UNCERTAINTIES IN DERIVED TEMPERATURE-HEIGHT PROFILES

R. A. MINZNER

SEPTEMBER 1974

GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER
GREENBELT, MARYLAND
UNCERTAINTIES IN DERIVED TEMPERATURE-HEIGHT PROFILES

R. A. Minzner
Atmospheric and Hydrospheric Applications Division

September 1974

GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER
Greenbelt, Maryland 20771
UNCERTAINTIES IN DERIVED TEMPERATURE-HEIGHT PROFILES

R. A. Minzner
Atmospheric and Hydrospheric Application Division

ABSTRACT

Nomographs have been developed for relating uncertainty in temperature $T$ (or in the corresponding scale height $H$) to uncertainty in the observed height profiles of both pressure $p$ and density $\rho$. The relative uncertainty $\delta T/T$ is seen to depend not only upon the relative uncertainties $\delta p/p$ or $\delta \rho/\rho$, and to a small extent upon the value of $T$ or $H$, but primarily upon the sampling-height increment $\Delta h$, the height increment between successive observations of $p$ or $\rho$. For a fixed value of $\delta p/p$, the value of $\delta T/T$ varies inversely with $\Delta h$. For $\Delta h = \sqrt{2} \cdot H$, which is of the order of 10 km, $\delta T/T = \delta p/p$. For $\Delta h = 0.01$ km, $\delta T/T$ is about 1000 $\delta p/p$, while for $\Delta h = 35$ km, $\delta T/T$ is about 0.3 $\delta p/p$. In the case of $T$ derived from density-height data, this inverse relationship between $\delta T/T$ and $\Delta h$ applies only for large values of $\Delta h$, i.e., for $\Delta h > 35$ km. For $\Delta h < 1$ km, $\delta T/T \simeq \delta \rho/\rho$, independent of the size of $\Delta h$. No limit exists in the fineness of usable height resolution of $T$ which may be derived from densities, while a fine height resolution in pressure-height data leads to temperatures with unacceptably large uncertainties.
CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ........................................................................... iii

SYMBOLS ........................................................................... vii

I. INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1

II. FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS ................................. 3

A. Pressure-Height Relationships .......................................... 3

B. Density-Height Relationship 1 ........................................... 6

C. Density-Height Relationship 2 ........................................... 8

III. UNCERTAINTY OF TEMPERATURES DEDUCED FROM PRESSURES ................................................................. 14

IV. UNCERTAINTY OF TEMPERATURES DEDUCED FROM DENSITIES ................................................................. 25

V. CONCLUSIONS: A COMPARISON OF THE DENSITY DATA NOMOGRAPH WITH THAT FOR PRESSURE DATA ....... 42

REFERENCES ........................................................................... 45

APPENDIX A: DEVELOPMENT OF THE GENERAL EXPRESSION FOR \( \frac{\delta T_q}{T_q}^2 \) AND FOR \( \frac{\delta H_q}{H_q}^2 \) ................................................. A-1

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure ................................................................................. Page

1 The U.S. Standard Atmosphere as Represented by Graphs of Five Atmospheric Properties versus Height, i.e., Temperature, Scale Height, Natural Log of Density Ratio, Natural Log of Pressure Ratio, and Derivative of Natural Log of Pressure Ratio with Respect to Height, Plus a Sixth Property for Comparison, i.e., Natural Log of Density Ratio versus Height for an Isothermal Atmosphere ......................................................................................... 5

