Taylor Instrument Company papers

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Rare Books, Special Collections, and Preservation

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Table of Contents

Summary Information 3
Biographical / Historical note 3
Scope and Contents 6
Arrangement 7
Administrative Information 7
Controlled Access Headings 8
Collection Inventory 8
Series I: History 8
Subseries I: General history 8
Subseries II: Centennial 11
Series II: War effort 11
Series III: Business papers 12
Subseries I: General papers 12
Subseries II: Bureau of Aircraft Production 13
Subseries III: Salesmen's conventions and publications 14
Subseries IV: Scientific information 14
Subseries V: Instrument designs and specifications 15
Subseries VI: Leaflets, advertisements, and order materials 15

Summary Information

Repository:	Rare Books, Special Collections, and Preservation
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ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Biographical / Historical note

George Taylor (d. 1889) and David Kendall founded the Taylor Instrument Company in Rochester, New York in 1851 under the original name Kendall & Taylor. The general stock and trade of the company was in thermometers and other instruments for monitoring temperature; this focus would continue into the twentieth century. Both Kendall and Taylor had worked independently as thermometer makers before forming the partnership which would found one of the largest manufacturers of thermometers in the United States. Kendall's father was the pioneer thermometer maker in the United States. The was located in a single room over what was then Post's Drug Store on Exchange Street, where they designed and produced the thermometers themselves.

Kendall left the company in 1853 and George Taylor succeeded him as sole owner, before withdrawing himself in 1859. Under George the company moved to 11 Hill Street, a larger

space with more room for the company's expanding employee forces. His brother Frank came to Rochester in 1862 from New Hampshire and re-named the company as Taylor and Richardson, under himself and Hamlet Richardson in 1866, operating out of a space at 145 Buffalo Street. Richardson eventually left the company [due to ill health] in 1866, and sold his interest to George Taylor in 1870. Under the two Taylors, the company officially became the Taylor Brothers Company in 1872. George Taylor stayed with the company as its president until his death in 1889. His brother Frank succeeded him, and would stay on as president until 1900. In 1890 the company was incorporated as the Taylor Brothers Company, with a capital stock of $75,000.00. George's two sons, J. Merton Taylor and G. Elbert Taylor [dates], were also associated with the company under Frank Taylor. Herbert J. Winn , who would later become company president andbegan working for the company in 1893, originally travelling as a salesman in Canada.

Taylor began branching out with the purchase of several other companies, experiencing a period of rapid expansion and success. They first acquired the Watertown Thermometer Co. in 1891. The acquisition of the Hohmann & Maurer Manufacturing Co. of Brooklyn, NY, in 1895, opened up business opportunities in the field of industrial applications for temperature and pressure instruments, expanding the range of the company's efforts far beyond the simple household and fever thermometers and barometers the company had produced up until then. In 1896 the Hohmann & Maurer Mfg. Company was moved to Rochester. Two years later in 1898 a new manufacturing branch was opened in London, England, at 106 Hatton Garden. The same year, Herbert J. Winn opened a branch office for the Taylor Brothers Co. in London. James Ely, who would become an important figure in company history, began working for the company in 1899. In this same year Charles W. Taylor was transferred to take charge of the New York office; he would later come back to Rochester to serve as J. Merton Taylor's assistant in the active management of manufacturing. He would die in 1912, while J. Merton was president, just one year before J. Merton's own death in 1913.

The acquisition of the Hohmann & Maurer Mfg. Co. was followed by the purchase of the Short & Mason Co., Ltd. of London in 1900. Short & Mason were manufacturers of high grade barometers, compasses, and other meteorological instruments. G. Elbert Taylor also became president in this year. By October of 1900 the capital stock of the Taylor Brothers Company had increased to $535,000.00, and the business had relocated to a property on Industrial Street, known later as Hill Street.

