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Collection Overview

Repository: Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title: Emile Bachelet Collection
Identifier: NMAH.AC.0302
Date: 1890 - 1973
Extent: 0.3 Cubic feet (3 boxes)
Creator: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
          Bachelet, Albert E.
Language: English
Summary: The collection documents Emile Bachelet, inventor of electro-magnetic therapeutic devices for the treatment of rheumatism.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information
The collection was donated by Albert E. Bachelet, son of the inventor.

Provenance
The collection was transferred to the Archives Center from the Division of Electricity (now the Division of Medicine and Science) in April 1988.

Processing Information
Processed by Robert S. Harding, archivist and Don Darroch, volunteer, May 1990; revised Alison Oswald, archivist, March 2003.

Preferred Citation
Emile Bachelet Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

Restrictions
Collection is open for research. Gloves must be worn when handling unprotected photographs and negatives.
Biographical / Historical

Emile Bachelet (1863-1946) was born in Nanterre, France, a village outside Paris and emigrated to the U.S. in the 1880s. He began his career in Boston as an electrician on the building staff of the Boston Institute (now known as Massachusetts Institute of Technology). He was naturalized a United States citizen in 1888, moved to California in 1889 and then to Tacoma, Washington where he worked as an electrician for the city government and later as an inventor of electro-magnetic therapeutic devices for the treatment of rheumatism. Bachelet discovered that arthritic pain disappeared when he was near huge generators and thus began his experimentation with electromagnets. In the 1890s he conceived the idea of magnetic levitation and worked for twenty years on its application to a train. A model was exhibited in London in 1914 and it received worldwide notice and some financial support. In the early 1900s, Bachelet moved to New York City and formed three companies, Bachelet General Magnet Co., Inc., Bachelet Magnetic Wave Company, and Bachelet Medical Apparatus Company to continue his invention work. However, his interest shifted often from one device to another and he later moved to Poughkeepsie, NY where he continued his invention efforts in a small workshop until his death in 1946.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of approximately .66 cubic feet of biographical materials, correspondence, clippings, patents, photographs, newspaper clippings, and a scrapbook relating to Emile Bachelet's invention of a device for magnetically levitating trains and other devices.

Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1890-1956, consists of Bachelet's passports, citizenship papers, some genealogical notes, clippings, a certificate from the Masonic Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, and an undated interview with Albert Bachelet, Emile's son. Documentation on Albert Bachelet's work with the Lincoln stereoscopic pairs is also here.

Series 2: Correspondence, 1915-1959, includes letters from Emile Bachelet's former secretary, Suzanne Stokvis-Simpson, to Albert Bachelet from 1948 to 1959.

Series 3: Patents, 1903-1929, contains both United States and foreign issued patents for Bachelet's inventions. Also included in this series is information on Bachelet's Wave Generator Machine that was used to treat individuals suffering from rheumatism and other pains by "increasing the vital energies of the blood and creating a vibratory magnetic field in which is placed the patients or patients."

Series 4: Photographs, 1929-1945, include Bachelet's "Magnetically Levitated Railway" device, his "Free Energy Machine", models, equipment, and other devices being demonstrated and portraits of Emile Bachelet.


Series 6: Miscellaneous, 1915-1917, contains a visitor's book to Bachelet's laboratory, brochures on the Bachelet Wave Generator machine and drawings.
Arrangement

The collection is divided into six series.

**Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1890-1956**

**Series 2: Correspondence, 1915-1959**

**Series 3: Patents, 1903-1929**

**Series 4: Photographs, circa 1880s-1945**

**Series 5: Newspaper Clippings and Scrapbook, 1912-1973**

**Series 6: Miscellaneous, 1915-1917**

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

**Subjects:**

- Electromagnetism
- Electromagnetism in medicine
- Inventions -- 1910-1920
- Inventors
- Magnetic levitation vehicles -- 1910-1920
- Magnetic suspension -- 1910-1920
- Medicine
- Patents
- Railroads -- Trains -- 1910-1920 -- England

**Types of Materials:**

- Clippings
- Contracts
- Photographs -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin -- 19th-20th century
- Scrapbooks

**Names:**

- Churchill, Winston, Sir, 1874-1965
Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Materials, 1890 - 1956

Box 1, Folder 1  Miscellaneous biographical materials , 1914 - 1946
Image(s)

