ecology, who worked with the department from 1914 until his death in 1945. Represented in this subseries are the Desert Laboratory, the Department of Botanical Research, and the Laboratory of Plant Physiology, and extensive documentation of the department's work in chlorella.

Series 2, Subseries 2: Department/Division of Historical Research (1903-1958), 1904-1978

In addition to the administrative and financial records found in this subseries, there is a good deal of correspondence with E.A. Lowe, a Palaeography scholar. A significant amount of the materials in this subseries are from the Department of Archaeology which was a subdivision of the Department/Division of Historical Research. The materials are primarily administrative in nature, with a heavy emphasis on departmental correspondence and finance. Of particular emphasis in the collection is the correspondence of A.V. Kidder, Director of the Department, and Sylvanus G. Morley, one of its primary researchers. Morley's letters in particular give a great deal of insight into the workings of the department, as well as a surprisingly detailed description of his own health problems. Most of the materials arising from field work and research, including a set of aerial photographs of Maya Ruins taken by Charles Lindbergh, were donated to the Peabody Museum at Harvard University when the Department closed in 1958.

Series 2, Subseries 3: Department of Genetics (1904-1971), 1902-1977

There are few records of the Eugenics Records Office (ERO) left in the archives at CIW. Though, there are several files of correspondence with Harry Laughlin.

In 1910, the Eugenics Record Office was founded in Cold Spring Harbor, New York, as a center for the study of human heredity and a repository for genetic data on human traits. It merged with the Station for Experimental Evolution in 1920 to become the Department of Genetics at the Carnegie Institution, and under the direction of Charles B. Davenport and later of Albert Blakeslee and Milislav Demerec, it became the most important center for eugenic research in the nation. However with intellectual currents shifting, the Carnegie Institution stopped funding the office in 1939. It remained active until 1944, when its records were transferred to the Charles Fremont Dight Institute for the Promotion of Human Genetics at the University of Minnesota. When the Dight closed in 1991, the genealogical material was filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah and given to the Center for Human Genetics; the non-genealogical material was not filmed and was given to the American Philosophical Society Library. (Eugenics Record Office Records, American Philosophical Society)

Also found in this subseries is a significant amount of director's correspondence and chronological files. There are correspondence files of T.H. Morgan and his work on *Drosophila* (fruit flies). Staff files from 1934-1949 are of note. There is only one folder for Barbara McClintock in this subseries. More information on her maize research is available at the National Library of Medicine.

The Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory archives holds correspondence between administrators and researchers of the Carnegie Institution of Washington field station in Cold Spring Harbor gathered from the Lab secretary's office.

Please note there is no box 9 in this series.

Series 2, Subseries 4: Department of Marine Biology (1904-1939), 1902-1972 (bulk 1902-1939)

This subseries contains the administrative records of the Marine Biology Laboratory on Dry Tortugas Island. The series consists of correspondence, reports, maps, files about the building and grounds, and files relating to the closing of the Laboratory in 1939, due to its remoteness and vulnerability to hurricanes.

Series 2, Subseries 5: Department of Economics and Sociology (1904-1916), 1903-1939 (bulk 1903-1916)

This department existed for only a brief period of time in the early part of the 20th century. This subseries is comprised mainly of correspondence files relating to those involved in economic investigation. Director's files are included here with other administrative records.

Series 2, Subseries 6: Department of Terrestrial Magnetism (1904-), 1902-1987

This subseries contains materials relating to the administration of the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism. The subseries consists primarily of correspondence, budgetary materials, reports, employee records, building plans and files relating to various surveys and expeditions around the world that the Department was involved in. Of particular interest are files relating to the research vessel *Carnegie*, from its construction, through its voyages to its ultimate destruction in 1929. These files include a letter from Andrew Carnegie stating that

he has no objection to the ship being named after him, and further wondering what it would be used for after its voyages were over.

The Department maintains its own archives on its research campus in northwest Washington, D.C.

Series 2, Subseries 7: The Observatories of the Carnegie Institution of Washington (1904-), 1904-1987

This series documents Carnegie's observatories at Mount Wilson in Pasadena, California, and at Las Campanas, Chile, in South America. There are no records in this collection for the Palomar Observatory which was jointly operated with the California Institute of Technology. The series is divided in two-subseries representing the two observatories for which there are records.

Series 2, Subseries 7, Sub-Subseries 1: Mount Wilson, 1902-1987

The records in this sub-subseries are administrative in nature. There is a large span of General Files from 1902-1987. Also found here are papers relating to the establishment of the observatory by George Ellery Hale. Documents related to work on optics is located in Series 2, Subseries 15: World War II.