The business became incorporated as the Taylor Instrument Company.. In 1905, they purchased the Davis & Roesch Manufacturing Co., which manufactured automatic temperature and pressure controlling devices, and the R. Hoehn Company. The consolidation of the individual companies under the umbrella name Taylor Instrument Companies allowed them to continue manufacturing for some time as "The Hohmann & Maurer Manufacturing Company, a Branch of Taylor Instrument Companies." By January, 1906, a new building on Ames Street was completed, with office and manufacturing departments shifting there over the winter season. G. Elbert Taylor retired from the company presidency in 1910, and his brother J. Merton succeeded him.

In 1911, after discussions about moving the plant closer to Rochester, the Watertown Thermometer plant was closed and all of its equipment installed in a new building adjacent to the main plant on Ames Street. 1911 also saw the opening of Taylor's own hospital, as well

as the establishment of the Research Department. The company also opened an Export Sales Department.

In July of 1913, J. Merton Taylor diedHerbert J. Winnwas elected President and Treasurer of the company.

The company's growth continued during World War I. The company opened offices in Toronto and St. Louis in 1914, Baltimore in 1915, Washington state and Washington, D.C. locations in 1917, and the Chemical Laboratory,Physical Laboratory, and Sales Engineering Department in Rochester all before 1920. The company developed numerous contracts with the United States government and other manufacturers of munitions and instruments. Much of the business done with the government in altimeters for aircraft was only possible because of the company's acquisition of Short & Mason, and the consequential acquisition of experience manufacturing aneroid barometers in their London factories. By 1918 Taylor's work force had expanded from 600 people to a team of more than 1270. During this period James Ely was the Consulting Engineer on Instruments as Applied to Aircraft and travelled extensively, monitoring the use and function of Taylor instruments being used in fighter planes, among other applications. In 1919 he was recalled to Rochester to serve as General Sales Manager, and the following year in 1920 he would be elected Vice President of the company.

The 1920s saw the opening of offices in several more cities, including San Francisco, Cincinnati, Seattle, Cleveland, Los Angeles, Tulsa, and Milwaukee. The Tycos Company Library, which preserved many of the publications and materials of the company as well as collections of papers from important company figures, was opened in 1922. During this period the company's Board of Director's experienced turn-overs as Frank Taylor, who had been on the company Board of Directors, died in 1920; G. Elbert Taylor died in 1923, and John W. Taylor died in 1928. F.K. Taylor and G.H. Taylor were elected to the Board, and the construction of a new building budgeted at some $56,000.00 was authorized. The capital stock of the company doubled, rising from $2.5 million to $5 million in 1929.

The Taylor Instrument Companies of Canada, Ltd, was incorporated in 1930.The capital stock remained wholly owned by the Taylor Instrument Companies. The "Tycos" name was discontinued in an effort to promote brand unity and stability under the name "Taylor," though some instruments would remain branded with "Tycos, a subsidiary of Taylor Instrument Companies" for continuity. James Ely retired from active work in 1932 due to illness, though he would continue to serve on the Board of Directors until his death in 1942. Herbert J. Winn, after serving as president since 1913 and treasurer since 1907, retired in 1938, and L.B. Swift was elected president after him. Winn was elected Chairman of the Board, a new position created after a special meeting of the stockholders in December of 1928.

During World War II, in 1943, the company became the prime contractor for the manufacture or procurement of instruments for the gaseous diffusion process in the Oak Ridge Atomic Bomb Project at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The production of these instruments, along with the manufacture of the bomb sights used in A-26 Invader aircraft, were classified. Barometers and altimeters were also produced for use in aircraft, as well as millions of compasses for the Army and Army Corps of Engineers. Taylor also produced a glass boot which could modulate the pressure inside, ensuring more consistent body temperatures for soldiers. . Taylor received the Army-Navy "E"award for excellence in wartime production three times, with presentation of

a large flag to display their achievement on-site. The company was also the joint recipient of the Award for Chemical Engineering Achievement, presented by Chemical and Metallurgical Engineering Magazine for their work as prime contractor for process control instruments for the Oak Ridge facility.

Many Taylor employees were drafted for service during WWII, and the company took it upon itself to send boxes of support materials from home, including newsletters with company updates, to the employees in service. Substantial contributions to the Red Cross efforts were also made, with clubs made among the employees, like the Red Cross Sewing Circle, which was occassionally hosted at Taylor. Louise Pritzbure, who had been with the company since 1888 and worked in the Tube Store at the factory, organized the donation of clothes for war refugees. Many social clubs and functions started at the company during the war era continued after the end of the war. Production of the company's commercial line began again in November of 1945.

