

# Guide to the Charles S. Hastings Papers

MS 997



compiled by Janet Elaine Gertz

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
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**CALL NUMBER:** MS 997

**CREATOR:** Hastings, Charles Sheldon, 1848-1932

**TITLE:** Charles Sheldon Hastings papers

**DATES:** 1869-1930

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 1 linear foot

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** Correspondence, professional writings, and notes of Charles Hastings concerning research in and teaching of physics, astronomy, and optics at Johns Hopkins University and Yale University.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0997>

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Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box  
f.      folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of estate of Charles S. Hastings, 1940.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

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## Preferred Citation

Charles Sheldon Hastings Papers (MS 997). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Charles Hastings was born in Clinton, New York, on November 27, 1848. He received a Ph.B. from Yale in 1870, and a Ph.D in 1873. Between 1871 and 1873, he was instructor of physics at Yale, after which time he studied physics at the Universities of Heidelberg and Berlin and at the Sorbonne in Paris. From 1876 to 1884, he was associate professor of physics at Johns Hopkins University. He returned to Yale in 1884 to become professor of physics, a position he held until 1915 when he became professor emeritus. Hastings died in Greenwich, Connecticut, on January 31, 1932.

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## Biographical / Historical

Charles Sheldon Hastings, Ph.B. 1870.

Born November 27, 1848, in Clinton, N. Y.; Died January 31, 1932, in Greenwich, Conn.

Father, Panet Marshall Hastings (B.A. Hamilton 1838; M.D. Columbia 1842); physician in Clinton and Hartford; lecturer at Hamilton; connected with Hartford Hospital; son of Dr. Seth Hastings, Jr., and Huldah (Clark) Hastings, of Clinton. Mother, Jane (Sheldon) Hastings; daughter of Charles and Alicia (Lawrence) Sheldon, of Hartford.

Hartford Public High School. Engineering course; member The Colony and Berzelius.

Studied in Yale Graduate School 1870-73 (Ph.D. 1873); instructor in physics 1871-73; studied physics at Universities of Heidelberg and Berlin 1873-75 and at the Sorbonne, Paris, 1875-76; associate professor of physics at Johns Hopkins University 1876-1884; professor of physics at Yale from 1884 until retirement 1915, when made professor emeritus; co-author, with Professor Frederick E. Beach, '83 S.: *Text Book on General Physics* (1899) and *Light, A Consideration of the More Familiar Phenomena of Optics* (1901); author: *New Methods in Geometrical Optics* (1928); made an Officier de l'Instruction Publique at the Sorbonne 1889; corresponding member Societa degli Spectroscopisti Italiani; member National Academy of Sciences, American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Physical Society, American Philosophical Society (received Elliott Cresson Medal of the society 1926), and the United Church (Congregational), New Haven; president of Graduates Club Association 1905-07.

Married June 28, 1878, in Hartford, Elizabeth Tracy, daughter of Elisha Tracy and Catharine M. (Barker) Smith, and sister of Charles W. Smith, ex-'74 S. One daughter, Katharine Panet, ex-'04 Art, the wife of Horace W. Chittenden '03 S.

Death due to cerebral hemorrhage and arteriosclerosis. Buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford. Survived by daughter.

Taken from *Yale University Obituary Record*, 1931-34, page 143.

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## Scope and Contents

These papers of Charles Sheldon Hastings consist of notebooks, lecture notes, letters, and other items relating to optics, astronomy, and physics. The letters are primarily from other scientists and deal with questions of optics and related matters. The largest group of letters is from William H. Goodyear of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Science; they are accompanied by notes concerning architectural measurements of cathedrals made by Goodyear and Hastings. Other correspondents include Henry C. Lomb and his associates at the Bausch and Lomb Optical Company, with whom Hastings was consulting about a new microscope.

The bulk of the papers, made up of scientific writings, notebooks, and notes, some relating to Hastings' teaching at Johns Hopkins University and Yale University, is arranged in chronological order. There are, in addition, certificates of membership in the National Academy of Sciences of the United States and in the American Philosophical Society; a diary of a voyage taken by Hastings from Panama to Peru and of his arrival in the Caroline Islands; and an assortment of photographs taken in New Haven and Europe, many of them unidentified.

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## Collection Contents

Correspondence		
b. 1, f. 1	General	1879-1909
	William H. Goodyear	
b. 1, f. 2	Letters	1909
b. 1, f. 3	Notes	1909
b. 1, f. 4	Bausch and Lomb Optical Company: letters and reports	1929-1930
Scientific papers		
b. 1, f. 5	Astronomical observations	1869
b. 1, f. 6	Notebook: "Lectures on Optics-by Prof. Kirchhoff"; "Einleitung in die höhen Analysis von Prof. Königsberger"; "Notes on Apparatus"	1874, 1883-1884, undated
b. 1, f. 7	Notebook on optics and other scientific subjects, with notes on Europe	1875, undated
b. 1, f. 8	Notebook: "Experiments in the Application of Mathematics to Physical Problems, Given First Term in Winter 77-8 at the Johns Hopkins Univ."	1877-1878
b. 1, f. 9	Notebook: "Notes on Lectures to the Advanced Class in Physics, 1879-80," at Johns Hopkins University	1879-1880
b. 1, f. 10	"Diary of Astronomical Observations" English	1879-1927
b. 2, f. 11	Inventory, "Physical Apparatus-S.S.S."	1883
b. 2, f. 12	Notebook: "Laboratory Observations"	1893-1896
b. 2, f. 13	"Lectures on Applied Optics" English	1907
b. 2, f. 14	Notes regarding observations of a halo around the sun	1919
b. 2, f. 15	Notes and proofs for <i>New Methods in Geometrical Optics</i>	[1927?]
b. 2, f. 16	"[Colby paper] on certain limitations in Science" English	undated
b. 2, f. 17	"Notes on Optical Problems" English	undated
b. 2, f. 18	"On the Influence of Temperature on the Optical Constants of Glass" English	undated
b. 2, f. 18	"On Lockyer's 'Hypothesis that the So-called Elements are Compound Bodies'" English	undated
b. 2, f. 19 - 20	Laboratory notebooks	undated
b. 2, f. 21	Miscellaneous writings	undated

b. 2, f. 22	Diary of South American cruise	[pre-1907]
b. 2, f. 23	Photographs	undated
b. 3	Certificates of membership in the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America and in the American Philosophical Society	1889, 1906

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Astronomy -- Observations  
Optics  
Physics  
Science  
Shipping

### **Geographic Names**

Asia

### **Occupations**

Physicists

### **Names**

Goodyear, W. H. (William Henry), 1846-1923  
Hastings, Charles Sheldon, 1848-1932

### **Corporate Bodies**

Bausch & Lomb Optical Company  
Johns Hopkins University -- Faculty  
Yale University -- Faculty