

KING, LOUIS VESSOT, 1886-1956

Physicist Louis Vessot King was born in Toronto, and graduated B.A from McGill in 1905 at the age of nineteen. Encouraged by Ernest Rutherford to continue in his study of physics, King went to Cambridge where he received his B.A. in 1908. In 1915 he was awarded a D.Sc. from McGill. King's long teaching career at McGill began in 1910 with his appointment as sessional Lecturer in physics. He became Assistant Professor in 1913, Associate Professor in 1915, and was Macdonald Professor of Physics from 1920 until his retirement in 1938. King's major research and publishing interests lay in fog alarm research, applications of electromagnetism, heat convection, and radiation. He developed the gyromagnetic electron theory, invented the hot-wire anemometer and worked on methods of submarine detection during World War I.

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Originals, Printed Materials, Photographs, 1877, 1901-1952, 1.2 m (M.G. 3026)

The bulk of King's papers concern his research, but there is also some general correspondence, student materials, and personal papers.

Research materials comprise manuscripts and addresses, and research notes. The manuscripts and addresses (1901-1933) contain essays on fog-signals and the transmission of sound, radiation, the physics of viscous fluids, the hot-wire anemometer, astronomy, and theoretical problems. The research notes (1904-1935) comprise approximately 50 files. Eight of these concern fog-signal research (1915-1926) and include some correspondence. Other topics include radiation, physics of gases and liquids, acoustics, astronomy, electromagnetism and mathematical problems.

General correspondence covering the years 1908-1936 contains letters from his fellow physicists, including Rutherford, A.N. Shaw, E.S. Bieler and H.T. Barnes, on research and personal matters. There are also letters of introduction (1905), correspondence regarding his appointment at McGill, letters to the editor of Nature (1926), the National Research Council (1933-1934), and the Central Computing Bureau (1918), and concerning ice research (1920), tests at Prescott, including his diary of the expedition (1920), and the St. Lawrence waterway (1931-1932).

King's private papers comprise a diary for 1902, reading notes and reviews of Maria Chapdelaine (1919-1921), his pension papers, and an inventory of periodicals in his library. There are also two formal photographs and a number of snapshots of school groups, Cambridge scenes, and laboratory equipment.