1951 saw the marking of 100 years for the Taylor Instrument Company, a centennial for which much celebration and publicity was planned. The company held a large open house for the public and families of employees, taking the occasion as an excellent opportunity for publicity and promotion.

The company continued to develop in the second half of the twentieth century, and merged with Combustion Engineering in 1983, becoming one of the largest process instrumentation companies in the United States. Combustion Engineering became part of the ABB Group in 1989, joining the largest electrical engineering company in the world.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Scope and Contents

The Taylor Instrument Company Papers are organized in three series:

Series I: General History, contains timelines, company histories, meeting notes, correspondence, and photographs relating to the history of the company, from its earliest stages in 1851 through its centennial celebrations in 1951.

Series II: War Efforts, contains records, correspondence, newsletters, a large number of photographs, publicity and media articles on the Taylor effort in World Wars I and II.

Series III: Business Papers, includes materials specific to Taylor's business, salesmen, scientific investigation, and instrument specification and design, containing correspondence, company publications, scientific reports and writeups, blueprints, advertising materials, and various kind of records of price and order.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Arrangement

Within each series, items have been arranged in folders by subjects, which underscore the company's development. Where possible, items have been kept in original order. Correspondence and other dated materials have been ordered chronologically within folders.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Administrative Information

Publication Statement

Rare Books, Special Collections, and Preservation

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Access

The Taylor Instrument Company Papers are open for research use. Researchers are advised to contact the Rare Books, Special Collections, & Preservation Department prior to visiting. Upon arrival, researchers will also be asked to fill out a registration form and provide photo identification.

Use

In consultation with a curator, reproductions may be made upon request. Permission to publish materials from the collection must be requested from a curator. Researchers are responsible for determining any copyright questions.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The Taylor Instrument Company Papers were made a gift of the company in 1972.

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Controlled Access Headings

- Measuring instruments industry
- Thermometers
- World War (1914-1918)
- World War (1939-1945)
- New York (State)--Rochester
- Taylor Instrument Companies
- Taylor, George, -1889

Collection Inventory

Series I: History

Subseries I: General history

Title/Description	Instances	
Timelines, 1851-1950	Box 1	Folder 1
Company history write ups	Box 1	Folder 2
Company history write ups - manuscript with pictures, 1926	Box 1	Folder 3
Company history write ups - the Tycos Factory in 1930; The Taylor Clipper, Vol.1, No.11	Box 1	Folder 4
History of the Taylor Company by J. Ely **Scope and Contents** Notes, write ups, copies of correspondence	Box 1	Folder 5
Company history by George H. Taylor	Box 1	Folder 6-8
Notes and correspondence on Taylor history manuscript, 1951	Box 1	Folder 9
History of the Taylor Instrument Company of Canada Ltd. write up, February 19, 1954	Box 1	Folder 10
Taylor Bros. mortgage record, 1915	Box 1	Folder 11
History of the Pacific branch	Box 1	Folder 12

History of Henry W. Maurer	Box 1	Folder 13
History of the Kendalls - inventory of David Kendall's stock, October 13, 1851	Box 1	Folder 14
History of the Kendalls - correspondence about Marker, family	Box 1	Folder 15
History of the Kendalls - letter to John Kendall, 1858	Box 1	Folder 16

Scope and Contents

with plant historian efforts, provenance, clarifications, original item transcription, etc.

