

# Guide to the William Weldon Watson Papers

MS 828



compiled by Nancy Fappiano and Tom Hyry

May 1997

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
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<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 828

**CREATOR:** Watson, William W. (William Weldon), 1899-1992

**TITLE:** William Weldon Watson Papers

**DATES:** 1924-1983

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 3 linear feet (8 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The papers reflect William W. Watson's career as a physicist and include correspondence, subject files, writings, and reports on professional conferences and writings, largely for the years 1950 to 1963. Best documented is his work as science advisor to the Philippine government, his involvement with the McGraw Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology, and his participation on the Atomic Energy for Connecticut Committee.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0828>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.0828>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

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 William W. Watson, 1978, 1981, and 1985.

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## Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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## Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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## Preferred Citation

William Weldon Watson Papers (MS 828). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

William W. Watson was born on September 14, 1899 in Eveleth, Minnesota. He received his B.S. degree in 1920; his M.S. degree in 1922; and his Ph.D. degree in 1924, all from the University of Chicago. He was on the Chicago faculty from 1922 to 1928, when he was appointed Assistant Professor of Physics at Yale. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1931 and to full Professor and Chairman of the department in 1940. Under Professor Watson's direction, the Physics Department at Yale underwent considerable expansion both in the size of its staff and student body, as well as in its housing and facilities. In 1961, Professor Watson stepped down from the chairmanship, and seven years later, in 1968, he retired from the Yale faculty. He died August 3, 1992.

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## Scope and Contents

The William W. Watson Papers represent the professional activities of Dr. Watson outside of his duties as chairman of the Physics Department at Yale. They date from (approximately) 1950 to 1963 and include correspondence, reports on professional conferences, and writings. Professor Watson's role as science adviser in the Philippines is especially well-documented by correspondence. His involvement with the McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology and his participation on the Atomic Energy for Connecticut Committee are also noteworthy. The papers were received from Dr. Watson on May 8, 1978.

Photographs of the Sloane Laboratory staff (1920-1921, 1951), the dedication of the Electron Accelerator Laboratory (1963), and an aerial view of the Gibbs Laboratory and Accelerator Lab (1955) have been removed for the Yale Picture Collection.

Watson's files as chairman of the Yale physics department from 1940 to 1961 have been retained by that department (1978).

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## Arrangement

The papers are arranged into five series and one addition: I. General Correspondence, 1951-1960, II. Topical Correspondence, 1928-1968, III. Conferences, 1954-1959, IV. Writings, 1949-1968, and V. Personal and Miscellaneous Papers, 1945-1968.

## Collection Contents

### Original accession

General Correspondence		
b.1	A	1951-1963
b.1	B	1954-1963
b.1	C - D	1951-1968
b.1	E - G	1952-1962
b.1	H - I	1952-1961
b.1	K - L	1951-1962
b.1	Mc - M	1957-1961
b.1	P - R	1951-1962
b.1	S - T	1951-1961
b.1	U - V - W	1957-1963
b.1	Y - Z, unidentified	1958-1961
b.1	Gordon, Dorothy	1959 June 29– August 25, 1960 February 2–April 27, 1960 May 2– July 28
Topical Correspondence		
b.2	American Institute of Physics	1958-1960, undated
b.2	American Institute of Physics: Committee on the Design of Physics Building	1959 January 16-1961 February 9
American-Philippine Science Foundation, Inc.		
b.2	1959 May 8 - September 10	1959 May 8 - September 10
b.2	1959 September 11 - October 30	1959 September 11 - October 30
b.2	1959 November 2 - December 29	1959 November 2 - December 29
b.2	1960 January 6 - March 8	1960 January 6 - March 8
b.2	1960 March 9 - April 5	1960 March 9 - April 5

