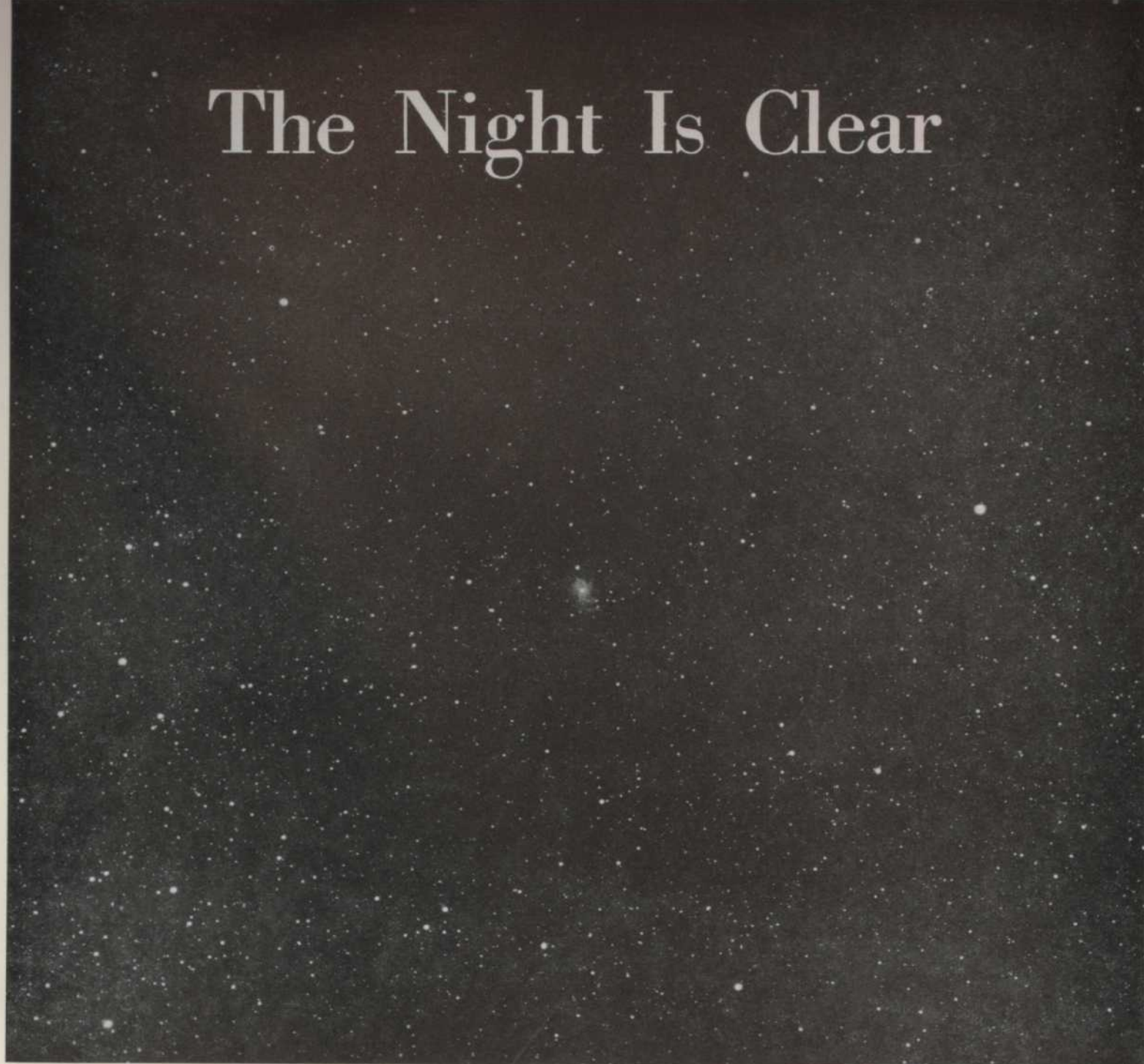


The Night Is Clear



A spiral nebula, an entire distant galaxy, whirls among the innumerable planets and stars inhabiting the sky. There are several million galaxies.

MANY EVENINGS you'll find Balfour Whitney alone, perched high above Woodrow Wilson Center in the University's Observatory. However, far from being the campus' loneliest man, he experiences a thrill which relatively few men know: he visually visits with the stars and planets.