Box 1, Folder 2  Tacoma Illustrated (page 80) , 1890

Box 1, Folder 3  Albert Bachelet , 1956

Box 3, Folder 1  Passports and citizenship papers , 1916 - 1918

Return to Table of Contents
Series 2: Correspondence, 1915 - 1959

Box 1, Folder 4  Correspondence, 1915 - 1932

Box 1, Folder 5  Correspondence, 1916 - 1945

Box 1, Folder 6  Suzanne Stokvis-Simpson, 1948 - 1949

Box 1, Folder 7  Suzanne Stokvis-Simpson, 1950 - 1953

Box 1, Folder 8  Suzanne Stokvis-Simpson, 1954 - 1959

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Series 3: Patents, 1903 - 1929

Subseries 3.1: United States Patents, 1903 - 1929

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #743,372, Magnetic Medical Apparatus , 1903

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #743,373, Electromagnetic Therapeutic Apparatus , 1903

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #847,877, Electric Current Interrupting and Varying Apparatus , 1907

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #849,653, Electro Magnetic Apparatus , 1907

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #946,193, Electromagnet , 1910

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #986,039, Synchronizing Interrupter for Electric Currents , 1911

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #1,001,236 Electromagnetic Sound-Wave Therapeutic Machine , 1911

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #1,020,942, Levitating Transmitting Apparatus , 1912

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #1,020,943, Levitating Transmitting Apparatus , 1912

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #1,051,056, Levitating Apparatus for Conveying Ammunition , 1913

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #1,088,511, Levitating Apparatus for Starting and Stopping Aeroplanes and the Like , 1914

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #1,232,174, Electromagnetic Engine , 1917

Box 1, Folder 9  
US #1,738,981, Mechanical Movement , 1929

Subseries 3.2: Foreign Patents, 1905 - 1915

Box 1, Folder 10  
British #10726, Improvements in and relating to Electro-Magnetic Levitating Devices , 1915

Box 1, Folder 11  
Bachelet Wave Generator Machine, 1907, 1905

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Series 4: Photographs, 1929 - 1945

Box 1, Folder 12  Photographs, undated

Probably the earliest photograph of Bachelet's working model of his magnetically levitated railway in Mt. Vernon, New York (1910) [black and white photoprint], 1910

1 Item (unmounted; Silver gelatin on paper.; 5.2" x 8.0")

Image(s): Probably the earliest photograph of Bachelet's working model of his magnetically levitated railway in Mt. Vernon, New York (1910) [black and white photoprint].

Levick, Edwin, Photographer
"Edwin Levick / New York" blind-stamp at lower right.

Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000014.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946

Topic: Engineering models
Magnetic suspension -- 1910-1920
Railways

Genre/ Form: Photographs -- 1910-1920 -- Black-and-white photoprints
Silver gelatin

Winston Churchill at demonstration of the magnetically levitated railway at Bachelet Works [black and white photoprint,], 1914

1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.6" x 8.7")

Image(s): Winston Churchill at demonstration of the magnetically levitated railway at Bachelet Works [black and white photoprint,] 1914.

Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Collector
Photographer unidentified, but possibly by Brown Bros. Churchill is shown in profile, slightly to the right of the center of the image.

Unrestricted research use by appointment. Photographs must be handled with cotton gloves unless protected by sleeves.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000026.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Churchill, Winston, Sir, 1874-1965

Topic: Engineering models
Magnetic suspension -- 1910-1920
Box 1, Folder 12  
[Emile Bachelet : black-and-white photoprint.], Circa 1908-1910
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.2 x 4.8 in.)
Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Collector
Bachelet, Albert E., Donor
Photographer unknown. Emile Bachelet in his laboratory standing next to his working model of the magnetically levitated railway.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000001.tif (AC Scan)

Topic: Engineering
Inventors
Laboratories
Railroads
Scientists

Genre/ Photographs -- 1910-1920 -- Black-and-white photoprints
Form: -- Silver gelatin

Box 1, Folder 12  
[Emile Bachelet] [Portrait], Circa 1908-1910
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.0 x 4.7 in.)
Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
Photographer unknown. Emile Bachelet in the Bachelet-Bracewell lab holding up the first experimental model of the levitated railroad.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000002.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Engineering
Inventors
Laboratories
Portrait
Railroads
Scientists

Genre/ Photographs -- 1900-1910 -- Black-and-white photoprints
Form: Portraits -- Men

Box 1, Folder 12  
[Magnetic Devices in Emile Bachelet's Laboratory] [Portrait], Circa 1908
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.1 x 4.7 in.)

Image(s)

Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946

Photographer unknown. A view of the table top in Emile Bachelet's laboratory which has several items on it including the electric magnetic interrupter and other magnetic levitational devices.

