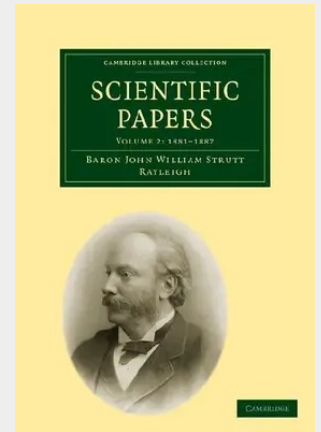


Scientific Papers

As Cavendish Professor of Experimental Physics at Cambridge University, Lord Rayleigh focussed his considerable energies on the study of electricity – building on the work of his illustrious predecessor, James Clerk Maxwell. This second volume of his papers, covering 1881–7, includes a series of four major contributions from 1881 and 1883 concerning the absolute determination of the ohm. Related reports include the measurement of current, and the electrical properties of various materials. A note from 1884 pessimistically predicts an absolute practical limit of less than 50 miles for a working telephone cable. In 1884, Rayleigh stepped down from his post as Cavendish Professor but continued his research work from his private laboratory. He proposed the existence of surface waves in a paper of 1885. These 'Rayleigh waves' roll along the surface of the earth and are responsible for producing most of the shaking experienced in an earthquake.

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