PRECEEDING PAGE BLANK NOT FILMED
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Relative Contribution Made to the Calculated Temperature by the Density-Ratio Term and by the Integral Term of Equation (11) as a Function of the Size of the Altitude Range of Integration, for a 238 K Isothermal Atmosphere</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Value of the Coefficient &quot;A_{1,2}&quot; in Equation (20) as a Function of Pressure-Sampling Height Interval for Each of Three Atmospheric Temperatures Representing Approximately the Maximum, Median, and Minimum Values, Respectively, for Heights Below 100 Geopotential Kilometers</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Uncertainty in the Mean Temperature of an Atmospheric Layer as a Function of the Pressure-Sampling Height Interval, i.e., the Thickness of that Layer, when that Mean Temperature is Deduced from the Atmospheric Pressure at the Upper and Lower Boundaries of that Layer, and When the Mean Temperature is At or Near 241.57 K</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nomograph for Estimating Relative Uncertainty in Temperatures (Calculated from Pressure-Height Data) as a Function of the Pressure-Height Sampling Interval, and as a Function of the Value of the Temperature, for Each of Nine Values of Relative Uncertainty in the Pressure-Height Observations</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Graphs of Three Quantities as a Function of Density-Sampling Height Interval Δh, i.e., (1) the Limited Band of Values of a Particular Series of Terms Defined by ϕ_q, and Related to Δh, (2) the Value of the Last Term of that Series, and (3) the Value of the Ratio of Mean Scale Height to Δh</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Value of the Product of Two Factors (Comprising the Coefficient of the Uncertainty of Observed Densities) in Equation (36) as a Function of Density-Sampling Height Interval, for Each of Three Values of Mean Scale Height Consistent with Three Specified Temperatures</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nomograph for Estimating Relative Uncertainty in Temperatures (Calculated from Density-Height Data) as a Function of the Density-Height Sampling Interval, and as a Function of the Value of the Temperature, for Each of Nine Values of Relative Uncertainty in the Density-Height Observations</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## SYMBOLS

**Basic Quantities and Coefficients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>The dimensionless coefficient indicating the factor by which ( \delta p/p ) is amplified to yield ( \delta T/T )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>The standard geopotential gravitational constant ( 9.80665 , \text{m}^2 , \text{sec}^{-2} , (\text{m'})^{-1} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Scale height in units of geopotential height, m' (or km')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>Geopotential height in units of m' (nearly equal to geometric height, but accounting for height variation of the acceleration of gravity: i.e., ( Gdh = g(z)dz ))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>A dimensional constant ( 0.0341632 , \text{K/m'} ) resulting from the combining of the three constants ( GM/R ) into a single value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Mean molecular weight of air ( 28.9644 , \text{kg kmol}^{-1} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>Atmospheric pressure ( \text{Nm}^{-2} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Universal gas constant ( 8.31432 \times 10^3 , \text{joules K}^{-1} , \text{kmol}^{-1} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>The value of a particular series of terms involving density ratios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Atmospheric Temperature K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>A general designation for a function of a number of generalized variables</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Equation or Figure**

- (20)  
- (1)  
- (1)  
- (1)  
- (4)  
- (1)  
- (1)  
- (30)  
- (1)  
- (14)  

vii
Basic Quantities and Coefficients (Cont’d.)

\( y \)  
A general designation for the set of variables of which 
\( x \) is a function  
(14)

\( \alpha \)  
A subscripted dimensionless coefficient with a value 
near unity  
(23)

\( \rho \)  
atmospheric density kg m\(^{-3}\)  
(7)

Single Subscripts

1  
Refers to a particular height \( h_1 \) so that \( p_1, T_1, \rho_1, \) and \( h_1 \) all refer to the same point in a given equation  
(4), (11)

2  
Similar to 1  
(4)

\( i \)  
Refers to an individual member of a set of related variables having the general designation \( y_i \)  
(14)

\( i \)  
Also refers to a variable in an isothermal atmosphere  
as \( \rho_i \) in the graph of \( (\rho_i/\rho_r) \) versus \( h \) in Figure 1

\( j \)  
A general designation for an integer which may vary between 2 and \( q \), and which is simultaneously associated with 
a geopotential height as \( h_j \) and with the related density as \( \rho_j \)  
(21)

\( q \)  
A general designation for an integer which may have any positive value and which is associated with the lowest 
density-height data point (i.e., \( h_q, \rho_q \)) involved in a particular evaluation of an integral to determine the value of the 
related temperature \( T_q \).  
(11)
Single Subscripts (Cont'd.)

q Also used as $S_q$ where $q$ implies the number of terms in the series $S$ (30)

r Designates a specific reference value for the basic quantity of which it is a subscript, i.e., $p_r$ and $\rho_r$ Figure 1

Double Subscripts

$1,2$ Refers to a particular height layer as between $h_2$ and $h_1$, where $h_1$ and $h_2$ are ordered in such a way that the quantities within the subscripted parentheses have particular signed significance, i.e., $\Delta h$ is always positive while $\Delta H$ is positive only when $dT/dh$ is positive in the related layer (4), (10a), (23)

$j-1,j$ Similar to 1,2 (25)

$j, j+1$ Similar to 1,2 (26)

$q-1, q$ Similar to 1,2 (27)

$q_{\text{max}}$ designating maximum value of $S_q$, as in Figure 6. (36)

$q_{\text{min}}$ designating minimum value of $S_q$, as in Figure 6.

