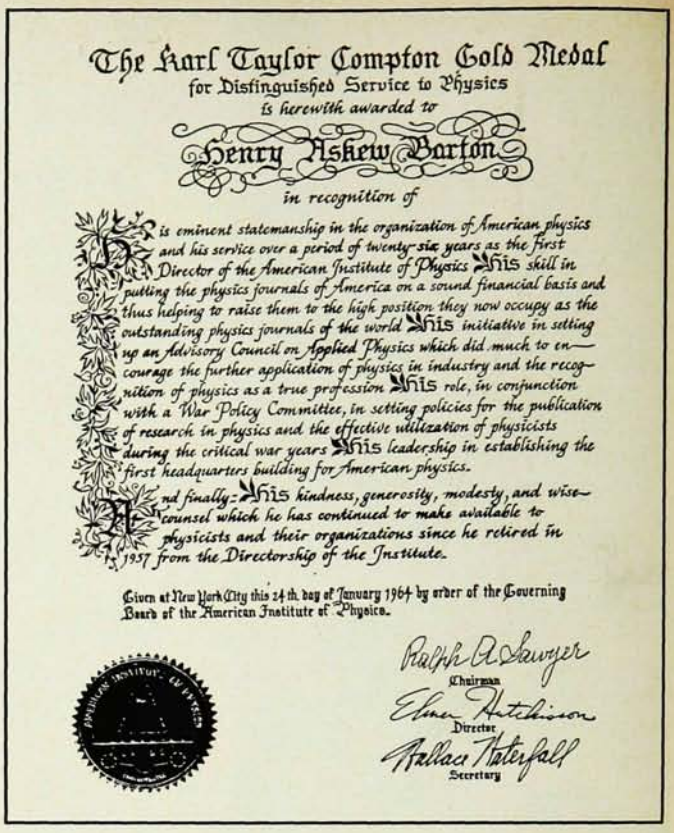
AIP AND SOCIETY ACTIVITIES



The Karl Taylor Compton Gold Medal
for Distinguished Service to Physics
is herewith awarded to
Henry Askew Barton
in recognition of

His eminent statemanship in the organization of American physics and his service over a period of twenty-six years as the first Director of the American Institute of Physics. His skill in putting the physics journals of America on a sound financial basis and thus helping to raise them to the high position they now occupy as the outstanding physics journals of the world. His initiative in setting up an Advisory Council on Applied Physics which did much to encourage the further application of physics in industry and the recognition of physics as a true profession. His role, in conjunction with a War Policy Committee, in setting policies for the publication of research in physics and the effective utilization of physicists during the critical war years. His leadership in establishing the first headquarters building for American physics.

And finally: His kindness, generosity, modesty, and wise counsel which he has continued to make available to physicists and their organizations since he retired in 1957 from the Directorship of the Institute.

Given at New York City this 24th day of January 1964 by order of the Governing Board of the American Institute of Physics.

Ralph A. Sawyer
Chairman
Elmer Hutchisson
Director
Wallace Waterfall
Secretary

The Compton Medal

The highest award of the American Institute of Physics, the Karl Taylor Compton Gold Medal for Distinguished Service in the Advancement of Physics, was presented in January to Henry A. Barton, director emeritus of the Institute. Dr. Barton, one of the founders of the AIP and its first director, served as the organization's administrative head from the time of its establishment in 1931 until 1957, when he retired. As director emeritus, he continues to serve the Institute as a consultant.

The award was established by the Institute in 1957 in memory of K. T. Compton, the first chairman of the AIP Governing Board. Dr. Compton, who was chairman of the Corporation of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology at the time of his death in 1954, played a leading role in the founding of the American Institute of Physics. The Compton Medal has been awarded on only two other occasions. The first presentation was made in 1957 to the late George B. Pegram, who had served continuously for a quarter of a century as an officer of the AIP. The second recipient of the award was Karl K. Darrow, secretary since 1941 of the American Physical Society and a former board member of the Institute.

The medal was presented to Dr. Barton by Ralph A. Sawyer, the present chairman of the AIP Governing Board. The ceremony took place on January 24, following the banquet of the American Physical Society and the American Association of Physics Teachers, held at the Statler-Hilton Hotel in New York City during the annual joint meeting of the two organizations.

Dr. Barton was introduced by Dr. Darrow, and the comments of both on that occasion are reproduced below.