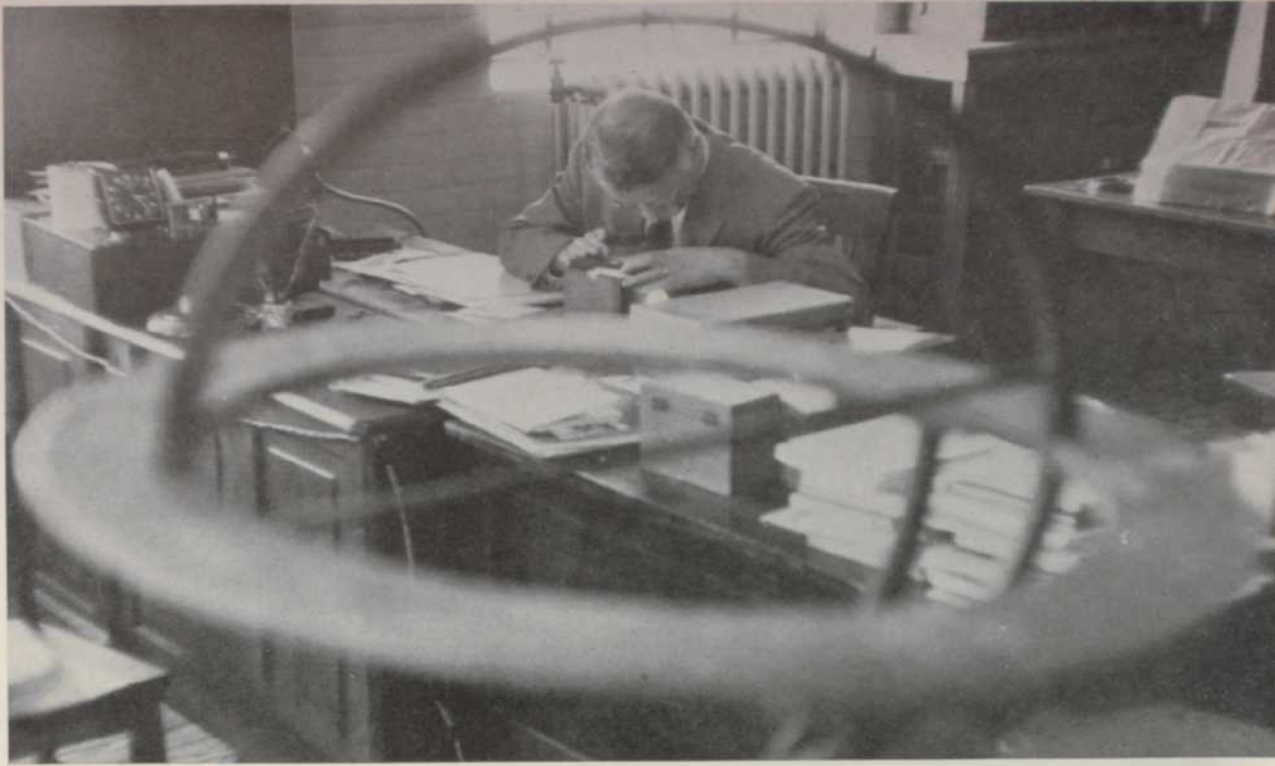
Whitney, mathematics and astronomy teacher, puts it this way: "When the night is clear, I work. Of course, I cannot work all night and then teach classes all day. I

learned that long ago."