Operators and Functions

Overbar as in $\bar{T}$ or $\bar{H}$ indicates the mean value of $T$ or $H$ for the related layer (4)

$\sqrt{\ldots}$ Square root as $\sqrt{2}$ (20)

$\int \ldots$ Integral as $\int \rho(h) dh$ (11)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operators and Functions (Cont'd.)</th>
<th>Equation or Figure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$\partial$ Partial differential as in $\partial x$</td>
<td>(14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$d$ Differential as in $dh$</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\ln$ Natural logarithm as $\ln p$ and $\ln \rho$</td>
<td>(1) and (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ An increment as in $\Delta h$ and $\Delta H$</td>
<td>(4) and (10a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\delta$ An increment or random uncertainty as in $\delta y_i$, $\delta p_i$, $\delta \Delta h$, $\delta T_j$, $\delta \rho_j$, $\delta T_q$, and $\delta \rho_q$</td>
<td>(14), (15) and (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Sigma$ A summation of a set of terms</td>
<td>(12), (14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AN ANALYSIS OF THE ERRORS ASSOCIATED WITH
THE DETERMINATION OF ATMOSPHERIC TEMPERATURE
FROM ATMOSPHERIC PRESSURE AND DENSITY DATA

I. INTRODUCTION

Relationships between pressure, temperature, and height in the earth's atmosphere are well known, and for many years have been the basis for height determination in balloon-radiosonde flights making observations of pressure and temperature in meteorological probings of the lowest 30 kilometers of the earth's atmosphere. When radar-tracked rocket vehicles extended the potential atmospheric probing capabilities to heights up to 100 kilometers, into regions where pressure is still measurable, but where existing technology does not allow for immersion sensing of temperature, these same mathematical relationships were used to extract temperature from the measured pressures and radar-derived rocket-height data. The unsmoothed temperature-height values from many of these soundings represented a very jagged height profile, with the degree of jaggedness apparently increasing as the height increment between successive data points decreased. Investigators usually have been unable to determine how much of this jaggedness represents real temperature variability, and how much is attributable to measurement error.

The hydrostatic equation and the equation of state lead to another set of height relationships: those between atmospheric density, temperature,
and height, such that temperature may also be computed from density-height data. In cases where such computations have been made, particularly in the height region of 30 to 100 km, the resulting temperature-height profiles appeared to be less jagged than those derived from pressure-height data with comparable height resolution.

The apparent difference in the jaggedness of density-derived temperature-height profiles from those associated with pressure-height data suggest that the height increments of the pressure and density data do affect the uncertainty in the derived temperatures, and that the influence of height increments in relation to density data may be different from that in relation to pressure data. Obviously, the error analyses presented in this paper, involving both the pressure-temperature-height relationship, and the density-temperature-height relationship, are needed. The error analyses confirm the fact that important differences do exist between these two sets of relationships, particularly in regard to the influence of the height increment on the propagation of measurement uncertainties into the temperature-height profile. These differences strongly favor the use of density-height data over pressure-height data.
II. FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Pressure-Height Relationships

The equation of state, when combined with the differential form of the hydrostatic equation to eliminate density \( \rho \), yields an expression frequently referred to as the hypsometric equation:

\[
\frac{d\ln p}{dh} = \frac{-GM}{RT} = -\frac{1}{H}
\]  

where \( p \) is atmospheric pressure,

\( h \) is a measure of the height above sea level, in geopotential meters \( m' \)

\( T \) is absolute temperature of the atmosphere at \( h \),

\( R \) is the universal gas constant,

\( M \) is the mean molecular weight of air,

\( G \) is a constant when \( h \) is expressed in geopotential, and

\( H \) is the scale height in geopotential units.

