



Smithsonian

Institution Archives

Records, 1849-1875, and related records from 1820

Finding aid prepared by Smithsonian Institution Archives

Smithsonian Institution Archives
Washington, D.C.
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	Records
Date:	1849-1875, and related records from 1820
Identifier:	Record Unit 60
Creator::	Smithsonian Institution. Meteorological Project
Extent:	9.66 cu. ft. (18 document boxes) (2 half document boxes) (8 microfilm reels)
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 60, Smithsonian Institution, Meteorological Project, Records

Access Restriction

Microfilm copies of incoming correspondence, 1852-1861, 1868, are available.

Descriptive Entry

Joseph Henry's first major project for the Smithsonian Institution was his plan to obtain weather reports from a countrywide network of voluntary observers; his plan is detailed in the 1848 annual report of the Institution. Voluminous reports, maps, tables, and charts were prepared and published on all phases of the work--rainfall, snowfall, temperatures, barometric pressure, storms, meteors, auroras, and other phenomena. In 1869, when Congress established the Weather Bureau of the United States Signal Service, the Smithsonian system of meteorological reports was turned over to the new bureau. The Smithsonian continued to work on the material collected up to the time of transfer, however, and over the next few years issued reports, tables and maps. A part of this record unit was published in the 1873 annual report, pages 84-131, "Classified Record of Monthly Meteorological Reports Preserved in the Smithsonian Institution," and other segments of this unit were published elsewhere. Completely unpublished, however, is meteorological incoming and outgoing correspondence. These records were created after 1850, but contain meteorological information dating back to 1820.

This record unit consists of papers and records regarding the Smithsonian's meteorological observation projects in the eighteen-fifties and analysis and publication of meteorological data in the eighteen-seventies; incoming correspondence to the Smithsonian, circa 1852-1873, from observers and others working on meteorology; another series of correspondence, reports and notes, 1853-1875, and undated; outgoing correspondence, 1853-1854, of Lorin Blodget, an assistant at the Smithsonian for meteorological affairs; a manuscript copy of part of the 1873 Smithsonian Annual Report on meteorological data preserved at the Smithsonian; data on mean temperatures, annual rainfall, and barometric pressures in the United States and other countries of the Americas, mostly for the years 1850 through 1873, and prepared for publication; a small and uneven collection of clippings on meteorology, 1856-1873; records of meteorological observations

and loan of instruments, 1856-1873; and miscellaneous and fragmentary original records of meteorological observations.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

- Meteorology
- Research

Types of Materials:

- Clippings
- Letterpress copybooks
- Manuscripts
- Maps
- Microfilms

Names:

- Blodget, Lorin
- Coffin, James Henry, 1806-1873
- Espy, James P. (James Pollard), 1785-1860
- Guyot, A. (Arnold), 1807-1884
- Henry, Joseph, 1797-1878
- Loomis, Elias, 1811-1889
- Schott, Charles A. (Charles Anthony), 1826-1901
- United States. Army. Signal Corps
- United States. Weather Bureau

Container Listing

Series 1: INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE, 1852-1861, 1868.

Note: Correspondence received by the Smithsonian on meteorological matters, filed chronologically. The following persons important in meteorological work are included among the correspondents: James Henry Coffin, James Pollard Espy, Arnold Guyot, Joseph Henry, Elias Loomis, and Charles Anthony Schott. Each volume is indexed separately. The records are related to records in the National Archives.

Box 1

Box 1 of 20	1852-1853 Digital Content: Letter from Lewis H. Steiner, a physician and librarian of Frederick, Maryland, to Edward Foreman, a clerk at the Smithsonian Institution, June 3, 1852. (Image no. SIA2012-3217)
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Box 2

Box 2 of 20	1852-1853
Box 2 of 20	1855-1856

Box 3

Box 3 of 20	1857-1858
Box 3 of 20	1858

Box 4

Box 4 of 20	1858-1859
Box 4 of 20	1859

Box 5

Box 5 of 20	1859-1860
Box 5 of 20	1860

Box 6

Box 6 of 20	1860-1861
Box 6 of 20	1868

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Series 2: MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE, NOTES, REPORTS, 1853-1875, CIRCA 400 PIECES, SOME WITH NOTATIONS BY JOSEPH HENRY.