Series 2, Subseries 7, Sub-Subseries 2: Carnegie Southern Observatory (CARSO), 1960-1981

The records in this sub-subseries center on the establishment of a major collaborative observatory in the Chilean Andes. Located here is information on the conception and construction of the 40-inch and 200-inch telescopes and the Dupont 100-inch telescope in Las Campanas. Other CARSO administrative records are also found in this sub-subseries.

Series 2, Subseries 8: Geophysical Laboratory (1905-), 1902-1987

This subseries consists primarily of correspondence, director's chronological files, and budgetary materials. There are some files related to various patents. A large body of correspondence with Charles Snowden Piggot, who was a pioneer in ocean-bottom marine research, and a long-time employee of the Lab, is located here. Of potential interest is a run of general files from 1912-1987 and data on employees dating 1908-1936.

The laboratory maintains its own archives on its research campus in northwest Washington, D.C.

Series 2, Subseries 9: Department of Meridian Astrometry (1905-1938), 1902-1940

This subseries consists of materials relating to the Department of Meridian Astrometry (later the Committee on Meridian Astrometry), from 1905-1938. The records are mainly administrative in nature.

Series 2, Subseries 10: Nutrition Laboratory (1907-1946), 1902-1963 (bulk 1902-1947)

This subseries consists of materials relating to the Nutrition Laboratory from 1907-1946. The series contains director's correspondence, files about the buildings and grounds of the lab, files relating to proposed projects, employee records and equipment records.

Series 2, Subseries 11: Department of Embryology (1914-), 1913-1987

This subseries contains director's correspondence/chronological files and other materials related to the administration of the department. There are also a number of files related to "Contributions to Embryology" dated 1935-1949, which was published at CIW.

Series 2, Subseries 12: Division of Animal Biology (1935-?), 1934-1940

This subseries includes information about the administration of this department, including director's files, accounting and budgetary data, and information on the buildings and grounds. Because the amount of records for the department was so small, the records were heavily weeded and reorganized during processing.

Series 2, Subseries 13: Seismology Laboratory (1921-1934), 1921-1936, 1940

This series contains a small body of material relating to the administration of the department.

Series 2, Subseries 14: World War I, 1918-1920

This subseries consists of two folders containing documents that partially illuminate the activities of the Institution during World War I.

Series 2, Subseries 15: World War II, 1941-1953, 1963

This subseries contains materials that illuminate the activities of the Carnegie Institution of Washington during World War II. The materials consist primarily of correspondence, invoices and reports relating to specific military contract numbers. Although a number of departments did research for the military at the time, the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism and the Geophysical Laboratory account for the vast majority of the materials. A much smaller subset of materials consist of work done by the Mount Wilson Observatory on problems relating to optics.

Series 3: Finance, 1904-1982

This subseries consists primarily of financial materials relating to the Institution as a whole. It contains budget recommendations, insurance matters, legal files relating to property sales, and some salary information. The most notable subset of materials relates to the sale of various properties in New York near the Cold Springs Harbor research facility. Also found in this series are financial ledgers of the administration and of the departments.

Series 4: General Files, 1890-1996

This subseries consists of administrative records of the Carnegie Institution of Washington from its founding. The subseries is something of a catchall with a variety of records, including correspondence, grant requests, budgetary materials, publications, financial materials, personnel materials, clippings, government reports and photographs. It also contains material related to the overall operation of the Institution as an entity and relationships with individual grantees and others affiliated with the Institution but not with any particular department. In processing, an effort was made to tie in keywords with grantees. A run of Annual Meeting transcripts from 1902-1929 may be of interest. Chronological files exist for many of the Annual Meetings.

Series 5: Patents, 1902-1994

Most of the files in this series center around three patents: Vannevar Bush's Justifying Typewriter, David Schwartz's Pulsed Oriented Electrophoresis, and S.L. McKnight's GA Binding Protein. There is also a small amount of material showing the development of the patent policy at the institution.

Series 6: Personnel, 1902-Present

The main personnel files are still in use by the Institution and are kept in a secure location for legal and privacy reasons. It should be noted that folders for individuals located in the General Files may contain personnel information. It appears filing was inconsistent; therefore, it may be helpful to seek permission to look at the Personnel files for information about a particular individual. There are a few folders from 1922-1955, located in the Archive which are labeled "Biographical Data" and are broken down into alphabetical sections. Actuarial data for each department from 1913-1950 is also found here.

Series 7: President's Files, 1902-2001

This series is arranged chronologically and includes the files of the Executive Officers. Related materials may be found under the president's name in the General Files, or (in the case of Gilman) in the Trustees information.

There are no records from Daniel Gilman's presidency in this series; there are files from 1902-1908 located in Series 8: Subseries 1: Trustees Information. Additional files from Robert S. Woodward's term (and beyond—1902-1970) are located in Series 4: General Files. There are no files from James Ebert's presidency (1978-1987), though some records may be found in Series 2: Subseries 11: Department of Embryology.

