Table of Contents

- Collection Summary
- Biographical Note
- Scope and Content Note
- Subject Headings
- Related Material
- Administrative Information
- Access and Use
- Encoding Information
- Series List
- Container List

Collection Summary

Repository: Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries

Creator: Furness, Caroline E. (Caroline Ellen), 1869-1936

Title: Caroline Furness Papers

Inclusive

1840-1938

Dates:

Bulk Dates: 1887-1928

Quantity:

4 cubic feet (5 boxes, 1 OV folder)

The Caroline Furness Papers consist of correspondence, personal and professional papers, writings, research, and photographs created and assembled by American astronomer and Vassar

faculty member Caroline E. Furness. Notable correspondents include Furness's father, Henry B.

Abstract: Furness; Vassar faculty member Mary W. Whitney; Kan'ichi Asakawa; Sakusaburo Uchigasaki;

Rose O'Neill; Vilhjalmur Stefansson; and other astronomers, including Jan van der Bilt, Phoebe

Waterman Haas, and Ruth E. Smith.

Language of Materials are in English, with some materials in Japanese. **Material:**

<u>Top</u>

Biographical Note

Caroline Eleanor Furness (1869-1936) was an American astronomer and professor at Vassar College. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, on June 24, 1869, to Henry B. Furness and Caroline Sarah Baker, she spent her adolescence in Cincinnati, where her father was a high-school science teacher. She came to Vassar in 1887 as part of the class of 1891, and would be associated with the college for most of her life. In 1894, she became Professor Mary W. Whitney's assistant in the Vassar College Observatory, and in 1900 received her Ph.D. from Columbia University. She became an associate professor at Vassar in 1911, director of the Observatory a few years later, and Alumnae Maria Mitchell Professor of Astronomy in 1916. Her best-known publication is *Introduction to* Variable Stars, published in 1915.

One of Furness's many interests outside her astronomical work was Japan, particularly the education of Japanese women and their opportunities for participation in civic and political life. In 1918, Furness travelled to Japan and met with numerous women educators and political figures, including Umeko Tsuda, one of the five girls sent to the United States in 1872 as part of the Iwakura Mission. Two of the other five girls were Vassar graduates Sutematsu (Yamakawa) Oyama (VC 1882) and Shigeko (Nagai) Uriu (VC Spec 1878-1881). During her visit, she collaborated with the Red Cross of Japan and the Unitarian Women of Japan.

Furness taught at Vassar until her death in 1936.

<u>Top</u>

Scope and Content Note

Correspondence makes up the largest portion of the Furness papers and includes 182 letters written by Caroline E. Furness to her friends and family, primarily during her years as a Vassar student, 1887-1891. Incoming correspondence consists of 2,199 letters received from family, friends, colleagues, and other professional acquaintances on various personal and professional topics, from family life and travel, to astronomical work and women's suffrage. Additional materials include travel diaries from trips to Europe and Japan with records of star sightings; astronomy and birdwatching notebooks; drafts of written works; records from the Vassar College Astronomy Department; photographs of Furness and her visits to Japan; and research on Matthew Vassar's family history.

<u>Top</u>

Access and Use

Access

This collection is open for research according to the <u>regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library</u> without any additional restrictions.

Restrictions on Use

Permission to quote (publish) from unpublished or previously published material must be obtained as described in the <u>regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library.</u>

<u>Top</u>

Related Material

Related Materials

- Kan'ichi Asakawa Papers (MS 40). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library
- Maria Mitchell Papers
- Sutematsu Yamakawa Oyama Papers
- Shigeko Nagai Uriu Papers
- <u>Vassar College Biographical Files</u>

<u>Top</u>

Subject Headings

Names:

Asakawa, Kan'ichi, 1873-1948

- Bilt, Jan van der, 1876-1962
- Furness family
- Furness, H. B.
- Haas, Phoebe Waterman
- O'Neill, Rose Cecil, 1874-1944
- Smith, Ruth E.
- Stefansson, Vilhjalmur, 1879-1962
- Uchigasaki, Sakusaburo
- Vassar, Matthew, 1792-1868
- Whitney, Mary Watson, 1847-1921

Organizations:

- American Unitarian Association
- Pan-Pacific Women's Conference (1927)
- Vassar College--Faculty
- Vassar College--Students

Subjects:

