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Willard L. Severinghaus Papers4078449

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Description is written in: English.

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Butler Library, 6th Floor
Columbia University, Mail Code 1127
535 W. 114th St.
New York, NY 10027
Business Number: (212) 854-5153
Fax Number: (212) 854-1365
rbml@libraries.cul.columbia.edu
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Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Book and Manuscript Library
Creator:	Severinghaus, Willard L (Willard Lesly), 1882-1947
Title:	Willard L. Severinghaus Papers
ID:	4078449
ID:	MS#1150
Date [inclusive]:	1895-1947
Physical Description:	4.5 linear feet 9 boxes
Language of the Material:	English .

Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Willard L. Severinghaus papers; Box and Folder; Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library.

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Biographical note

Willard Lesly Severinghaus (1882-1947) was a professor of Physics at Columbia University, 1919-1941, and secretary of the American Physical Society, 1929-1940.

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Biographical / Historical

Severinghaus was born in Terre Haute, Indiana on January 28, 1882, to the Reverend John Frederick Severinghaus and Maria Albers Severinghaus. He was the youngest of nine children. He earned an A.B. and master's degree in Physics from Baldwin-Wallace College in 1904 and

1905, respectively. From 1904 to 1907, Severinghaus was a professor of Physics at Moores Hill College. He then began working as an assistant in the Columbia University Physics department.

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Biographical / Historical

Severinghaus earned a Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1914. His research specialized in thermodynamics and electricity. He taught Physics at the university for the rest of his career, until his retirement in 1941.

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Biographical / Historical

Severinghaus married Frances Orr, a former graduate student of his and a Physics teacher at Brooklyn College, on August 26, 1920. They had no children. He died in New York City on August 28, 1947.

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Scope and Contents

The Willard L. Severinghaus Papers include the personal and professional papers of Columbia University Physics professor Willard Lesly Severinghaus, as well as a small amount of material related to the extended Severinghaus family. There are also record books from the Terre Haute, Indiana German Methodist Episcopal Church where Severinghaus's father, John F. Severinghaus, was pastor.

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Scope and Contents

Manuscript files include teaching notes and student lists; notebooks on physics, experiments, etc.; college notebook on biology and Willard Lesly Severinghaus notebooks and Frances Orr Severinghaus diary of their trip to Europe in 1927. Teaching materials; American Physical Society, 1939-1941; lightning; Moores Hill College, Moores Hill, Indiana; and telephotographs are included in the subject files. Biographical information includes the wedding announcement of Willard Leslie Severinghaus and Frances Orr; his obituary and letters relevant to his wife's teaching appointments. There are photographs of Severinghaus, his family, other scientists, laboratory equipment, the "Leonardo da Vinci Aircraft" exhibit, one identified group photograph of the "Cavendish Research" in 1926, 24 lantern slides (3 1/4 x 4 inches, glass) produced by the McAllister-Keller Company of New York, which appear to be a specially ordered lecture set on lightning & six slides for a lecture on thermodynamics. There is also a 75 item, A-Z student name and quiz grade card file, and 17 books from his library.

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Arrangement

Selected materials cataloged; remainder arranged. This collection is arranged in two series.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Revision Description

PDF finding aid converted to EAD, and scope and content and biographical notes revised by CLB. 2020-03-17

Restrictions on Access

The following boxes are located off-site: 2-9. You will need to request this material at least three business days in advance to use the collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library reading room.

Restrictions on Access

This collection has no restrictions.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Source of acquisition--Severinghaus, Mrs J. Walter. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--03/18/88. Accession number--M-88-03-18.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Papers: Source of acquisition--Severinghaus, Helen. Method of acquisition--Gift; Date of acquisition--06/25/90. Accession number--M-90-06-25.

Ownership and Custodial History

Gift of Mrs J. Walter Severinghaus, 1988.

Ownership and Custodial History

Gift of Helen Severinghaus, 1990.

Processing Information

Processed 08/04/88.

Processing Information

Papers Processed JHR 08/29/90.

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Accruals

Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. Contact rbml@columbia.edu for more information.

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Related Materials

Related Materials

[Severinghaus family papers](#): Papers of Willard L. Severinghaus' nephew, Leslie Severinghaus, and family. Includes other papers of John F., Aura E., and Charles E. Severinghaus. At Cornell University.

Related Materials

[Aura E. Severinghaus Papers](#): Papers of Willard L. Severinghaus' nephew, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons Professor of Anatomy Aura E. Severinghaus. At the Columbia University Medical Center Archives.