## Topical Correspondence &gt; American-Philippine Science Foundation, Inc. (continued)

b. 2	1960 April 13 - June 17	1960 April 13 - June 17
b. 2	1960 July 2 - October 3	1960 July 2 - October 3
b. 2	1960 June 1 - July 26	1960 June 1 - July 26
b. 2	1960 September 27 - December 28	1960 September 27 - December 28
b. 2	1961 January 6 - January 26	1961 January 6 - January 26
b. 2	1961 February 6 - March 29	1961 February 6 - March 29
b. 2	1961 April 4 - June 14	1961 April 4 - June 14
b. 3	1961 June 29 - 1962 January 30, undated	1961 June 29 - 1962 January 30, undated
	American-Philippine Science Foundation, Inc.:	
b. 3	Reports concerning science in the Philippines	1957-1961
b. 3	Five scientific photographs	
	American Society for Engineering Education:	
b. 3	Evaluation of the Role of Physics in Engineering Education	1954 April 23-December 31
b. 3	Associated Universities, Inc.	1958-1962
b. 3	Associated Universities, Inc.: pamphlet, "Twenty-five Years of Research Management"	[1972]
b. 3	Atomic Energy Commission: European Fact-Finding Trip	1959 December 7-1960 September 12
	Atomic Energy for Connecticut	
b. 3	1956 May 8 - July 26	1956 May 8 - July 26
b. 3	1956 September 20 - December 18	1956 September 20 - December 18
b. 3	1957 March 14 - 1958 November 12	1957 March 14 - 1958 November 12

## Topical Correspondence &gt; Atomic Energy for Connecticut (continued)

b. 3	1959 May 25 - 1960 December 27	1959 May 25 - 1960 December 27
b. 3	1961 January 6 - December 15	1961 January 6 - December 15
b. 3	1961 December 29 - 1962 January 30	1961 December 29 - 1962 January 30
b. 3	Carnegie Fellows	1962 August 20-1963 April 11
McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology		
b. 3	1957 August 21 - 1958 February 26	1957 August 21 - 1958 February 26
b. 3	1958 March 4 - June 26	1958 March 4 - June 26
b. 4	1958 July 3 - 31	1958 July 3 - 31
b. 4	1958 August 8 - September 26	1958 August 8 - September 26
b. 4	1958 October 10 - November 12	1958 October 10 - November 12
b. 4	1958 December 5 - 1959 February 24	1958 December 5 - 1959 February 24
b. 4	1959 April 2 - June 22	1959 April 2 - June 22
b. 4	1959 July 21 - December 18	1959 July 21 - December 18
b. 4	1960 January 19 - 1961 February 2	1960 January 19 - 1961 February 2
b. 4	1961 February 8 - June 22	1961 February 8 - June 22
Visiting Scientist Program in Physics		
b. 4	1957 August 22 - 1958 January 30	1957 August 22 - 1958 January 30
b. 4	1958 February 4 - December 31	1958 February 4 - December 31
b. 4	1959 January 2 - March 27	1959 January 2 - March 27

## Topical Correspondence &gt; Visiting Scientist Program in Physics (continued)

b. 4	1959 April 6 - December 18	1959 April 6 - December 18
b. 5	1960 September 14 – 1961 July 12, 1964 June 15	1960 September 14 – 1961 July 12, 1964 June 15
b. 5	Yale University, Pierson College	1957 January 25-October 28
b. 5	Yale University, Pierson College: Fellow appointments	1959 February 19
b. 5	Yale University, reports concerning Physics at Yale	1928-1968
b. 5	Yale University, newspaper clippings about atom smasher	1954 May 18-20
b. 5	Yale University, reports for Atomic Energy Contract At (30-1)-625	1950 July 3-1955 October 4
b. 5	Yale University, new Physics building	1950-1951
Conferences		
b. 5	Conference on Nuclear Physics in Engineering, 1954 Sep 7-11	1954 January 8-May 13
b. 5	Conference on Nuclear Physics in Engineering, 1954 Sep 7-11	1954 May 14-September 13
b. 5	Gordon Research Conference, American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1955 Jul 11-15	1954 December 16-1955 July 2
b. 5	National Science Foundation, Conference of Physics Chairmen, 1955 Nov 4-5	1955 June 15-August 25
b. 5	National Science Foundation, Conference of Physics Chairmen, 1955 Nov 4-5	1955 August 29-November 25, undated
b. 5	Connecticut Industrial Radio-isotopes Workshop, 1960 Mar 30-31	1959 December 9-1960 April 6
Writings		
b. 6	Articles and speeches	1954-1968, undated
b. 6	Reprints and bibliography of William W. Watson	1949-1961
b. 6	Report to the National Science Development Board, "Science in the Philippines"	1960 April 16
Personal and Miscellaneous Papers		
b. 6	Trip around the world	1960
b. 6	Certificates	1945 August 6, 1976 July 9