History of the Kendalls - "The Kendall Thermometer Company, New York State Historical Association"	Box 1	Folder 17

Physical Description: Collection of pages bound in folder

The Taylor Bros. local/family history - photo of Frank Taylor	Box 1	Folder 18
Collection of old letterheads in binder, 1940	Box 1	Folder 19
Correspondence on employment	Box 1	Folder 20
List of personnel	Box 1	Folder 21
Assorted personnel materials	Box 1	Folder 22
For exactness in all things, Tycos yearbook , 1925-1926	Box 15	Folder 7-8
Tycos Employees' Quarter-Century Club	Box 1	Folder 23
Photographs of personnel, 1880-1919	Box 2	Folder 1-4
Oversize photographs of personnel	Box 15	Folder 4
Photograph of personnel with signatures	Box 15	Folder 9
Photograph of Hamlet Richardson, undated	Box 2	Folder 5
"Thirty three years service with the Taylor Brothers Company and Taylor Instrument Companies," by J.A. Sutherland, 1895-1926	Box 2	Folder 6
J. Merton Taylor, President	Box 2	Folder 7
John W. Taylor, Director	Box 2	Folder 8
Herbert J. Winn correspondence - 75th Anniversary of Taylor	Box 2	Folder 9
Articles announcing election of H.J. Winn, Chairman of the Board and L.B. Swift, President, November 1938	Box 2	Folder 10
Photographs of group of employees of Hohman and Maurer Mfg. Co.	Box 2	Folder 11
Photographs of company buildings	Box 2	Folder 12

Painted/retouched image of Tycos Building	Box 2	Folder 13
Information on factory buildings	Box 2	Folder 14

Scope and Contents

Includes brief notes, maps

Photograph of construction of Taylor Plant at Ames St., 1905	Box 3	Folder 1
Short and Mason Factory photograph album, P.R. Jameson, 1936	Box 3	Folder 2
Photographs	Box 3	Folder 3-7
Newspaper clippings, 1909-1915	Box 3	Folder 8
Articles about the Taylor Company in other publications	Box 3	Folder 9
Newspaper clippings on Taylor Company - business and people	Box 3	Folder 10
Social ephemera (Non-Taylor)	Box 3	Folder 11
Matted print of D.G. Fahrenheit's signature with documentation	Box 15	Folder 5
"H.&M. general letters", December 15, 1904- October 17, 1910	Volume 1	
"H.&M. general letters", October 24, 1910- March 30, 1912	Volume 2	
"General letters", May 29, 1911- January 13, 1913	Volume 3	
"Taylor Cambridge general letters" and "Taylor Cambridge publicity bulletins", January 1909-January 1919 and February 1914-January 1919	Volume 4	
"Publicity bulletins, T.I. Cos. and H.&M.", 1911-1914	Volume 5	
"General letters", November 17, 1904-May 6, 1908	Volume 6	
"General letters", January 10, 1906- September 14, 1908	Volume 8	
"George Taylor: early letter book", 1857-1858	Volume 11	
"H.&M. general letter book: Lewis B. Swift"	Volume 13	
"Taylor Brothers early cash & inventory records", 1844-1893	Volume 14	
"George Taylor journal & order book", 1853-1859	Volume 15	
"Original Short and Mason catalog", 1898	Volume 17	
Eastman program records	Box 16	

Physical Description: 78 RPM

Subseries II: Centennial, 1951

Scope and Contents

The contents all relate to the centennial celebration. Box 4, folders 2-7 were removed from a binder and include correspondence, centennial project planning, and announcements

Title/Description	Instances	
Planning	Box 4	Folder 1
Original order	Box 4	Folder 2-7
Materials for publicity - history and involvement in other industries	Box 4	Folder 8
Publications "Graduated by years from 0 to 100," no.1-4	Box 4	Folder 9
Publications - "Taylor technology"	Box 4	Folder 10
Banquet program	Box 4	Folder 11
Posters of employees with Taylor Company 40+ years	Box 4	Folder 12
Publicity, newspaper clippings, broadcast transcript	Box 4	Folder 13
Photographs	Box 4	Folder 14-15
Celebration photograph album	Box 5	Folder 1-6
Corning Glassworks, 1951	Box 5	Folder 7

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Series II: War effort

Title/Description	Instances	
History of the war effort	Box 6	Folder 1
Constructing a history of Monroe County's past	Box 6	Folder 2

Scope and Contents

Correspondence of requests for information, 1922 (Tycos Service List)