The arrangement of the files in this series is chronological by term of service as follows:

- Robert S. Woodward (1904-1920), 1912-1920
- John C. Merriam (1921-1938), 1911-1938
- Walter Gilbert (executive officer), 1913-1941
- Vannevar Bush (1939-1955), 1928-1956, 1964-1965
- Caryl P. Haskins (1956-1971), 1959-1970
- Paul A. Scherer (executive officer), 1945-1957
- Philip H. Abelson (1971-1978), 1971-1978
- Edward A. Ackerman (executive officer), 1971-1973
- M.H. Walburn (executive officer), 1971-1974
- Edward E. David, Jr., acting president (1987-1988), 1987-1988
- Maxine F. Singer (1988-2002), 1988-1999

Series 8: Trustees, 1901-1993

This series is made up of two subseries which relate to the role of the trustees at the Institution.

Series 8, Subseries 1: Trustees Information, 1901-1993

This subseries is made up of information about past and present trustees, as well as persons nominated for a trustee position, but declined or were rejected. The folders contain

biographical information, correspondence, and other relevant materials. There is also a very small amount of information pertaining to board structure, address lists, invitations, etc.

Series 8, Subseries 2: Trustee Meetings and Committees, 1902-1993

This subseries contains the files of the Trustees and its various committees. Transcripts, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and correspondence make up the bulk of the materials. During the first half of the twentieth century Board of Trustee minutes were bound and occasionally include a typescript index. In addition to the bound volumes, one loose copy of each set of Trustee minutes was kept. The committee files which follow the Trustee records are arranged alphabetically, with the exception of the Executive Committee and Finance Committee, which start the run of records due to their bulk. Arrangement is as follows:

- Board of Trustees
- Executive Committee
- Finance Committee
- Advisory Committees
- Auditing Committee
- Employee Benefits Committee
- Exhibits Committee
- Lecture Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Special Committees

Folder Listing

The folder listing for this collection is contained in a searchable database. The series title and any sub-series are included in the series field. Occasionally, an extra notation such as “personnel” or “grant” is included to specify the nature of the contents of the folder. These notations do not denote another sub-series division.

Subject Terms

Topics:

- Astrometry
- Astronomical observatories
- Astronomy
- Biochemistry
- Biology
- Biophysics
- Bonampak Site (Mexico)
- Chichén Itzá Site (Mexico)
- Chlorella Research
- Drosophila Research
- Economics
- Eugenics
- Eugenics Record Office
- Exobiology
- Genetics
- Geomagnetism

Geophysical observatories
Las Campanas Observatory
Marine biology
Mayas
Mayas – Antiquities
Mayas – Belize – Maps
Mount Wilson and Las Campanas Observatories
National Science Foundation (U.S.)
Nuclear physics
Oceanography
Patents
Petrology
Plant biology
Physics
Radio astronomy
Scientific expeditions
Seismology
Sociology
Space biology
Telescopes
Tikal Site (Guatemala)
Uaxactún Site (Guatemala)
United States. National Academy of Science
World War, 1914-1918
World War, 1939-1945

Occupation:

Archaeologists
Astronomers
Biochemists
Biologists
Biophysicists
Economists
Geneticists
Geologists
Geophysicists
Historians
Marine biologists
Petrologists
Physicists
Seismologists
Sociologists

Corporate Names:

Carnegie Institution of Washington
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Bureau of Historical Research

Carnegie Institution of Washington. Dept. of Archaeology
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Dept. of Botanical Research
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Dept. of Economics and Sociology
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Dept. of Genetics
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Dept. of Historical Research
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Dept. of Marine Biology
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Dept. of Meridian Astrometry
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Dept. of Plant Biology
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Dept. of Terrestrial Magnetism
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Division of Historical Research
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Division of Plant Biology
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Geophysical Laboratory
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Laboratory for Plant Physiology
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Nutrition Laboratory.
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Station for Experimental Evolution at Cold Spring
Harbor, New York
Carnegie Institution of Washington. Tortugas Laboratory
Carnegie Observatories
Desert Botanical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution
Las Campanas Observatory
Mount Wilson and Las Campanas Observatories

Personal Names:

Abelson, Philip Hauge
Adams, Walter S. (Walter Sydney), 1876-1956
Adams, Leason Heberling, 1887-1969
Agassiz, Alexander, 1835-1910
Baade, Walter, 1893-1960
Babcock, Horace W.
Bauer, L. A. (Louis Agricola), 1865-1932
Benedict, Francis Gano, 1870-1957
Berry, Joseph A., 1941-
Blakeslee, Albert Francis, 1874-1954
Bolton, Ellis T.,
Boss, Lewis, 1846-1912
Boss, Benjamin, b. 1880
Bowen, Ira Sprague, 1898-1973
Briggs, Winslow R.
Brown, Donald D., 1940-
Bush, Vannevar, 1890-1974
Carpenter, Thorne M. (Thorne Martin), b. 1878
Clements, Frederic E. (Frederic Edward), 1874-1945
Corner, George Washington, 1889-
Davenport, Charles Benedict, 1866-1944
David, Edward E.

