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## Guide to the Douglas C. Strain Papers, 1914-2007

### Title

Douglas C. Strain Papers (MSS Strain)

### Dates

1914-2007 (inclusive)  
1970-2000 (bulk)

### Creator

Strain, Douglas C.

### Summary

The Douglas C. Strain Papers consist of materials generated and assembled by Strain and document his establishment of Electro Scientific Industries (ESI) and professional and philanthropic activities as well as his family. Strain founded Electro Scientific Industries, a manufacturer of precision instrumentation and laser fabrication systems, in Portland, Oregon, in 1953. He was actively involved in a civic organizations and boards and supported a number of projects at Oregon higher education institutions, including Oregon State University.

### Quantity

16 cubic feet, including 850 photographs, 3 videotapes, and 1 DVD (16 boxes)

### Restrictions on Access

Collection is open for research.

Oregon State University Libraries, University Archives  
121 The Valley Library  
Oregon State University  
Corvallis, OR 97331-4501  
Phone: 541-737-2165  
Email: [archives@oregonstate.edu](mailto:archives@oregonstate.edu)  
Web: <http://osulibrary.oregonstate.edu/archives>

Finding aid prepared by Elizabeth Nielsen, 2010.

## Biographical Note

Douglas C. Strain was the founder, chairman, and CEO of Electro Scientific Industries (ESI) and was instrumental in the establishment of the high-technology and electronics industry in Oregon. After working as a design engineer for several southern California electronic and instrument companies, he founded Electro Measurements with his father, Clayton Strain, and several Cal Tech classmates in 1953. Strain retired as CEO in 1980, but continued as chairman, and later vice chairman, of the board until his full retirement in 1999.

Strain was active in a variety of professional, civic, and philanthropic organizations and received numerous honors and awards. He actively supported numerous higher education projects in Oregon, including building campaigns at Oregon State University and Portland State University, and was a member of the Pacific University Board of Trustees.

Douglas Campbell Strain was born in Spokane, Washington, in 1919 and lived in Idaho and California as a child. He graduated from Pasadena Junior College in 1941 and from California Institute of Technology in 1948. He died in Portland, Oregon, in 2008.

Douglas' parents, Clayton Preston Strain and Edith Crockatt Strain, both attended Agricultural College and earned BS degrees in 1915. His father, Clayton Strain, also earned an MS in Dairy Manufacturing in 1917. Clayton Strain and Edith Crockatt were married in 1918.

## Content Description

The Douglas C. Strain Papers consist of materials generated and assembled by Strain and document his establishment of Electro Scientific Industries (ESI); his participation in professional, civic, and philanthropic activities; awards and honors he received; and his family. The papers include correspondence, newspaper clippings, notebooks, photographs, publications, reference materials, sound recordings, speeches, videotapes, and a DVD.

The collection includes annual reports, newsletters, board meeting minutes, and financial information for Electro Scientific Industries (ESI). Extensive materials pertaining to Strain's membership on various boards, including the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry, Oregon Health Sciences University, Pacific University Board of Directors, American Committee for the College of the Cayman Islands, OSU Advisory Council for the Center for Advance Materials Research, City Club of Portland, and Oregon Innovation Network, are included. The reference materials address a variety of topics such as adoption of the metric system in the United States, nuclear power, business management, energy consumption, and health.

The photographs include about 700 color slides and 150 prints; these include self-portraits of Strain; images of family vacations, ESI employees, Douglas Strain as a child, and Clayton Strain's student years at Oregon Agricultural College; graphics prepared for metric education; and slide presentations by Strain. The sound recordings consist of 8 audiocassettes and one open reel audiotape pertaining to the history of Strain's family, the Harris Trust, and the 1969 Instrument Society of America conference. The videotapes include footage of a 1991 trip to Hawaii and the retirement of ESI employee Jack Burraston. A DVD documenting Strain's life and involvement in community organizations and philanthropy, *The Everyday Philanthropist*, includes interviews with Strain and his daughter.

Materials documenting Clayton Strain's student years at Oregon Agricultural College in the 1910s and his association with the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity and the Umatilla Club are also part of the collection. The papers also include Oregon State commencement programs and lists of alumni for class reunions.

A history of Electro Scientific Industries written by Marshall M. Lee in 1999 is part of the collection.

## Preferred Citation

Douglas C. Strain Papers, Oregon State University Archives, Corvallis, Oregon.

## Acquisition Information

The papers were donated to the Archives by a representative of Strain's family in 2009.

## Processing Note

This collection is not fully processed; this guide is preliminary.

## Additional Reference Guides

[Preliminary container list](#) available online.

## Related Material

A 1974 publication by Clayton Strain about the Umatilla Club and Lambda Chi Alpha is part of the [Memorabilia Collection](#) (MC-Lambda Chi Alpha).

## Subjects

This collection is indexed under the following headings in the OSU Libraries Catalog. Researchers desiring materials about related topics, persons, or places should search the catalog (<http://oasis.oregonstate.edu>) using these headings.

## Organizations

Lambda Chi Alpha.  
Oregon Agricultural College--Students.  
Oregon State University--Alumni and alumnae.

## Topics

Electronic industries--Oregon--Portland.  
Fund raising--Oregon.  
Student activities--Oregon--Corvallis.  
Universities and colleges--Oregon.

## Forms of Materials in the Collection

Audiocassettes.  
Audiotapes.  
DVDs.  
Photographic prints.  
Slides.  
Videotapes.

## Other Creators

Electro Scientific Industries, Inc.  
Lee, Marshall M.  
Strain, Clayton Preston.