Solving equation (1) for \( T \) and \( H \), respectively, yields

\[
T = \frac{GM}{R} \cdot \frac{-dh}{d\ln p}
\]  

and

\[
H = \frac{RT}{GM} = \frac{-dh}{d\ln p}
\]  

When values of \( \ln p \) versus \( h \) are known from numerical data rather than from an analytical function, it is convenient to replace the expression \(-dh/d\ln p\), which applies to a specific height, with a numerical approximation \((h_2 - h_1)/(\ln p_1 - \ln p_2)\).
In this approximation, $p_1$ is the pressure at $h_1$, and $p_2$ is the pressure at $h_2$. The approximation therefore represents the mean value of the reciprocal of the derivative over the height interval $(h_2 - h_1)$. When the point value of the derivative is replaced by the numerical approximation, in both equations (2) and (3), the related values of $T$ and $H$ no longer apply to a single height, but rather become the mean values $\bar{T}$ and $\bar{H}$, respectively, associated with the height interval $(h_2 - h_1)$. Thus, we have

$$
\bar{T} = \frac{GM}{R} \cdot \frac{h_2 - h_1}{\ln p_1 - \ln p_2} = k \cdot \frac{(\Delta h)_{1,2}}{\ln p_1 - \ln p_2}
$$

where $k = \frac{GM}{R} = 0.034163 \, {^\circ}K/m'$, and $(\Delta h)_{1,2} = h_2 - h_1$, and where, from the relationship between $T$ and $H$ implicit in equation (1), we see that

$$
\bar{H} = \frac{h_2 - h_1}{\ln p_1 - \ln p_2} = \frac{(\Delta h)_{1,2}}{\ln p_1 - \ln p_2}
$$

From equation (5), we obtain the following expression which will be of special importance in the uncertainty analysis in Section III:

$$
\frac{1}{\ln p_1 - \ln p_2} = \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{(\Delta h)_{1,2}} \right)
$$

The interrelationships between $\ln p$, $d\ln p/dh$, $T$, and $H$, all as a function of height as expressed by equations (1), (2) and (3), are shown pictorially by four of the six height-related graphs of Figure 1. This figure, which depicts the properties of a portion of the 1974 U. S. Standard Atmosphere (in preparation), was developed from a preliminary set of abbreviated tables representing a portion of this revised standard atmosphere (Kantor and Cole 1973). Geopotential
Figure 1. The U.S. Standard Atmosphere as Represented by Graphs of Five Atmospheric Properties versus Height, i.e., Temperature, Scale Height, Natural Log of Density Ratio, Natural Log of Pressure Ratio, and Derivative of Natural Log of Pressure Ratio with Respect to Height, Plus a Sixth Property for Comparison, i.e., Natural Log of Density Ratio versus Height for an Isothermal Atmosphere.
height is scaled linearly along the abscissa of Figure 1. Atmospheric pressure, which is plotted in the form of the natural logarithm of the ratio \( p/p_r \), has its ordinate scale at the left of the figure, and is depicted by the lower of the three lines diagonally crossing the entire figure from upper left to lower right. In this presentation of pressure, \( p_r \) in the ratio \( p/p_r \) has been made equal to one Newton per square meter (i.e., \( 1 \text{ N m}^{-2} \)), so that the numerical values of \( p/p_r \) are those of \( p \text{ in N m}^{-2} \), while the scale of \( \ln(p/p_r) \) at the left of the figure implies no dimensions.

The graph of \( d\ln p/dh \), which quantity is negative and inversely proportional to \( T \), shows that the slope of \( \ln(p/p_r) \) versus \( h \), or equivalently the slope of \( \ln p \) versus \( h \), is constant only in height regions over which \( T \) is invariant. These portions of the graph of \( d\ln p/dh \) versus height corresponding to constant \( T \) (i.e., the three height intervals \( 11 \text{ to } 20 \text{ km}', \ 47 \text{ to } 57 \text{ km}', \text{ and } 84.852 \text{ to } 89.716 \text{ km}' \) consist of horizontal straight-line segments, while the remainder of that graph consists of 5 curved segments. The scale height, which is directly proportional to \( T \), is seen to remain within the range of \( 5.45 \) and \( 7.95 \text{ km}' \), with a median value of \( 6.5 \text{ km}' \).