Workers during the war	Box 6	Folder 3
Armed Forces recruiting of employees	Box 6	Folder 4
Contribution to war efforts by departments	Box 6	Folder 5
Correspondence about war effort	Box 6	Folder 6
"Tycos effort during the Great World War, 1916-1918" book		

	Box 6	Folder 7
"The Tycos effort in the war" booklet, Instrument Assembly Division, P.R. Jameson, , June 1, 1921	Box 6	Folder 8
"Tycos war service" booklet	Box 6	Folder 9
Citations and awards - WWI, 1920	Box 6	Folder 10
Photographs of employees in the Armed Forces	Box 6	Folder 11
Nomination for Army - Navy "E" award/correspondence and office notes, December 1942-February 1945	Box 6	Folder 12
Nomination for Army - Navy "E" award charts, graphs, and presentation	Box 6	Folder 13-14
Army - Navy "E" award ceremony invitation and programs	Box 6	Folder 15
Army - Navy "E" award ceremony photographs	Box 6	Folder 16
Liberty Loan Bulletin newsletters, April 8, 15, and 22, 1918	Box 6	Folder 17
"Atomic bomb production posed toughest processing problems ever faced by industry," by Taylor engineers	Box 6	Folder 18
Taylor Px - Newsletters to deployed Taylor Employees, No. 17 June 1945; May 1945 supplement	Box 6	Folder 19
Taylor Meteor clippings: "Two secrets revealed at war's end," "Taylor sight in A-26 invader", August 1945	Box 6	Folder 20
Wartime newspapers - Democrat & Chronicle, July 28, 1943-July 31, 1943	Box 6	Folder 21
Effort in peacetime	Box 6	Folder 22
"Army-Navy 'E' award flag" Physical Description: 1 box(es) Physical Location: Oversized Box 1 Located on top of flat file cabinet in Alcove 6	Box 1 oversized	
Archival paperwork accompanying WWII photographs	Box 7	Folder 1
A-26 invader combat photographs	Box 7	Folder 2
Photographs of optical sight production	Box 7	Folder 3-6
Wartime instrument production	Box 7	Folder 7-10

ˆ Return to Table of Contents

Series III: Business papers

Subseries I: General papers

Title/Description	Instances

Office/organizational matters	Box 8	Folder 1
Financial planning, 1903, 1909, 1911-1912	Box 8	Folder 2
Factories and buildings - construction planning	Box 8	Folder 3
Executive meeting minutes, 1917, 1922	Box 8	Folder 4
Underwriting Committee meeting minutes, 1910's	Box 8	Folder 5
Meetings with Hohmann and Maurer Division	Box 8	Folder 6
Factory staff meetings, April 1912-August 1928	Box 8	Folder 7-8
Lists of business associates, 1853-1872	Box 8	Folder 9
"Foreign trip Herbert J. Winn - Stephen J. Zand, October 7-November 21, 1929"	Box 8	Folder 10

Scope and Contents

Notes and correspondence from business trips

"No commission to Short and Mason" correspondence	Box 8	Folder 11-16
Correspondence and orders	Box 8	Folder 17-19

Subseries II: Bureau of Aircraft Production

Title/Description	Instances	
J. Ely's "Bureau of Aircraft Production Instruments" aerial navigation series	Box 9	Folder 1-3
J. Ely's "Bureau of Aircraft Production Instruments" Instrument Department personnel	Box 9	Folder 4
J. Ely's "Bureau of Aircraft Production Instruments" correspondence	Box 9	Folder 5-7
J. Ely's "Bureau of Aircraft Production Instruments" NY District Aircraft Production office memos	Box 9	Folder 8
J. Ely's "Bureau of Aircraft Production Instruments" blueprint of structure/hierarchy in Science and Research Division	Box 9	Folder 9
J. Ely's "Bureau of Aircraft Production Instruments" airplane instruments altimeter (first edition)	Box 9	Folder 10
J. Ely's "Bureau of Aircraft Production Instruments" instruction manual: instruments technical notes	Box 9	Folder 11
J. Ely's "Bureau of Aircraft Production Instruments" aeroplane instruments manual	Box 9	Folder 12
J. Ely's "Bureau of Aircraft Production Instruments" miscellaneous	Box 9	Folder 13