K. K. Darrow's Introduction of Compton Medallist H. A. Barton

"Messrs. Presidents, Mr. Sawyer, Mr. Barton, distinguished guests: To me has been allotted the privilege of introducing someone who needs no introduction, and justifying a prizegiving that needs no justification. This I have accepted because it is such a pleasure to speak of Harry Barton and his distinguished career. About two thousand years ago one Quintus Horatius Flaccus, otherwise known as Horace, said 'exegi monumentum aere perennius'—I have made a monument more enduring than bronze. He was speaking of his poetry, and he was right; but most poets could not say this truly of their poems. There must have been millions of poets whose poems did not outlast themselves, let alone bronze. If you want to make something more enduring than bronze, it is a much better bet to found an institution. That is what Harry Barton was doing, nearly a third of a century ago. If you will go to Twenty-third Street and Fifth Avenue you will see a remarkable building which for many years was as much the emblem of New York as the Empire State Building is today. It is the Flatiron Building. Go to the north of it and look back at its north apex, and let your eyes travel up to the fifteenth floor. You will then be gazing at the windows behind which Harry Barton organized the Institute." [*Aside to H. A. B.:*] "Yes, Harry, I know that you have told me that your very first office was elsewhere, but forget it and never speak of it again; the story is much nicer if it starts in the Flatiron." "In his office he sat, at first alone, then with one secretary, then with more secretaries, then with Madeline Mitchell: and Harry will not begrudge it if I take twenty seconds of his time to say that those of us who remember Madeline Mitchell will always hold her in loving and grateful memory. With Madeline Mitchell and John Tate, Harry started the publication by the Institute of the great journals of American physics; and he was doing other things as well. For instance, he was interpreting physics to the press. Also and for years, he was doing something which now seems supererogatory: he was promoting applied physics, that is to say, he was persuading industry to employ physicists. When I

think of that I imagine children on a beach. They are working like beavers, carrying water in buckets from the ocean up to a pool in the rocks that they want to fill: and suddenly the tide roars in, and fills every pool in sight a hundred times over, and the children have to scamper for their lives. The only thing wrong with this analogy is that the Institute did not scamper for its life. The Institute mounted upon the crest of the tide, for this was the tide that in the words of Shakespeare leads on to fortune. It would be idle to pretend that the Institute would now be what it is, but for that tide in the affairs of men which started to rise about 1940 and has not even yet begun to ebb. On the other hand we must never forget that the Institute, with Harry Barton as its captain, stimulated the tide. There was a feed-back, with the tide lifting the Institute and the Institute amplifying the tide. This suggests that we should liken Harry to the moon, but this is too delicate a simile to manipulate tactfully in so short a time. We might just call him, in the language of the Rubaiyat, 'the moon of our delight'; and let it go at that. Now I should like just to enumerate the things that the Institute is doing now: but if I were to do that I should take all of my time, and all the time of Ralph Sawyer, and all the time of Harry Barton, and all the time of Robert Oppenheimer, and still I should not finish. The Institute is interested in the past, for it is promoting a project for the history of American physics. The Institute is interested in the present, for look at us here. Here we sit peacefully in the eye of a hurricane, and the hurricane is the 1964 Annual Meeting of these two Societies, and the hurricane is completely under control because the Institute is controlling it, otherwise there would be chaos. And the Institute is interested in the future, in ways so numerous that as I just said I cannot even enumerate them without stealing the whole of the evening. Let us anyhow look at its budget. In one week the Institute spends as much toward the advancement of physics as Harry Barton spent in his first fifteen months. Let us compare the verbiage it now prints with the verbiage it printed in 1932—oh no no, let's not, this is a happy occasion, let us keep it so. Anyway my watch tells me that it is now time to go back to the first of October, 1931. That was the date when the Institute was founded, and the first of October is a crucial date in my life also, for on that date many years earlier I entered the University of Chicago. Some years later I mounted on a platform together with my classmates, and a dean spoke to us in the Latin language, and then he presented us in Latin to the President of the University, who was also a Harry: Harry Pratt Judson. Harry Pratt Judson spoke to me in Latin, and then he handed me a diploma (but not a check). I thought it was wonderful, and I still think that Latin is the very noblest language in which to perform a ceremony. And accordingly therefore, I now repay to Harry Barton my debt to Harry Pratt Judson. Surge, Henrice, et veni mecum ad Ralph Sawyer: Ralph Sawyer: ad te adduco Henricum Barton, conditorem Instituti Physicae Americani, ut a manibus tuis, coram uxore et filiabus et magna multitudine amicorum suorum praemium Comptonianum benemeritum accipiat, quia ille per nos omnes et per omnes generationes futuras in saecula saeculorum, Institutum aere perennius aedificavit."

photo by Heka

Karl K. Darrow (at left) orates on the subject of Henry A. Barton (far right). Amused listeners are retiring presidents John H. Williams of the American Physical Society and Vincent E. Parker of the American Association of Physics Teachers.

Heka

Mrs. H. A. Barton looks on as husband receives the Compton Medal from Ralph A. Sawyer, chairman of the Governing Board of the American Institute of Physics.

Dr. Barton's Response

"Mr. President, Dr. Sawyer, Dr. Darrow, Members and Guests: Until this evening it has been manifestly correct to believe implicitly every word uttered by Dr. Darrow. Now it is clear