B. Density-Height Relationship

When the differential form of the hydrostatic equation is combined with the differential form of the equation of state to eliminate the differential of pressure, we
obtain the following relationship between temperature and the density-height function:

\[
T = \frac{-dh}{d\ln \rho} \left[ \frac{GM}{R} + \frac{dT}{dh} \right]
\]  

(7)

In the absence of an analytical expression for \( \rho(h) \), a numerical approximation for \( dh/d\ln \rho \) leads to a mean value of temperature \( \bar{T} \) for the height interval \( h_2 - h_1 \):

\[
\bar{T} = \frac{h_2 - h_1}{\ln \rho_1 - \ln \rho_2} \left[ \frac{GM}{R} + \frac{T_2 - T_1}{h_2 - h_1} \right]
\]  

(8)

In terms of scale height, this expression becomes

\[
\bar{H} = \frac{h_2 - h_1}{\ln \rho_1 - \ln \rho_2} \left[ 1 + \frac{H_2 - H_1}{h_2 - h_1} \right]
\]  

(9)

It is important to note that while equation (8) expresses the mean temperature for the layer \( h_1 \) to \( h_2 \), the expression involves the average gradient of \( T \) with respect to \( h \) within that layer. A similar situation prevails for the expression of the mean scale height in equation (9), where \( \bar{H} = (H_2 + H_1)/2 \). Since prior knowledge of the value of neither \( (T_2 - T_1)/(h_2 - h_1) \) nor \( (H_2 - H_1)/(h_2 - h_1) \) is generally available, equations (8) and (9) are not of themselves useful relationships for temperature-height determination. One version of the following expression derived from equation (9), however, will be of special importance in an uncertainty analysis in Section IV. This expression is

\[
\frac{1}{\ln \rho_1 - \ln \rho_2} = \frac{(H_2 + H_1)/2}{(h_2 - h_1) + (H_2 - H_1)}
\]  

(10)

Equation (10) is written for the case in which \( h_2 > h_1 \), as when data are being analyzed from lower to greater heights, such that \( \rho_1 > \rho_2 \). If the equation is to
apply to data being analyzed from greater to lower heights, as is the preferred case for the integral form of the density-height function, involving the normal atmosphere, $h_1$ is greater than $h_2$ such that $\rho_2 > \rho_1$, and equation (10) must be rewritten as

$$\frac{1}{\ln \rho_2 - \ln \rho_1} = \frac{(H_1 + H_2)/2}{(h_1 - h_2) + (H_1 - H_2)} = \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2}$$

In this expression $\Delta h$ is always positive, and $\Delta H$ is positive in regions of positive temperature gradients, zero in regions of zero temperature gradients, and negative in regions of negative temperature gradients.

C. Density-Height Relationship 2

The integral of the hydrostatic equation, when combined with the equation of state to eliminate the pressure, yields the following directly useful integral expression relating temperature to density:

$$T_q = \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot T_1 + \frac{GM}{R} \cdot \frac{1}{\rho_q} \cdot \int_{h_1}^{h_q} \rho(h) \, dh \quad (11)$$

The temperature $T_q$ is not the mean value of temperature for some layer, as in the case of $\bar{T}$ in equation (4), rather, it is the temperature at the specific height $h_q$.

It has been demonstrated (Minzner, et al. 1964 and 1966) that the properties of equation (11), when applied to a helium atmosphere, differ markedly from those observed when the equation is applied to an argon atmosphere. With an air atmosphere having a mean molecular weight of about 29, the properties of this
equation are similar to those found when the equation is applied to an argon atmosphere in which the integration optimumly proceeds from the greatest to the lowest altitude of the density-height data. In this situation, $T_1$, $\rho_1$, and $h_1$ are each associated with the greatest height of the data set, while $T_q$, $\rho_q$, and $h_q$ are each associated with the running value of $h$. This is the height for which the value of $T_q$ is being computed, a height which varies progressively from $h_1$ to the lowest height of the data set as the calculation of the profile proceeds.

