

Schwarzschild (for reciprocity failure), Hubble (on detectability of very small images), and H. N. Russell (on converting stellar apparent magnitudes to other units like lumens). The author(s) suggest using Polaris as a standard; perhaps it was not a weakly pulsating Cepheid that year.

Most fun and impressive is the figure of the sensitivity of spectrum plates available from the Eastman Kodak Company. There were, in those days, no fewer than 19, all inevitably with near-UV and blue sensitivity (to be cut off by Wratten filters if you so desired), but with their long-wavelength ends extending to anything from about 500 nm to 1200 nm (1.2 microns). The names are all letters of the alphabet, in order O J H G T D B C F S U N K R L P M Q Z (perhaps the model for the various bands of radar called S, X, and so forth). By 1973, the survivors were O J G H D E H-alpha F N and Z (B and M were panchromatic).

Are there reasons to remember these? Perhaps if you are interested in digitizing old astronomical images. And perhaps there is more than the one bit of humour that I remember, featuring a senior astronomer instructing a graduate student in a dark room. The senior chap lit a cigarette while plates were still in the developer. The student gasped in horror at the thought of losing a night's work. But the mentor said, "Is OK, Chris. They are only O plates." (which did not respond to orange or red light). Of course plates could be sensitized in various ways, after which, the authors advised said plates should be kept in an icebox. — VIRGINIA TRIMBLE.

Here and There

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The star's brightness was measured more than 300 times a second, and its diameter calculated with extreme precision from the fluctuations in its luminosity during the occultation: it's exactly 2,173 times as large as the Sun, and thus the smallest star ever measured. — *A History of the Universe in 100 Stars* (Quercus), 2023, p. 93.