

WIDE COMPONENTS IN DOUBLE AND MULTIPLE STARS

*Proceedings of the 97th Colloquium of the
International Astronomical Union
held in Brussels, Belgium, 8–13 June, 1987*

Edited by J. DOMMANGET, E. L. VAN DESSEL, and Z. KOPAL

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J. DOMMANGET

Department of Astrometry, Royal Observatory of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium

E. L. VAN DESSEL

Department of Astrophysics, Royal Observatory of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium

and

Z. KOPAL

Department of Astronomy, University of Manchester, England

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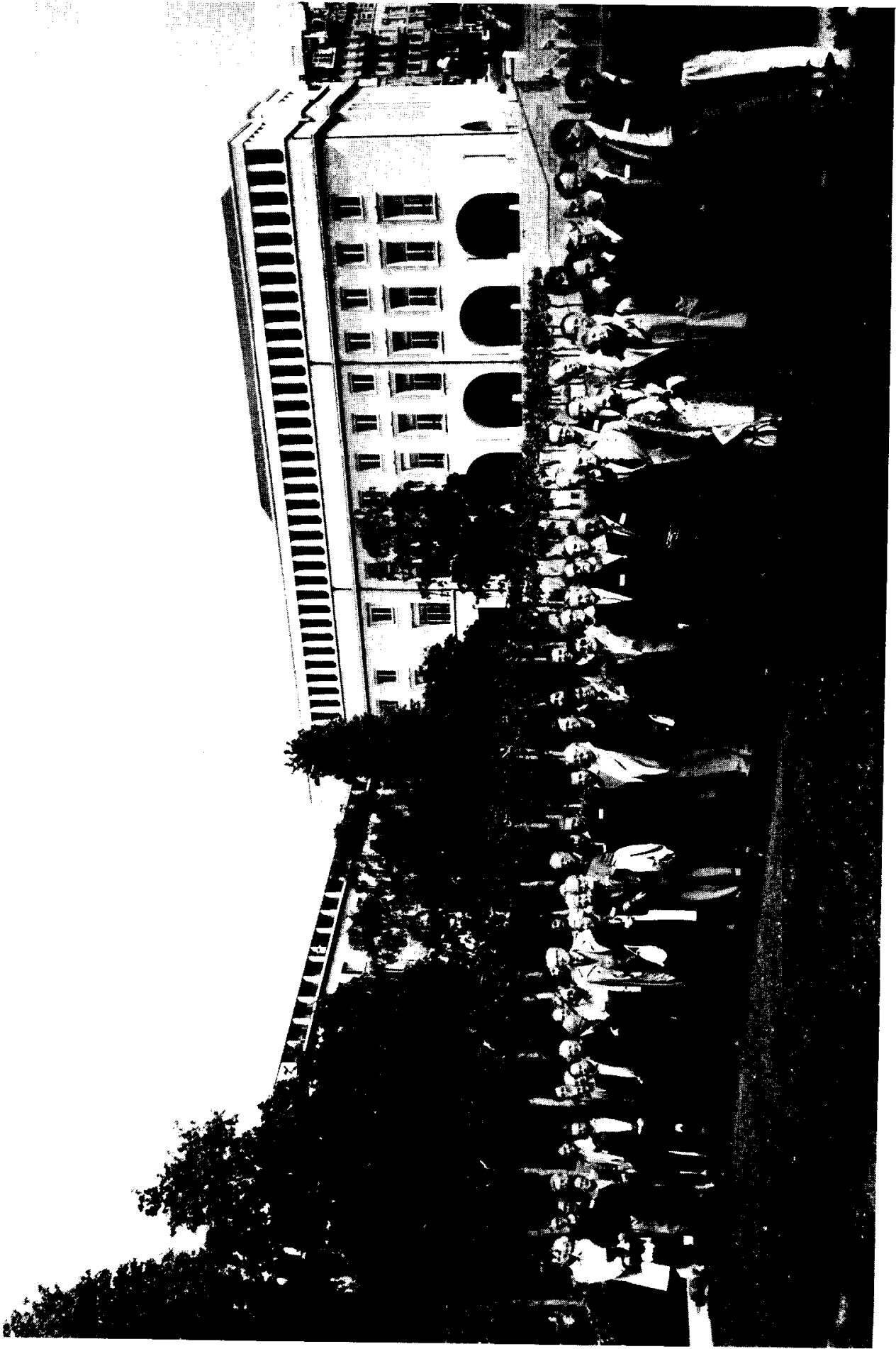
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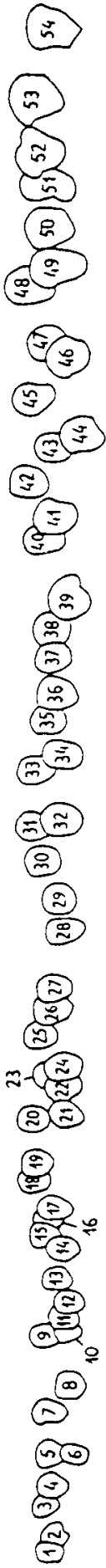
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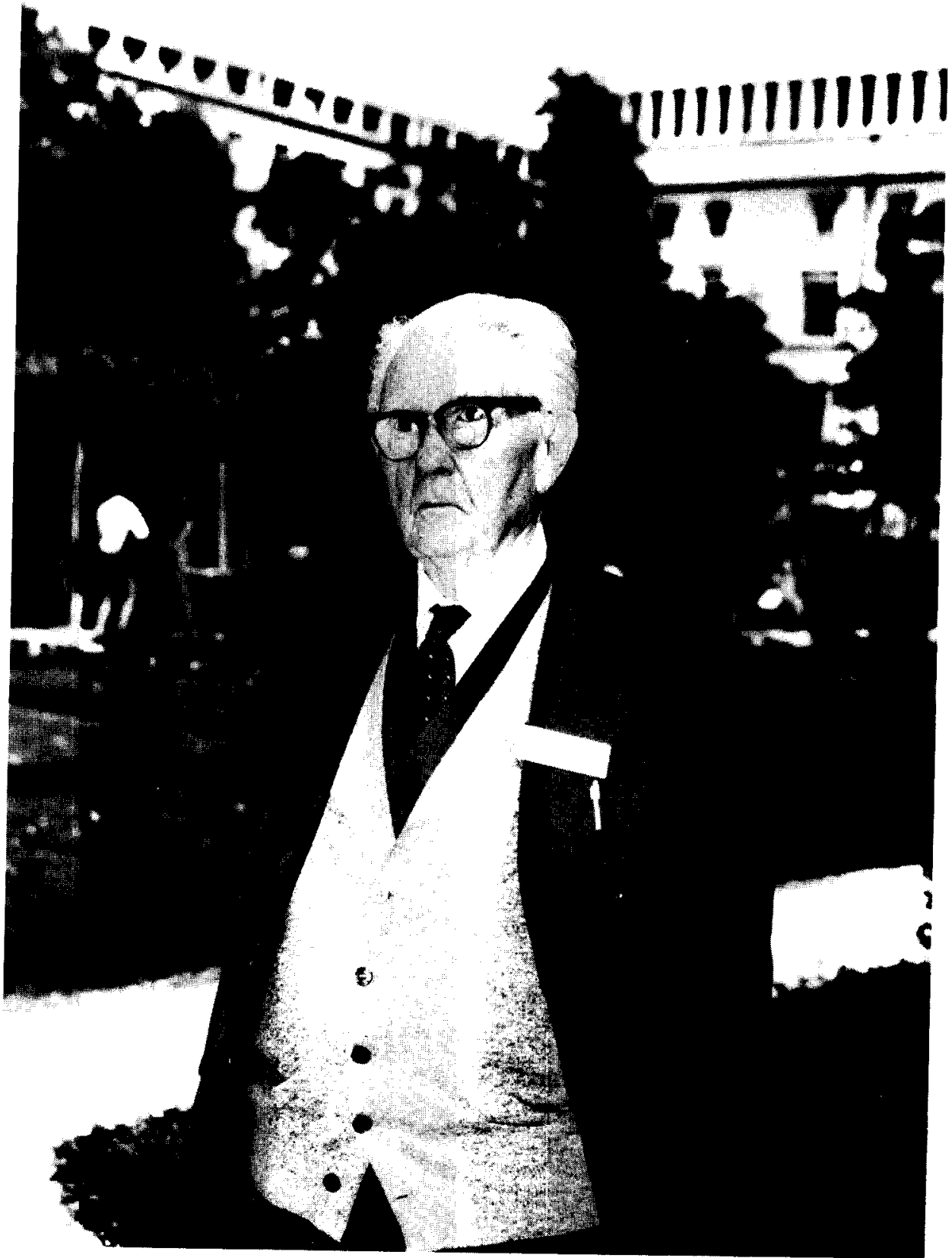
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(In the background: the equestrian statue of King Albert I)



W. J. LUYTEN

The colloquium was dedicated to W. J. Luyten.