Subseries III: Salesmen's conventions and publications

Title/Description	Instances	
Scrapbook of Mr. Chester A. Haak	Box 10	Folder 1
Salesmen's conference programs	Box 10	Folder 2
Report of salesman's convention booklet, July 20-25, 1914	Box 10	Folder 3
Salesmen's convention, 1915	Box 10	Folder 4
Reports and papers presented before the Tycos Sales Convention, January 1927 Physical Description: Booklet	Box 10	Folder 5
Convention proceedings, September 15, 1930	Box 10	Folder 6-8
Tycos sales wedge and correspondence	Box 10	Folder 9
Tycos - Rochester publication, 1926	Box 10	Folder 10
Salesman's affairs	Box 10	Folder 11
Informal papers from salesmen's conventions	Box 10	Folder 12
Hohmann and Maurer - Salesmen's convention, 1906-1908, 1910	Box 10	Folder 13
Sales news bulletin: No. 1-3, 22, 24-25, 34-40	Box 10	Folder 14-16
Photographs of salesmen's convention, 1905	Box 15	Folder 1
"S.&M. London salesmen's instruction letters", October 1903- August 1910	Volume 7	
"Office notices" and "Salesmen's meeting reports", 1905-1912 and 1906-1908, 1910	Volume 9	

Subseries IV: Scientific information

Title/Description	Instances	
Evolution of the thermometer and barometer, 1929	Box 11	Folder 1-2
"Temperature control in the distillation of hardwoods"	Box 11	Folder 3
The Dr. Rogers' "Tycos" sphygmomanometer story	Box 11	Folder 4
Scientific promotion efforts	Box 11	Folder 5
Temperature and thermometer	Box 11	Folder 6
Association of Scientific Apparatus Makers of the USA meeting program	Box 11	Folder 7
Production of penicillin, 1944	Box 11	Folder 8
The Cambridge Scientific Instrument Co. Ltd. "Stolzenberg file"	Box 11	Folder 9-14

Photograph recording barograph charts	Box 15	Folder 3
"Manometres, barometres et autres instruments a tubes metalliques de E. Bourdon"	Volume 12	
"Certificate records of standards and other thermometers, 1905 to 1908"	Volume 16	

Subseries V: Instrument designs and specifications

Title/Description	Instances	
Thermometer design and specifications	Box 12	Folder 1
History of sphygmomanometer	Box 12	Folder 2
The Hohmann and Maurer Mfg. Co. instrument specification	Box 12	Folder 3
Assorted blueprints	Box 12	Folder 4
Photographs of instruments	Box 12	Folder 5
Changes to instrument specification	Box 12	Folder 6
Pages from "Day book, Hohmann and Maurer Mfg. Co., Brooklyn, N.Y." scrapbook, 1886-1918 Physical Description: Includes pages 7-20, 29-48, 59-60, 71-89, 95-98, 155-158, 175-182, 195-196, 203-228, 237-246, 251-252, 337-338, 361	Box 12	Folder 7-11

Subseries VI: Leaflets, advertisements, and order materials

Title/Description	Instances	
Advertising campaigns - company materials	Box 13	Folder 1
Newspapers publicity	Box 13	Folder 2
Magazine advertisements	Box 13	Folder 3
Leaflets, posts, and displays	Box 13	Folder 4
H.J Winn's leaflet scrapbook	Box 13	Folder 5-8
Correspondence	Box 13	Folder 9
Copies of advertising materials	Box 13	Folder 10
Correspondence on orders	Box 13	Folder 11
Letters and records of order, 1852, 1857	Box 13	Folder 12
Letters of order, 1857, 1888	Box 13	Folder 13
Unfulfilled orders, 1913	Box 13	Folder 14
Import price book, 1906-1909	Box 13	Folder 15
Record/personal order books , 1856-1910	Box 14	

"Foreign order book", 1898	Volume 10	
Copies of advertising materials	Box 15	Folder 2
Advertising campaign introducing the new 1932 Tycos Recording Thermometer to the dairy industry	Box 15	Folder 6

ˆ Return to Table of Contents