- Astronomers
- Astronomy--Research
- Astronomy--Study and teaching
- Women college teachers
- Women scientists
- Women--Diaries
- Women--Education--Japan
- Women--Japan--Social conditions

Places:

• Cincinnati (Ohio)--Politics and government

Document Types:

- Correspondence
- Cyanotypes (photographic prints)
- Diaries
- Essays
- Financial records
- Photographs
- Postcards
- Printed ephemera
- Reports

VCL Categories:

- East Asia, South Asia, and India
- Math, Science and Medicine
- Vassar College
- Women's History

<u>Top</u>

Encoding Information

Encoded by Elizabeth Clarke, February 2007. Updated by Emma Gronbeck, December 2023.

<u>Top</u>

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Caroline Furness Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Processing Information

Processed by Emma Gronbeck, December 2023.

Acquisition Information

Gift of Estate of Caroline Furness.

<u>Top</u>

Series List

Series I. Correspondence, 1840-1935 (Boxes 1-3)

Correspondence makes up the largest part of the Caroline E. Furness Papers and includes letters to and from Caroline E. Furness's family, friends, and professional contacts. Her outgoing correspondence consists primarily of letters written to her family during her years at Vassar. Incoming family correspondence consists of letters from Furness's father, H. B. Furness, about Cincinnati, Ohio politics, his reading, her work and career, family matters, and other intellectual pursuits (131 letters); her sister Mary (74 letters); and her cousins, Alexander and Philip Macomber, and their father James. Professional correspondence related to astronomy includes extensive correspondence with Furness's Vassar mentor, Mary Watson Whitney, about intellectual and professional issues, travel, affairs of friends, and other personal news (1,098 letters); as well as letters on both personal and professional topics from a variety of Dutch and American astronomers, including Jan van der Bilt, Benjamin Boss, Annie J. Cannon, Edwin B. Frost, Phoebe Waterman Haas (VC 1904), Alberta Hawes, John Hedrick, Harold Jacoby, Jacobus Kapteyn, Carl Otto Lampland, Harriet McWilliams Parsons, Ruth Emily Smith, Lillian M. Wickham, and Anne Sewell Young.

Additional correspondents include a number of Japanese educators and activists, particularly Yale professor Kan'ichi Asakawa, the first Japanese citizen to teach at an American university and one of the major figures involved in establishing the field of Asian Studies in the United States (85 letters); as well as professor and politician Sakusaburo Uchigasaki (13 letters); and Michi Kawai, a Japanese educator and Christian activist who helped found the Japanese YWCA (2 letters). Other notable correspondents include Rose O'Neill, inventor of the Kewpie Doll (6 letters); and Arctic explorer and ethnologist Vilhjalmur Stefansson (5 letters).

Correspondence is organized into 3 subseries: Outgoing Correspondence, Incoming Correspondence, and Correspondence Between Others. Each subseries is arranged alphabetically with unidentified correspondence filed at the end of the sequence.

Series II. Personal and Professional Papers, 1901-1938 (Box 3)

This series consists of assorted materials related to Caroline Furness's personal and professional matters. It includes personal and family memorabilia, such as passports and clippings; printed ephemera and notes from trips to Japan and the Netherlands; printed ephemera and notes related to professional organizations; and materials related to Furness's career as Professor of Astronomy at Vassar College. Vassar College materials include correspondence related to Furness's struggle to be promoted from associate professor of astronomy to head of the department after Mary Whitney's retirement in 1910; financial records of the department; annual reports and budgets; and student papers from 1925.

Arranged alphabetically by file title.

Series III. Writings, 1890-1928 (Box 3)

This series consists of Caroline Furness's writings and related correspondence, including notebooks on various topics from astronomy to birdwatching; travel journals from trips abroad; drafts of written works; and correspondence related to published books and articles.

Arranged alphabetically by file title.

Series IV. Photographs, circa 1870-1926, undated (Box 4)

This series consists of photographic prints and cyanotypes of Caroline Furness during various periods of her life. Also included are photographs of family, friends, places, and people met during Furness's visit to Japan in 1918-1919.

Arranged alphabetically by file title.