Because $\rho(h)$ is usually known numerically rather than analytically, it is convenient to replace the integral of equation (11) with an appropriate series approximation, one of which is governed by the logarithmic trapezoidal rule (Smith 1965, Minzner, et al. 1965). With the use of this approximation, equation (11) may be rewritten as

$$T_q = \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} T_1 + \frac{GM}{R} \cdot \frac{1}{\rho_q} \cdot \sum_{j=2}^{q} \frac{(h_j - h_j) (\rho_j - \rho_{j-1})}{\ln \rho_j - \ln \rho_{j-1}}$$

(12)

The logarithmic-trapezoidal-rule approximation is a particularly suitable one for the integration of atmospheric density with respect to height, because, in a graph of measured values of $\ln \rho$ versus $h$, the straight-line segments between successive data points exactly represent the conditions of the logarithmic trapezoidal rule, and also very closely represent the conditions of the real atmosphere. The latter is evident from the nearly straight-line segments of an idealized version of the real atmosphere shown in the graph of $\ln(\rho/\rho_f)$ versus height in Figure 1. For this graph, which represents the densities of the 1974 U.S. Standard
Atmosphere, the value of \( \rho_r \) was chosen to be \( 1 \times 10^{-5} \text{ kg m}^{-3} \), so that the single ordinate scale at the left of the figure applies to both \( \ln(p/p_r) \) and \( \ln(p/\rho_r) \). The shape of the curve \( \ln(p/\rho_r) \) versus \( h \) is identical to the shape which the curve \( \ln(p/\rho_r) \) versus \( h \) would have, since the values of \( \ln(p/\rho_r) \) vs. \( h \) and of \( \ln(p) \) vs. \( h \) are offset by the constant difference \( \ln(p_r) \) at all heights.

Figure 1 also contains a graph of \( \ln(p_1/\rho_r) \) in the form of a continuous straight line immediately above the graph of \( \ln(p/\rho_r) \). This single straight line diagonally across the entire figure is characteristic of the density of an isothermal atmosphere extending upward from a height of 7.625 km where the standard-atmosphere density is \( 5.8281 \times 10^{-1} \text{ kg m}^{-3} \), and where the temperature and the corresponding scale height are \( 238.587 \text{ K} \) and \( 7,000 \text{ km} \), respectively. For this specialized atmosphere, the logarithmic-trapezoidal rule represents a series which exactly duplicates the integral of equation (11). The small deviations of the slopes of \( \ln(p/\rho_r) \) versus height from those of \( \ln(p_1/\rho_r) \) versus height show the small influence of the variation of atmospheric temperature from the fixed value, \( 238.587 \text{ K} \), (in the height region of 10 to 90 km) on the general shape of the curves of \( \ln(p/\rho_r) \) and \( \ln(p) \) versus \( h \). (The influence of temperature variation upon the curves of \( \ln(p/p_r) \) and \( \ln(p) \) versus \( h \) is similarly small.)

In the evaluation of \( T_q \) by equation (11), or by any appropriate approximation of that equation as exemplified by equation (12), a knowledge of the initial temperature \( T_1 \) is of importance only for the upper regions of the profile. For \( h_q = h_1 \),
the value of \((\rho_1/\rho_q)T_1\) is exactly \(T_1\), since \(\rho_1 = \rho_q\) and the integral term is, of course, zero. As the value of \(h_q\) decreases from \(h_1\), i.e., as \((h_1 - h_q)\) increases, the value of the relative contribution of the density-ratio term decreases, while that of the integral term correspondingly builds up. When \((h_1 - h_q)\) increases from zero, first by one scale height and then by three scale heights, the relative contribution of the density-ratio term to \(T_q\) decreases from 100% to about 37%, and then to about 3%, because of the large decrease in the value of \((\rho_1/\rho_q)\) over these height regions. Simultaneously, the value of the integral term grows correspondingly. At heights of more than three scale heights below \(h_1\), the value of \(T_q\) is determined almost completely by the integral term alone. Figure 2 shows the relative contributions made to \(T_q\) by the density-ratio term, and by the integral term of equation (11) as a function of the range of the limits of integration \((h_1 - h_q)\) expressed in units of scale height.