## Personal and Miscellaneous Papers (continued)

b. 6	Personnel security questionnaires	1951, 1956
b. 6	Yale University, recommendation for academic appointment	1962
b. 6	Classified material receipt	1959
b. 6	Conference accommodations price list	1955
b. 6	Symposium participants list	1957
b. 6	Manuscript revision note	undated
b. 6	Clipping on heavy water	undated
b. 6	Synopses of telecast lessons	1959
b. 6	Correspondence concerning the retirement of William W. Watson	1968 April 23- August 25

**Accession 1985-M-078: Additional Material, 1924-1983**

This series is arranged alphabetically and contains biographical material, writings, correspondence, and subject files pertaining to the professional career of William Weldon Watson. "Bibliography and biographical sketch" and "Genealogical notes" provide information on Watson's publications, life, and family background. "Comments on Onsager's Research on Thermal Diffusion in Gases" and "Physics at Yale, 1928-1968" are hand-written documents composed by Watson after his retirement from the Yale faculty in 1968. "Writings" provide a sampling of Watson's publications written throughout his professional career.

## General files

b. 1, f. 1	Bibliography and biographical sketch	1968, undated
b. 1, f. 2	"Comments on Onsager's Research on Thermal Diffusion in Gases," English	1981 March
b. 1, f. 3	Genealogical notes	undated
b. 1, f. 4-5	Miscellaneous [newspaper clippings]	1940-1983
b. 1, f. 6	"Physics at Yale, 1928-1968" [talk delivered to a convocation of the Ph.D. alumni of the Yale Physics Department] English	1975
b. 1, f. 7	Programs, 1940, 1967-1968	
b. 1, f. 8	<i>Science in the Philippines</i> , [report by Watson as Science Advisor to the United States Operations Mission to the Philippines and to the National Science Development Board of the Philippine Government]	1960
b. 1, f. 9	Taft, Horace [one letter re: Taft's leaving Yale]	1971 March 26
b. 1, f. 10	Temmer, G. M. [one letter re: krypton isotopes]	1955, September 30
b. 1, f. 11-12	Writings	1924-1970
b. 1, f. 13	Yale Graduate Physics Symposium	1975 May 2-3
	Visual Materials	1930-1976
	The Visual Materials series is comprised of photographs dating from 1930 to 1976. Watson appears in most of them. Many of them portray events and activities in which he took part including the construction of the Sloane Laboratory in 1953, the dedication of the Gibbs Laboratory in 1955, his retirement party in 1968, and the unveiling of his portrait in the Physics department in 1969.	
b. 2, f. 1-2	Photographs	1930, 1947, 1949-1976
b. 7	Photographs (cont'd)	1930, 1947, 1949-1976

## **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**

Nuclear energy  
Physics  
Science

### **Geographic Names**

Asia  
Connecticut  
Philippines

### **Occupations**

Physicists

### **Names**

Watson, William W. (William Weldon),  
1899-1992

### **Corporate Bodies**

American-Philippine Science Foundation  
Atomic Energy for Connecticut  
Yale University. Physics Department  
Yale University -- Faculty