Series V. Vassar Family Research, 1926-1932 (Box 4)

This series consists of Caroline Furness's correspondence, notes, and copies of documents related to her research into Matthew Vassar and his family history. Furness commissioned B. H. Vores to research Matthew Vassar's family history in Norfolk, particularly whether concrete evidence could be found as to whether or not William Vassar of Shipdham was Matthew Vassar's grandfather, and the series includes their correspondence as well as Vores's final report on his findings. Also included is correspondence with other individuals regarding the Vassar family's genealogy, notably Vassar relative William A. F. Vassar.

Arranged alphabetically by file title.

Container List

Series I. Correspondence, 1886-1935

Outgoing (from Caroline E. Furness)

Folder 1.01	"Miss Borden", 1935 Oct 26 [1 letter]
Folder 1.02	Furness, Caroline Sarah (Baker), 1887-1888 [16 letters]
Folder 1.03	Furness, H. B., 1888-1892 [8 letters]

10/25/24, 3:38 PM	Guide to the Caroline Furness Papers, 1840-1938	
Folder 1.04	Furness, H. B. and Caroline Sarah (Baker), 1887-1891 [14 letters]	
Folder 1.05	Furness, Mary Baker, 1887-1888 [18 letters]	
Folder 1.06	Furness, Mary Baker, 1889 [37 letters]	
Folder 1.07	Furness, Mary Baker, 1890 [37 letters]	
Folder 1.08	Furness, Mary Baker, 1891 [20 letters]	
Folder 1.09	Furness, Mary Baker, 1892 [16 letters]	
Folder 1.10	Furness, Mary Baker, 1921, undated [4 letters]	
Folder 1.11	"Miss Hequeinberg", 1910 May 23 [1 letter]	
Folder 1.12	"Miss Kenyon", 1918 Nov 24 [1 letter]	
Folder 1.13	The New York Times, 1925 Feb 24 [1 letter]	
Folder 1.14	Swartz, Helen, 1909-1910 [3 letters]	
Folder 1.15	Unidentified, undated [5 letters]	
1 01de1 1.13	omachanica, analica [5 fetters]	
Incoming (to Caroline E. Furness)		
Folder 1.16	A General, 1906-1923 [22 letters]	
Folder 1.17	American Unitarian Association, 1912-1921 [8 letters]	
Folder 1.18	Asakawa, Kan'ichi, 1917-1918 [14 letters]	
Folder 1.19	Asakawa, Kan'ichi, 1919 [7 letters]	
Folder 1.20	Asakawa, Kan'ichi, 1920 [7 letters]	
Folder 1.21	Asakawa, Kan'ichi, 1921 [22 letters]	
Folder 1.22	Asakawa, Kan'ichi, 1922 [14 letters]	
Folder 1.23	Asakawa, Kan'ichi, 1923 [11 letters]	
Folder 1.24	Asakawa, Kan'ichi, 1924-1925, undated [10 letters]	
Folder 1.25	"Aunt Ellen", 1904 [1 letter]	
Folder 1.26	"Aunt Maria", 1898 [1 letter]	
Folder 1.27	Auesaki, N. [Anesaki, Masaharu?], 1918-1921 [5 letters]	
Folder 1.28	B General, 1898-1931 [36 letters]	
Folder 4.01	[Bemporad, A.?] (Reale Osservatario Astronomico di Napoli), 1916-1917 [2 letters]	
Folder 1.29	Bigelow, Harriet, 1916-1922 [4 letters]	
Folder 1.30	Bilt, Jan van der (Utrecht University Observatory), 1916-1922 [15 letters]	
Folder 1.31	Boss, Benjamin (Dudley Observatory, Albany, NY), 1911, 1917 [7 letters]	
Folder 1.32	Buyo, George, 1920-1922 [3 letters]	
Folder 1.33	C General, 1911-1930 [17 letters]	
Folder 1.34	Canby, Henry S., 1921-1922 [3 letters]	
Folder 1.35	Cannon, Annie J. (Harvard College Observatory), 1920-1931 [4 letters]	
Folder 1.36	Carnegie Institute of Washington, 1910-1913 [8 letters]	
Folder 1.37	Carroll, Ruth (Robinson) (VC 1922), 1922-1925, undated [15 letters]	
Folder 1.38	Chase, Frederica (Lick Observatory, University of California), 1906, undated [3 letters]	
Folder 1.39	Cobb, [Florence?] B., 1919-1922 [3 letters]	
Folder 1.40	D General, 1904-1934 [13 letters]	
Folder 1.41	Doolittle, Eric (University of Pennsylvania, Flower Observatory), 1896-1900 [6 letters]	
Folder 1.42	E General, 1914-1928 [3 letters]	
Folder 1.43	Edmonds, Harry (International House, NY), 1925-1929 [13 letters]	