Box 7

Box 7 of 20	Notes for annual report and fragments and extracts of letters, no date
Box 7 of 20	1857, copies of letters
Box 7 of 20	1858, copies of letters
Box 7 of 20	1859, copies of letters
Box 7 of 20	1860, copies of letters
Box 7 of 20	1868, originals and copies of letters
Box 7 of 20	1869, originals and copies of letters
Box 7 of 20	1871, copy of letter
Box 7 of 20	1872, original letters
Box 7 of 20	1873, originals and copies of letters, notes for reports, other data
Box 7 of 20	1874, copy of letter
Box 7 of 20	1875, copy of letter
Box 7 of 20	Lightning, 1853-1875, originals and copies of letters, notes for reports
Box 7 of 20	Storms and Tornadoes, 1856-1873, same as above
Box 7 of 20	Aurora, 1856, 1872, same as above
Box 7 of 20	Dark Day Report, copies of letters, 1873

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Series 3: LORIN BLODGET'S OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE, 1853-1854.

Note: Correspondence sent from the Smithsonian by Lorin Blodget, an employee assigned to meteorological work.

Box 8

Box 8 of 20

1 volume, 1853-1854

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Series 4: MANUSCRIPT FOR "CLASSIFIED RECORD OF MONTHLY METEOROLOGICAL REPORTS PRESERVED IN THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION," ANNUAL REPORT, 1873.

Boxes 9-11

Boxes 9-11 of 20

"Classified Record of Monthly Meteorological Reports Preserved in the Smithsonian Institution"

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**Series 5: RECORDS RELATING TO STUDIES OF MONTHLY AND ANNUAL
MEAN TEMPERATURES IN THE UNITED STATES AND ELSEWHERE IN
THE AMERICAS, DATA FROM EIGHTEEN TWENTIES THROUGH EIGHTEEN
SEVENTIES.**

Box 12

Box 12 of 20	Alabama-New Mexico
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Box 13

Box 13 of 20	New York-Wyoming, Central and South America
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Box 14

Box 14 of 20	Different configuration of data for locations in the United States, apparently texts used for tabulations or printing
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Series 6: RECORDS RELATING TO STUDIES OF MONTHLY AND ANNUAL RAINFALL IN THE UNITED STATES AND ELSEWHERE IN THE AMERICAS, DATA FROM THE EIGHTEEN TWENTIES THROUGH THE EIGHTEEN SEVENTIES.

Box 15	
Box 15 of 20	Alabama-New Jersey
Box 16	
Box 16 of 20	North Carolina-Wyoming, other areas in the Americas
Box 17	
Box 17 of 20	Consolidated Tables of Precipitation and other records used in tabulations

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Series 7: RECORDS RELATING TO ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE, DATA FROM EIGHTEEN FIFTIES THROUGH ABOUT 1875.

Box 18

Box 18 of 20

Collected data on atmospheric pressure, arranged alphabetically by
state.

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Series 8: RECORDS OF OBSERVERS AND USE OF SMITHSONIAN INSTRUMENTS, 1850-1873.

Box 19	
Box 19 of 20	Meteorological Instruments Loaned, 1850-1870, 1 volume, arranged by states with an alphabetical index to persons. Digital Content: Data on Instruments Loaned and Number of Observers for the Smithsonian Meteorological Project, 1872 (Image no. SIA2010-0726)
Box 19 of 20	Meteorological Records, 1859-1860, 1 volume, combined list of observers and instruments loaned, arranged alphabetically by state or other area.
Box 19 of 20	Records of Meteorological Observers, 1868-1873, 1 volume, arranged alphabetically by name of state and indexed by name of observer.
Box 19 of 20	Rain Gages Sent Out, 1868-1870, listed by date sent, 1 volume.
Box 19 of 20	List of Barometer Stations, 1861, loose.
Box 19 of 20	List of Books and Pamphlets in the Smithsonian Institution Library on Meteorology.

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Series 9: CLIPPINGS ON METEOROLOGY, 1853, 1855, 1857, 1858, 1867,
1872, 1873.

Box 20

Box 20 of 20

Clippings (7 folders)

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Series 10: MISCELLANEOUS METEOROLOGICAL RECORDS, 1849-1875.

Box 20

Box 20 of 20	Meteorological Observations in Nicaragua, 1849
Box 20 of 20	Meteors, a list and description of meteors observed during years 1849-1867
Box 20 of 20	Temperature Reading in Jackson, Ohio, 1851-1852
Box 20 of 20	Barometer Reading in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, 1870
Box 20 of 20	Meteorological Observations in New York and New London, Connecticut, 1873, 1875
Box 20 of 20	Publications
Box 20 of 20	Letter - John F. Posey to E. S. Glover (March 21, 1857) re: meteorological materials.

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