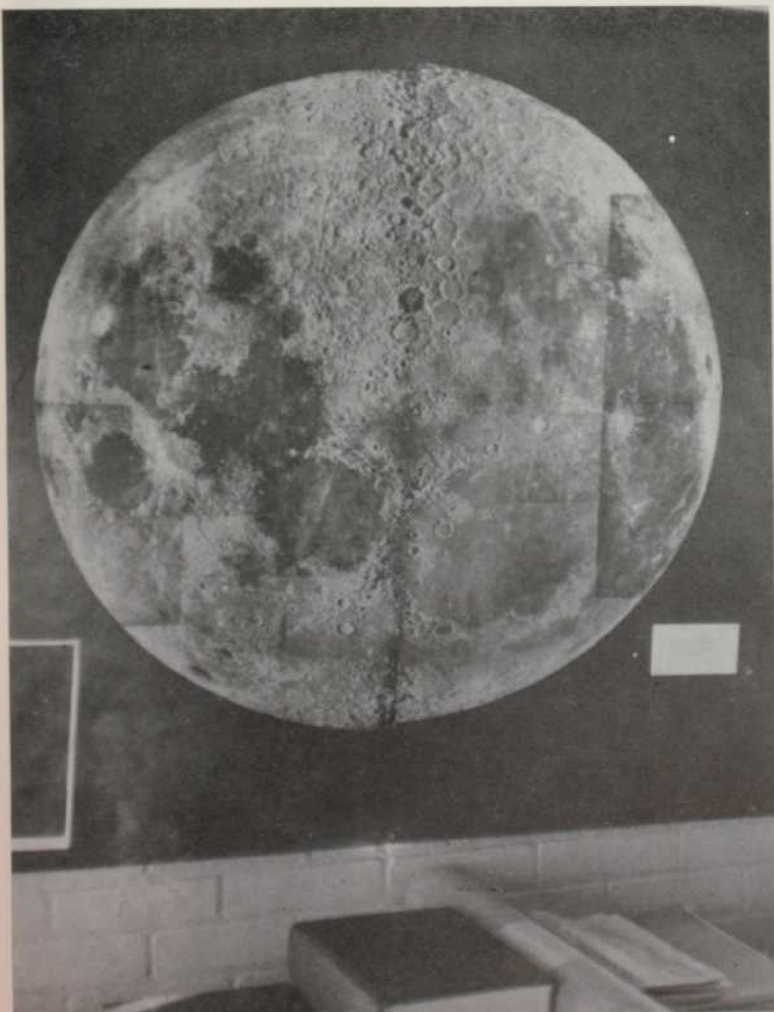
Peering at unearthly objects from Norman for the past 20 years, Whitney has become very familiar with outer space. Photographing the heavens week after week, year after year, he has built up the University's library of astronomical plates to a total number exceeding 16,000. It all began when he was a high school freshman, back in 1916. One day he got his hands on the school's two or three ancient books dealing with astronomy, read them, found

more elsewhere, and kept going like a shooting star straight into his life's work.

Astronomy, a fascinating science, somehow attracts fewer students than almost any other of the institution's curriculums. At this time Whitney has only two astronomy students, but his elementary classes usually total 25 or 30. He anticipates the larger number this summer. No one has majored in astronomy at O. U., to his knowledge. There isn't enough interest to warrant a graduate program.



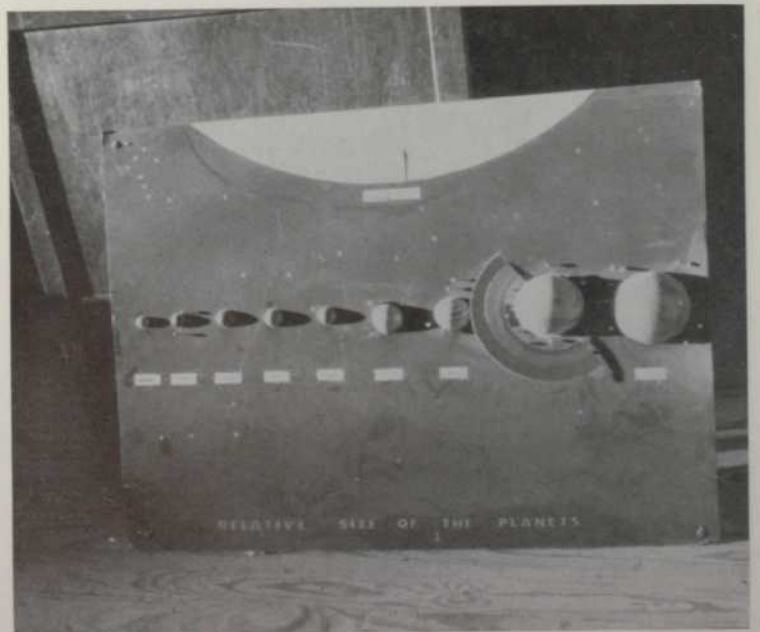
Balfour Whitney, seen through a mounting for a celestial sphere, works at his desk in the observatory. The sphere fell to pieces years ago.