10/25/24, 3:38 PM	Guide to the Caroline Furness Papers, 1840-1938	
Folder 2.44	Whitney, Mary Watson, 1912 May-Aug [63 letters]	
Folder 2.45	Whitney, Mary Watson, 1912 Sep-Dec [76 letters]	
Folder 2.46	Whitney, Mary Watson, 1913 Jan-Mar [57 letters]	
Folder 3.01	Whitney, Mary Watson, 1913 Apr-Jun [48 letters]	
Folder 3.02	Whitney, Mary Watson, 1913 Jul-Dec [69 letters]	
Folder 3.03	Whitney, Mary Watson, 1914-1915 [41 letters]	
Folder 3.04	Whitney, Mary Watson, undated [14 letters]	
Folder 3.05	Wickham, Lillian M. (Mount Wilson Solar Observatory; VC 1907), 1908-1909 [3 letters]	
Folder 3.06	Y General, 1915-1931 [13 letters]	
Folder 3.07	Yasui, Tetsu, 1920, 1923 [2 letters]	
Folder 3.08	Young, Anne Sewell (Mount Holyoke College Observatory), 1924, 1931 [2 letters]	
Folder 3.09	Unidentified, 1868-1907 [4 letters]	
Folder 3.10	Unidentified, 1908-1909 [7 letters]	
Folder 3.11	Unidentified, 1912-1933 [17 letters]	
Folder 3.12	Unidentified, circa 1919 [12 letters in Japanese]	
Folder 3.13	Unidentified, undated [6 letters]	
Correspondence Between Others		
Multiple Collection Box 1 (Oversize)	Baker, Louisa to Furness, Caroline Sarah (Baker), [1 letter]	
Folder 3.14	Whitney, Mary Watson to Furness, Mary Baker, 1891 Feb 22 [1 letter]	
Folder 3.15	Unidentified fragments, undated [2 fragments]	
	Series II. Personal and Professional Papers, 1901-1938	
Folder 3.16	American Association of Variable Star Observers, annual meeting pamphlet, 1921	
Folder 3.17	China Club of Seattle, resolutions, 1918 Jun 22	
Folder 3.18	Furness, Caroline - Passports, 1918, 1926	
Folder 3.19	Furness, Samuel - Obituary, 1914	
Folder 3.20	Japan: Business cards, circa 1919	
Folder 3.21	Japan: Ephemera and receipts, 1919-1925	
Folder 3.22	Japan: Invitations and ephemera, 1918-1923	
Folder 3.23	Japan: Notes, circa 1919	
Box 5 (Oversize)	Japan: Wooden box containing a cloth scroll with a message in Japanese from the Women's Patriotic Association of Japan to the AAVC, circa 1918 [27x7x7 cm]	
Folder 3.24	Netherlands: Ephemera, 1905, undated	
Folder 3.25	Printed ephemera, 1923-1929	
Folder 3.26	Third Pan-Pacific Science Congress, Japan, program and notebook, 1926	
	Vassar College Astronomy Department	
Folder 3.27	Furness promotion correspondence, 1911-1915	
Folder 3.28	Invoices and receipts, 1923-1927	
Folder 3.29	Observatory, bank books, 1901-1911, 1930	
Folder 3.30	Press releases, undated	
Folder 3.31	Reports and budgets, 1923-1938	