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Controlled Access Headings

- Thermodynamics
- Electricity
- Physics
- Correspondence
- Diaries
- Examinations (documents)
- Glass phototransparencies
- Itineraries
- Lantern slides
- Leases
- Lists (document genres)
- Notebooks
- Notes (documents)
- Photographs
- Receipts (financial records)

- Wills
- Physicists -- United States -- 20th century
- College teachers
- Bentley, Richard, 1662-1742
- Butler, Nicholas Murray, 1862-1947
- Einstein, Albert, 1879-1955
- Michelson, Albert A (Albert Abraham), 1852-1931
- Halifax, Charles Montagu, Earl of, 1661-1715
- Oppenheimer, J. Robert, 1904-1967
- Rayleigh, John William Strutt, Baron, 1842-1919
- Weismann, August, 1834-1914
- Moores Hill College
- American Physical Society
- Methodist Episcopal Church. Central German Conference

Collection Inventory

Series I: Cataloged correspondence and documents

Title/Description	Instances
Bentley, Richard, (1662-1742) correspondence	box 1
Butler, Nicholas Murray correspondence	box 1
Einstein, Albert correspondence	box 1
Michelson, Albert Abraham correspondence	box 1
Montague, Charles, 1st Earl of Halifax correspondence	box 1
Oppenheimer, Robert correspondence	box 1
Strutt, John William, 3rd Baron Rayleigh correspondence	box 1
Weismann, August correspondence	box 1
Butler, Nicholas Murray photograph	box 1
American Physical Society correspondence, 1929-1941	box 1
Columbia University correspondence	box 1
Scope and Contents	
General.	
Columbia University correspondence	box 1
Scope and Contents	
Regarding leave of absence/disability/retirement.	
Teacher's College correspondence, 1940-1941	

Scope and Contents	box 1
Regarding lease of apartment	
Correspondence with Frances Orr	box 1
European trip correspondence, 1927	box 1
Scope and Contents	
Mentions various eminent physicists.	
Letters to family from Europe, 1927	box 1
Letters of condolence to Frances Orr Severinghaus, 1947	box 1
<u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders	
General correspondence	box 1
<u>Physical Description</u> : 19 folders	
Arrangement	
Arranged alphabetically.	
Willard Severinghaus's last will and testament, 1927 January 28	box 1

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Series II: Arranged materials

Title/Description	Instances
Examinations, circa 1901-1903	box 2
Memorabilia	box 2
Notes	box 2
Scope and Contents	
On physics, travel, financial affairs, and other topics.	
Notebook from biology study at Baldwin-Wallace College, 1903-1904	box 2
High school notebooks	box 2
Notebooks on mathematics, science, and zoology	box 2
Notebook and travel diary, 1927	box 2
Notebook on physics, student lists, etc.	box 2
Receipts for equipment and lab supplies	box 2

"Scientific Laboratories the Length and Breadth of North America"	box 2
Travel Itinerary, 1940	box 2
"Trial and Error", 1932	box 2
Subject file: American Physical Society, 1939-1940	box 3
Subject file: Lightning	box 3
Subject file: Miller, Dayton C. "The Spirit and Service of Science", 1936	box 3
Moores Hill College Teaching Materials	box 3
Moores Hill - Glee Club, Activities, etc.	box 3
Telephotographs	box 3
Biographical files <u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders	box 3
Frances Orr Severinghaus biographical file	box 3
Newspaper clippings - Physics, etc., circa 1928-1940	box 3
Willard Leslie Severinghaus photographs <u>Physical Description</u> : 2 folders	box 3
Photographs of Severinghaus and family (some from childhood)	box 3
Photographs of Frances Orr Severinghaus	box 3
Photographs of Cavendish research, 1926	box 3
Photographs of home and family, including painting	box 3
Photographs of laboratory equipment	box 3
Photographs of "Leonardo da Vinci Aircraft" exhibit	box 3
Photographs of scientists and laboratory equipment (Leyden)	box 3
Miscellaneous photographs	box 3
Books from Severinghaus's library <u>Physical Description</u> : 12 Volumes	box 4
Lantern slides for a lecture on lightning <u>Physical Description</u> : 24 items	box 4
Card files: student names and quiz grades, 1905-1906	box 4
Books from Severinghaus's childhood library <u>Physical Description</u> : 5 Volumes	box 5
Glass slides for a lecture on thermodynamics	

<u>Physical Description</u> : 6 items	box 5
Notebooks, mostly from childhood and college	box 5
<u>Physical Description</u> : 7 items	
Central German Methodist Episcopal Church: Book of disbursement records, 1930-1933	box 6
Central German Methodist Episcopal Church: Minutes of the Central German Conference, 1929	box 6
Central German Methodist Episcopal Church: Record Book: Baptisms and Marriages, 1889-1938	box 6
Scope and Contents	
Baptism records, 1889-1938; Marriage records, 1890-1938.	
Severinghaus, A. E.: Biographical material	box 6
Severinghaus, A. E.: Alpha Epsilon Delta award material	box 6
Severinghaus, C. E.: correspondence regarding Central German Methodist Episcopal Church	box 6
Severinghaus family correspondence	box 6
Severinghaus family printed material	box 6
Severinghaus, C. E.: diaries, datebooks, and memoranda, 1902-1979	box 7
Severinghaus, J. F.: diaries, datebooks, and memoranda, 1902-1979	box 7
Biographical / Historical	
J. F. Severinghaus was the father of Willard L. Severinghaus.	
Severinghaus, C. E. last will and testament	box 8
Central German Methodist Episcopal Church Conference photograph, 1911	box 8
Tomkinson, Laura E. Twenty Years' History of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Cincinnati: The woman's home missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal Church., 1903	box 8
<u>Physical Description</u> : 1 Volumes	
Book of Psalms	box 8
Diplomas and awards	box 9

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