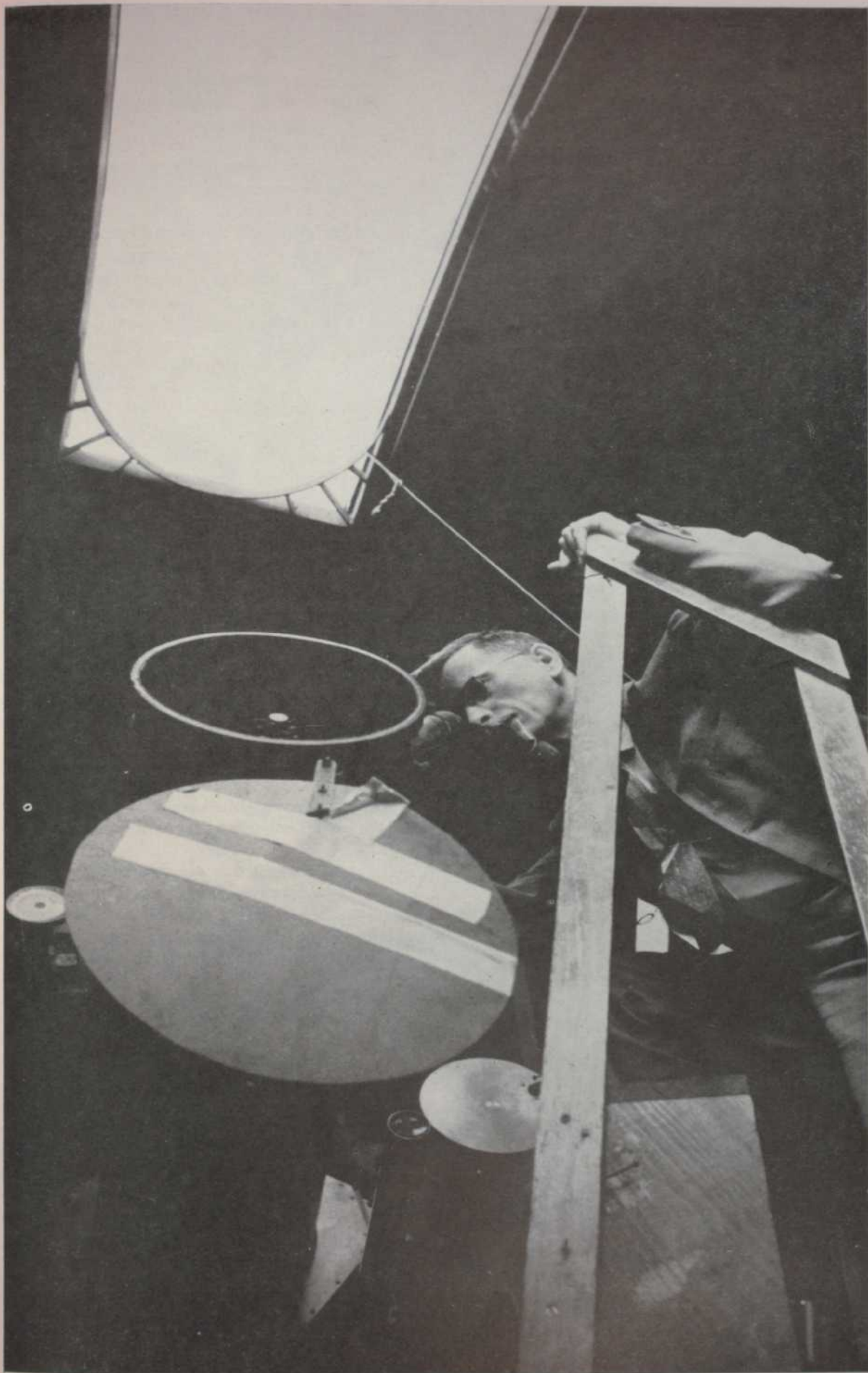


Paste-up of the moon shows the craters on that satellite's surface. Picture was created by joining several photographs.