Day, Arthur L. (Arthur Louis), 1869-1960
Demerec, M. (Milislav), 1895-1966
Ebert, James David, 1921-
Farnum, Henry
Fleming, J. A. (John Adam), 1877-1956
French, Charles Stacy, 1907-
Gilman, Daniel Coit, 1831-1908
Hale, George Ellery, 1868-1938
Hall, H.M.
Haskins, Caryl Parker, 1908-
Hershey, A. D. (Alfred Day), 1908-
Hubble, Edwin Powell, 1889-1953
Jameson, J. Franklin (John Franklin), 1859-1937
Kaufmann, B. P. (Berwind Peterson), 1897-
Kidder, Alfred Vincent, 1885-1963
Leland, Waldo Gifford, 1879-1966
Lindbergh, Charles A. (Charles Augustus), 1902-1974
Longley, William Harding, 1881-1937
Lowe, E. A. (Elias Avery), 1879-1969
MacDougal, Daniel Trembly, 1865-1958
Mall, Franklin P. (Franklin Paine), 1862-1917
Mayor, Alfred Goldsborough, 1868-1922
McLaughlin, Andrew Cunningham, 1861-1947
Merriam, John C. (John Campbell), 1869-1945
Morley, Sylvanus Griswold, 1883-1948
Morey, G. W. (George Washington), 1888-1965
Morgan, Thomas Hunt, 1866-1945
Morris, Earl Halstead, 1889-1956
Piggot, Charles Snowden, b. 1892
Pollock, H. E. D. (Harry Evelyn Dorr), 1900-
Preston, George Worrall, 1930-
Prewitt, Charles T.
Proskouriakoff, Tatiana, 1909-
Schmidt, Maarten
Searle, Leonard
Shepard, Anna Osler, 1903-
Singer, Maxine
Somerville, Christopher
Sosman, Robert B. (Robert Browning), 1881-
Spoehr, Herman Augustus, 1885-1954
Streeter, George Linius, 1873-1948
Tennent, David Hilt, 1873-1941
Tuve, Merle Antony, 1901-1982
Wetherill, George W.
Weymann, R. J. (Ray J.)
Woodward, Robert Simpson, 1849-1924

Wright, Carroll Davidson, 1840-1909
Yoder, H. S. (Hatten Schuyler), 1921-

Forms:

Administrative records
Blueprints
Clippings files
Corporation records
Correspondence
Grants
Invoices
Ledgers (account books)
Maps
Minutes
Patents
Personnel records
Photographs
Transcripts

Bibliography

Department of Terrestrial Magnetism – History. <<http://www.dtm.ciw.edu/content/view/90/87/>>

Dudley Observatory Records, Finding Aid.

<<http://libserv.aip.org:81/ipac20/ipac.jsp?uri=full=3100001~!2643~!0&profile=icos>>

Eugenics Record Office Records, American Philosophical Society.

<<http://www.amphilsoc.org/library/mole/e/ero.htm>>

Observatories of the Carnegie Institution: A Brief History. <<http://www.ociw.edu/ociw/about/>>

Streeter, George L. “Division of Animal Biology” [annual report]. *Carnegie Institution of Washington Year Book*, v. 34, (pp. 3-92). Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1935.

Strom, John. “Sources for the History of the Carnegie Institution of Washington at the Office of the Administration.” *The Earth, the Heavens, and the Carnegie Institution of Washington*. Ed. Gregory Good. Washington, D.C.: American Geophysical Union, 1994. 229-230.

Trefil, James and Margaret Hazen. *Good Seeing: A Century of Science at the Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1902-2002*. Washington, D.C.: Joseph Henry Press, 2002.

Related Collections

Carnegie Collection of Embryology. National Museum of Health and Medicine.

Carnegie Department of Embryology, 1914-1940s. Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives, Johns Hopkins Medical Institutes.

Carnegie Institution of Washington Files. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

Carnegie Institution Scrapbooks of Photos (1900s to 1930s). Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

Carnegie Observatories Records, 1903-1980s. Henry E. Huntington Library.

Department of Plant Biology Scientific Papers. Hunt Botanical Library of Carnegie Mellon University.

Department of Terrestrial Magnetism General Files, 1904-Present, Department of Terrestrial Magnetism, Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.

Eugenics Record Office Records, American Philosophical Society.

Geophysical Laboratory General Files, Geophysical Laboratory, Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.

Other collections may be found at:

Department of Embryology

Department of Plant Biology

Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens

Library of Congress

National Library of Medicine

Observatories of the Carnegie Institution

Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University

Smithsonian Institution Archives

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