Local Numbers

AC0302-0000003.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946

Topic: Engineering

Inventors

Laboratories

Magnetic devices

Scientists

Genre/ Photographs

Form: 

Box 1, Folder 12

[Street View of Emile Bachelet's Laboratory in London] [Photograph]. Circa 1971

1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 3.5 x 2.6 in.)

Image(s)

Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946


Local Numbers

AC0302-0000004.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946

Topic: Engineering

Inventors

Laboratories

Magnetic devices

Scientists

Genre/ Photographs

Form: 

Box 1, Folder 12

[Emile Bachelet] [Portrait]. Circa 1900-1915

1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.5 x 4.8 in.)

Image(s)

Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946

Photographer unknown. Emile Bachelet posing for the camera in a suit.

Local Numbers

AC0302-0000005.tif (AC Scan)
Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Engineering
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnetic devices
Scientists
Genre/ Form: Photographs Portraits

Box 1, Folder 12
[Emile Bachelet] [Portrait], Circa 1945
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 7.0 x 5.0 in.)
Image(s)
AEB, Photographer
Portrait of Emile Bachelet at the end of his life. He is looking away from the camera and in a suit.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000006.tif (AC Scan)
Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Engineering
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnetic devices
Scientists
Genre/ Form: Photographs Portraits

Box 1, Folder 12
[Study Model for Free Energy] [Photograph], Circa 1922
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 7.6 x 9.3in.)
Image(s)
Merillat, Lou, Photographer
A contraption invented by Emile Bachelet that demonstrates free energy.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000007.tif (AC Scan)
Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Energy
Engineering
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnetic devices
Scientists
Genre/ Form: Photographs

Box 1, Folder 12
[Demonstration of Magnetically Levitated Railway] [Photograph], Circa 1914
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.5 x 8.6 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
Emile Bachelet (center with his arms elongated), demonstrates and explains to visitors how his magnetically levitated railway works. This takes place at his laboratory in Great Saffron Hall, Hobborn Circus, London.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000008.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Energy
Engineering
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnetic devices
Railroads
Scientists
Place: London (England)
Genre/ Form: Photographs

Box 1, Folder 12

[Woman operating switchboard of model railway] [Photograph], Circa 1915
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.5 x 4.7 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
Mrs. Stokvis-Simpson (taken by Flashlight) Assistant and Secretary to Emile Bachelet; operating the switchboard of Model "Bachelet" Railway

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000009.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Engineering
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnetic devices
Railroads
Scientists
Place: Mount Vernon (Westchester County, N.Y.)
Genre/ Form: Photographs

Box 1, Folder 12

[Boy riding magnetic railway] [Photograph], Circa 1900-1920
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
Keith Alderton riding the magnetically levitated railway at Bachelet laboratory to demonstrate the power of the railway.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000010.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Engineering
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnetic devices
Railroads
Scientists
Genre/ Form: Photographs

Box 1, Folder 12
[Hyman Maxim testing magnetic railway] [Photograph], Circa 1914
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.6 x 8.5 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
Sir Hyman Maxim testing the lifting power of the proposed passenger car of the Bachelet levitated railway.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000011.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Engineering
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnetic devices
Railroads
Scientists
Genre/ Form: Photographs

Box 1, Folder 12
[Bust of Emile Bachelet] [Photograph], Circa 1913
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 10.0 x 8.1 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
Sideview of a bust of Emile Bachelet.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000013.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Box 1, Folder 12

[Working Model of Magnetically Levitated Railway] [Photograph], Circa 1908-1910
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 7.1 x 9.0 in.)

Image(s)

Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
The machine that demonstrates magnetically levitated railways.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000015.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946

Topic: Engineering
Inventions
Inventors
Laboratories
Scientists

Genre/ Form: Photographs

Box 1, Folder 12

[Men with the working model of the magnetic levitated railway] [Photograph], Circa 1900-1920
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.9 x 8.8 in.)

Image(s)

Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
First model of levitated railroad with Pumphrey, Miles Bracewell, Emile Bachelet, and Bracewell’s chauffeur (pictured left to right)

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000016.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946

Topic: Engineering
Inventions
Inventors
Laboratories
Railroads
Scientists

Genre/ Form: Photographs
Box 1, Folder 12  [Emile Bachelet at the switchboard for the magnetic levitated railway]  [Photograph], Circa 1908-1910  
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.7 x 8.7 in.)  
Image(s)  
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor  
Emile Bachelet at the switching control patron that levitated the train in one switch and applied power to mangets in another.  
Local Numbers  
AC0302-0000017.tif (AC Scan)  
Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946  
Topic: Engineering  
Inventions  
Inventors  
Laboratories  
Magnets  
Railroads  
Scientists  
Genre/ Form: Photographs