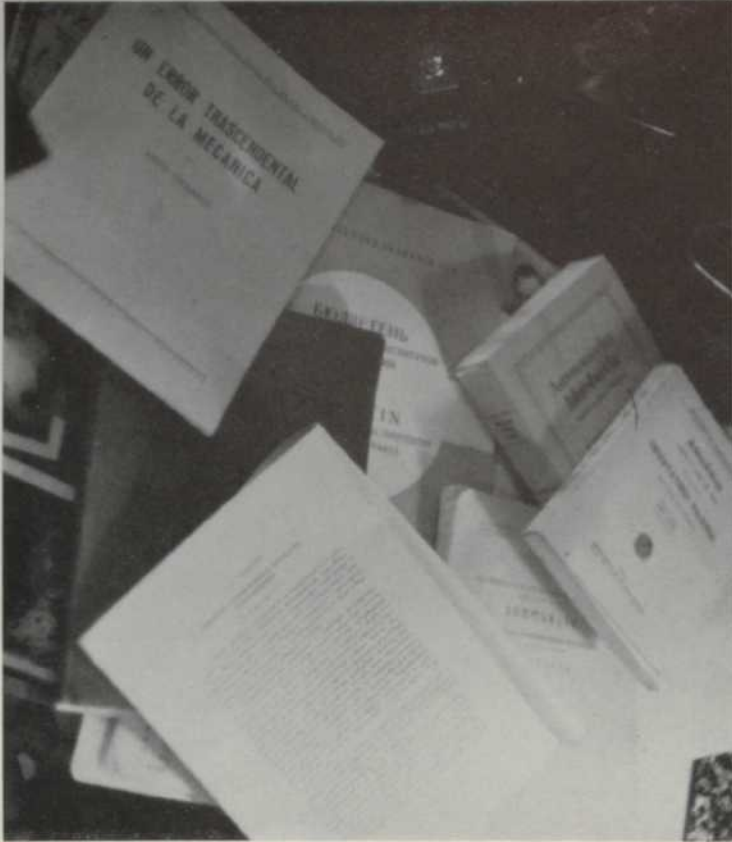
Photographed by BILLY BROWN

This model, displaying the relative sizes of our planets, was constructed by a junior high school student last year and given to the Observatory.

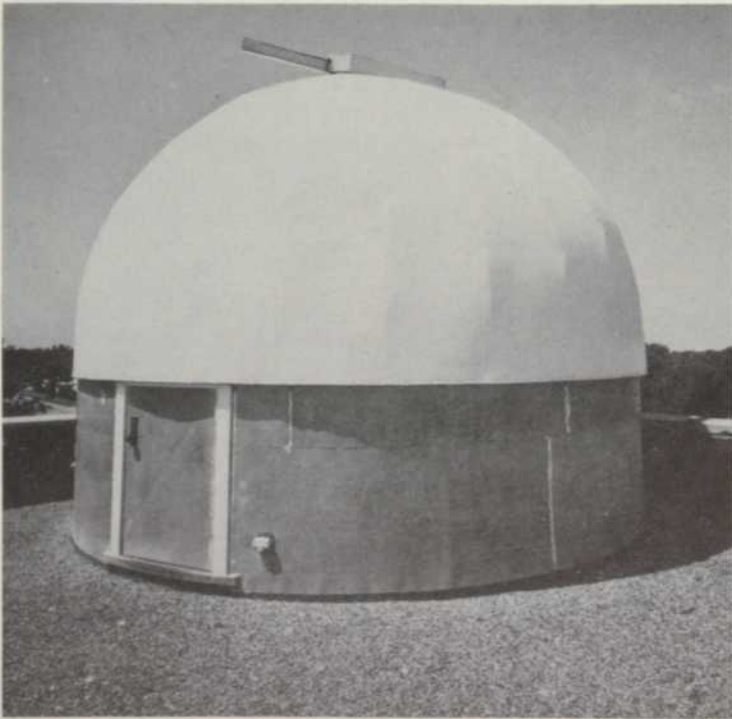




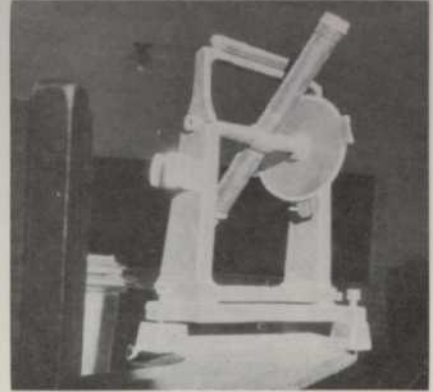
Pipe in mouth, Whitney checks on the ten-inch reflecting telescope in Observatory dome. Attached to 'scope is a camera.



About 250 astronomical publications in many languages come to O. U. each year. Shown are journals in German, Russian, Spanish and others.



The dome housing the Observatory's telescope is a fairly small unit sitting on the pebbled roof of Professor Whitney's office quarters.



This war-surplus sextant was used in aerial navigation 15 years ago, got results.

This room serves as storage for the more than 16,000 photographic plates owned by the University. Every second week Observatory has "open house."