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and

Z. KOPAL

Department of Astronomy, University of Manchester, England

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OPENING SESSION

Word of welcome by the Chairman of the Scientific Organizing Committee, Dr. J. Dommange

First of all I have the great pleasure to convey to all of you all wishes for a successful meeting from the General Secretary of the IAU, J. P. Swings and from the Assistant General Secretary, D. McNally.

I have also to fulfill a particularly agreeable duty in informing you that the Scientific Organizing Committee at its meeting of yesterday, has unanimously decided to dedicate the present colloquium to our always active colleague here present:

W. J. LUYTEN

who devoted so much of his scientific activity and researches to wide systems. Professor Luyten is so well known that I cannot recall here all what he did not only for double star astronomy, but also more generally for proper motion surveys and white dwarf discoveries.

May I thus immediately ask you, Professor Luyten, to accept this expression of our gratitude.

W. J. Luyten expresses his thanks as it follows:

Je suis profondément touché de l'honneur que vous me faites spécialement parce que pour moi découvrir des naines blanches et des étoiles doubles à mouvement propre commun était une occupation extrêmement agréable, et je vous remercie du fond de mon coeur.

Ik ben diep ontroerd door de eer die gij mij bewezen hebt speciaal juist omdat het ontdekken van witte dwergen en wijde dubbelsterren een van de aangenaamste werkzaamheden is die ik ooit gehad heb en ik zeg U daarom dank uit de grond van mijn hart.

I am profoundly touched by the honor you have conferred upon me especially because the discovery of white dwarfs and wide doubles has always been one of my most pleasant research work, and I therefore want to thank you from all my heart.

WELCOME ADDRESS

P. Melchior

Director of the Royal Observatory of Belgium

It is a privilege for me to address this Colloquium and a great satisfaction to express our gratitude to the Ministers of Education of Belgium, to our National Fund for Scientific Research and, the Unisys Company for the appreciable support given for the practical organization of this Symposium.

We interpret this support as a recognition that, despite the well known difficulties of our epoch, pure scientific research is appreciated by our national authorities.

I then wish to thank this audience of foreign astronomers coming from 17 different countries for their participation, which will let us benefit, during the next five days, from the invaluable contribution of their high level of scientific competence and professional experience in the study of binary stars.

I would like to say that we are proud indeed that, for the second time, the International Astronomical Union has chosen Brussels to have a Symposium organized on binary stars.

The first one was in 1966 with the title 'On the Evolution of Double Stars'. To-day the subject is on 'Wide Components in Double and Multiple Stars'.

In the introduction of the 1966 Symposium, my predecessor the late Professor Velghe reminded in some detail the historical place taken by binary stars studies in the programmes of activity of the Royal Observatory of Belgium.

This started almost exactly one hundred years ago with the measurements by Niesten and Stuyvaert. Most famous have then been the contributions of Van Biesbroeck in the beginning of this century and, since 1935, those of Arend, whom we were especially happy to meet here.

I consider the organization here of a second Colloquium on the same topic as a testimony of the good health of scientific activity in our Royal Observatory. These researches of binary stars have not simply been maintained just like a long tradition by Jean Dommange, the head of Department of Astrometry and Celestial Mechanics, but which is the most essential, has been efficiently developed in new directions and improved in quality.

Your presence here, dear colleagues, is a priceless encouragement for the Royal Observatory to persevere and to maintain this activity which we all know is of considerable meaning for fundamental astronomy, celestial mechanics, stellar evolution and cosmology.

As it is essentially at the initiative of J. Dommange that the objectives and the Programme of the present Colloquium have been defined, I will let him now introduce your sessions in his capacity of Chairman of the Scientific Organizing Committee.

But before doing that I wish to express also our thanks to his colleagues of the Local Organizing Committee for their efficient work of preparation.

The Colloquium is yours. I have no doubt that it will be very fruitful.