10/25/24, 3:38 PM	Guide to the Caroline Furness Papers, 1840-1938	
Folder 3.32	Student papers, A-E, 1925	
Folder 3.33	Student papers, F-M, 1925	
Folder 3.34	Student papers, R-S, 1925	
Folder 3.35	Student papers, T-Z and fragments, 1925	
Folder 3.36	Vassar College Fellowship Committee report, 1910	
Series III. Writings, 1890-1928		
Folder 3.37	Astronomical notebook, undated	
	Birdwatching journal, 1890-1895	
	Birdwatching journal, 1896-1897	
	An Introduction to the Study of Variable Stars, correspondence, 1915-1924	
	An Introduction to the Study of Variable Stars, reviews, 1915-1917	
	"Medical Opportunities for Women in Japan," correspondence, 1920	
	Notebook, undated	
	Notebook - "Holland", undated	
	Notebook - "The Heat of the Sun", 1895	
	Notes, undated	
	Notes - "England and London", undated	
	Notes - Furness family, undated	
	Notes - Personal, undated	
Folder 3.53	Poems and drawings, 1890, undated	
Folder 3.54	Perturbations, draft, undated [TS with MS formulae, 378 p.]	
Folder 3.55	Travel journal, 1901 Jun-Sep	
Folder 3.56	Travel journal, 1926 Jun-Oct	
Folder 3.57	Travel journal, 1926, 1928	
Folder 3.58	Untitled work about Louisa May Alcott, draft, undated [MS, 18 p.]	
	Series IV. Photographs, circa 1870-1926, undated	
Folder 4.03	Balangas, Philippines, circa 1910s [3 photographs]	
Folder 4.04	Furness, Caroline - Baby photographs, circa 1870 [26 photographs]	
Folder 4.05	Furness, Caroline - Childhood and family, circa 1872-1886 [17 photographs]	
Folder 4.06	Furness, Caroline - Portrait, circa 1896 [5 photographs]	
Folder 4.07	Furness, Caroline - Teaching years, circa 1908-1930 [7 photographs]	
Folder 4.08	Furness, Caroline - Vassar years, circa 1887-1891 [6 photographs]	
Folder 4.09	Furness, Caroline in Japan, circa 1919 [2 photographs]	
FOIGER 4 TO	Furness, Caroline in Japan, group photograph (including S. Uchigasaki), 1919 [1 photograph]	
	Furness, Caroline in Japan, group photograph with Japanese women in Mito, Japan, 1919 Jun 21 [1 photograph]	
Folder 4.12	Furness, Caroline in Japan with Japanese military officials, circa 1919 [1 photograph]	
Folder 4.13	Furness, Caroline in Japan with Japanese Unitarians, 1919 [1 photograph]	
FOIGER 4-14	Furness, Caroline in Japan with the Society for the Study of Women's Problems, 1919 [1 photograph]	

	Correspondence
Folder 4.29	Ambler, Alice to and from Furness, Caroline, 1928 [12 letters]
Folder 4.30	Barnaby, E. L. to Furness, Caroline, 1928-1929 [4 letters]
Folder 4.31	Bernau, R. and Charles to and from Furness, Caroline, 1928-1931 [10 letters]
Folder 4.32	Galloway, L.M. to Furness, Caroline, 1927-1928 [3 letters]
Folder 4.33	Hallinan, Hazel to and from Furness, Caroline, 1928 [3 letters]
Folder 4.34	Harwood, Margaret to Furness, Caroline (including 3 transcribed letters from Matthew Vassar to Maria Mitchell and 1 transcribed lecture by Maria Mitchell), 1929 [2 letters, 3 transcribed letters, 1 transcribed lecture]
Folder 4.35	Malerby, [Mrs.] to and from Furness, Caroline, 1928 May-Aug [2 letters]
Folder 4.36	Miscellaneous to Furness, Caroline, 1926-1932 [21 letters]
Folder 4.37	Mottram, R. H. from Furness, Caroline, 1928 Mar-May [2 letters]
Folder 4.38	Schwab, Mildred to and from Furness, Caroline, 1928 Oct-Nov [2 letters]
Folder 4.39	Various to Furness, Caroline concerning Matthew Vassar portraits, 1927-1928 [6 letters]
Folder 4.40	Vassar, William A. F. (and Fred Johnson) to and from Furness, Caroline, 1928-1931 [10 letters]
Folder 4.41	Vores, B. H. to and from Furness, Caroline, 1928 [4 letters, 1 report]
	Notes
Folders 4.42-4.43	Matthew Vassar family, circa 1928
Folder 4.44	Vassar family and property, circa 1928
	Research
Folder 4.45	Transcribed documents, circa 1928
Folder 4.46	Vassar, Matthew, Jr Diary (1890-1931), circa 1928 [transcript]
	Writings
Folder 4.47	Ambler, Alice, "Matthew Vassar's French Huguenot Ancestry," Vassar Quarterly, 1928 Nov

Folder 4.48

Furness, Caroline, "Matthew Vassar's Family," Vassar Quarterly, 1928 Nov

Return to the Table of Contents