Box 1, Folder 12  [Woman and men at a demonstration of magnetic levitated railway : black-and-white photoprint.], 1914  
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.7 x 8.7 in.)  
Image(s)  
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor  
"The Most Beautiful Woman in London" at a demonstration of the magnetically levitated railway at Bachelet Works, the laboratory in London.  
Local Numbers  
AC0302-0000018.tif (AC Scan)  
Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946  
Topic: Demonstrations  
Engineering  
Inventions  
Inventors  
Laboratories  
Magnets  
Railroads  
Scientists  
Genre/ Form: Photographs -- 1900-1910 -- Black-and-white photoprints

Box 1, Folder 12  [Duke and Duchess of Teck come for a demonstration : black-and-white photoprint.], Circa 1914
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.6 x 8.5 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
Bachelet, Albert E., Donor


The Duke and Duchess of Teck come for a demonstration of the Bachelet magnetically-levitated railway of the London laboratory; from the Daily Graphic. Some men wear top hats.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000019.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Demonstrations
Engineering
Inventions
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnets
Railroads
Scientists
top hats

Place: London (England)
Genre/ Form: Photographs -- 1900-1910 -- Black-and-white photoprints

Box 1, Folder 12
[Lord Mayor of London comes for a demonstration : black-and-white photoprint.], Circa 1914
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.5 x 8.6 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Collector
Bachelet, Albert E., Donor

Emile Bachelet and the Lord Mayor of London, Sir T. Vansittart Bowater, wearing a top hat, come for a demonstration of the magnetic levitated railway at Bachelet Works in London.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000020.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Demonstrations
Engineering
Inventions
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnets
Box 1, Folder 12

[First experimental model of equipment for magnetic levitation : black-and-white photoprint.], Circa 1908
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 6.5 x 8.6 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Inventor
Bachelet, Albert E., Donor
The equipment used to create a model for a magnetic levitation railway.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000021.tif (AC Scan)

Names:
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946

Topic:
Demonstrations
Engineering
Inventions
Inventors
Laboratories
Magnets
Railroads
Scientists

Genre/
Photographs -- 1900-1910 -- Black-and-white photoprints
Form:

Box 3, Folder 2

Mechanical Movement, 1929

Image(s)

Box 3, Folder 2

[Emile Bachelet and his brother on the platform : black-and-white photoprint.], Circa 1900-1920
1 Item (mounted.; Silver gelatin on paper; 9.1 x 11.1 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Collector
Bachelet, Albert E., Donor
Six men, including Emile Bachelet and his brother, working in a factory with a large machine in the middle.

Mount board brittle, with losses.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000022.tif (AC Scan)

Names:
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946

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Box 3, Folder 2  [Emile Bachelet and his men worked the switchboard for the Victoria Theater : black-and-white photoprint.], Circa 1895
1 Item (Silver albumen? on paper, mounted.; 9.0 x 13.9 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Collector
Bachelet, Albert E., Donor
Eight men, including Emile Bachelet, in front of a store with a large switchboard.

Mount board severely damaged and deteriorating, causing cracks in the photograph.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000023.tif (AC Scan)

Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Demonstrations
   Engineering
   Inventions
   Inventors
   Laboratories
   Magnets
   Railroads
   Scientists
   Theaters

Place: Washington
Genre/Form: Photographs -- 1890-1900 -- Black-and-white photoprints
Form: -- Silver albumen

Box 3, Folder 2  [Emile Bachelet's free energy model on the shelf : black-and-white photoprint.], Circa 1945
1 Item (Silver gelatin on paper.; 10.2 x 13.2 in.)

Image(s)
Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946, Collector
Bachelet, Albert E., Donor
Emile Bachelet's model for free energy machines on shelf with other study models, and a bust of Emile Bachelet above the machines.

Local Numbers
AC0302-0000024.tif (AC Scan)
Names: Bachelet, Emile, 1863-1946
Topic: Demonstrations
        Engineering
        Inventions
        Inventors
        Laboratories
        Magnets
        Railroads
        Scientists
Place: Poughkeepsie (N.Y.)
Genre/ Form: Photographs -- 1940-1950 -- Black-and-white photoprints
        -- Silver gelatin

Box 3, Folder 2 Free Energy Machine, 1945

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Series 5: Newspaper Clippings and Scrapbook, 1912 - 1973

Box 3, Folder 4  Newspaper clippings, 1912 - 1973

Box 3, Folder 5  Scrapbook, 1914

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**Series 6: Miscellaneous, 1915 - 1917**

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