

Newly cataloged collection of science materials now open for research

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A collection of science materials from the family of Sir John F. W. Herschel (1792–1871) is now open for research after a \$10,000 grant enabled staffers to rehouse the collection and to create an [online inventory](#).

The Herschel [family](#) papers, acquired in 1960 with subsequent smaller accessions of additional materials, largely represent the life and work of Herschel, the English mathematician, astronomer, chemist and experimental photographer/inventor. John Herschel has been called Britain's first modern physical scientist, and his correspondence has been noted as one of the most valuable archives for 19th-century science.

"The Herschel family archive is the most important history of science [collection](#) at the Ransom Center," said Richard Oram, associate director and Hobby Foundation Librarian at the Ransom Center. "The Herschels dominated the natural sciences in England for more than 100 years. While we have significant material relating to William Herschel, the discover of the planet Uranus, and his sister Caroline, who is now regarded as a pioneering female scientist, the most important holding is the correspondence of John Herschel, who, together with Darwin, towers over the Victorian scientific world."

The Herschel family papers at the Ransom Center form a significant resource for the study of the history of science in general and also for studies in astronomy, chemistry, physics and mathematics. The lives of the Herschels, their ground-breaking achievements, their interactions

with other leading scientists of their time and their influence on their colleagues' work are topics scholars may pursue in the papers. The Ransom Center's [Herschel](#) collection is exceeded in size only by the collection at the Royal Society in London.

The cataloging project was funded by a \$10,000 grant from the Friends of the Center for History of Physics at the American Institute of Physics.

Provided by University of Texas at Austin

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