The graphs in Figure 2 are based on the density-height profile for an isothermal atmosphere \((T = 238.587K)\) for which \(\ln\rho\) is a linear function of height as previously shown in the graph of \(\ln(\rho_1/\rho_r)\) in Figure 1. Only small variations from the values of the two terms of equation (12) depicted in Figure 2 would be seen for calculations based on a real, variable-temperature atmosphere.

The elimination of \(T\) between equation (12) and equation (3) yields the following expression for scale height:

\[
H_q = \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot H_1 + \frac{1}{\rho_q} \cdot \sum_{j=2}^{q} \frac{(h_{j-1} - h_j)(\rho_j - \rho_{j-1})}{\ln\rho_j - \ln\rho_{j-1}}
\]

\(13\)

11
Figure 2. Relative Contribution Made to the Calculated Temperature by the Density-Ratio Term and by the Integral Term of Equation (11) as a Function of the Size of the Altitude Range of Integration, for a 238 K Isothermal Atmosphere

The relative contribution of each of the two terms of this equation to $H_q$, as a function of the range of integration $(h_1 - h_q)$, follows exactly the same pattern shown in Figure 2 with regard to $T_q$.

Atmospheric soundings of both pressure and density have for many years served as the basis for the determination of the height profiles of temperature and scale height. From pressures, these profiles are obtained through equations (4) and (5) respectively, while from densities, they are obtained through one or another version of equations (12) and (13), respectively. It is obvious that the uncertainties
of these derived temperatures and scale heights are a function of the uncertainty in the measured quantities, pressure or density. Somewhat less obvious is the fact that the height interval between successive observations of pressure or density strongly influences the propagation of the observational uncertainties into the computed temperatures and scale heights. A rigorous error analysis of both of these pairs of equations demonstrates this situation. The pressure-related equations are analyzed in Section III, while the density-related equations are analyzed in Section IV.
III. UNCERTAINTY OF TEMPERATURES DEDUCED FROM Pressures

The error-analysis method employed is the first-order Gaussian method, wherein each variable $y_i$ entering into the expression of a particular function of these variables $x(y_i)$ is assumed to have an observational uncertainty $\delta y_i$ which meets the conditions of a Gaussian or normal distribution about $\bar{y}_i$, where $\bar{y}_i$ is the mean of a set of individual observations of the $i$th variable, or the true value of the $i$th variable. Thus, if the value of $x$ is determined from the functional expression $x(y_i)$, the value of $\delta x$, the implicit uncertainty in $x$, is given by

$$\delta x)^2 = \sum_i \left( \frac{\partial x}{\partial y_i} \cdot \delta y_i \right)^2$$

(14)

Applying this relationship to the variables of equation (4) yields

$$\delta T = \left[ \left( \frac{\partial T}{\partial p_1} \cdot \delta p_1 \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\partial T}{\partial p_2} \cdot \delta p_2 \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\partial T}{\partial \Delta h} \cdot \delta \Delta h \right)^2 \right]^{1/2}$$

(15)

It may be shown that the partial derivative of $T$ with respect to any one of the independent variables $y_i$ in equation (4) has the general form

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial y_i} \cdot \delta y_i = \frac{-k\Delta h}{(\ln p_1 - \ln p_2)^2} \cdot \frac{\delta y_i}{y_i}$$

(16)
where $\Delta h$ is associated with $(h_2 - h_1)$ without benefit of subscripts. Applying this generalized expression to equation (15) yields

$$
\delta T = \frac{+k\Delta h}{(\ln p_1 - \ln p_2)^2} \left[ \left( \frac{\delta p_1}{p_1} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\delta p_2}{p_2} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\delta \Delta h}{\Delta h} \right)^2 \right]^{1/2} \tag{17}
$$

where $\delta p_1$ and $\delta p_2$ are the pressure uncertainties of two consecutive pressure-height values, and $\delta \Delta h$ is the uncertainty of the height interval $\Delta h$ between the corresponding two pressure-height values.

Dividing each side of equation (17) by the appropriate side of equation (4) yields the relative uncertainty

$$
\frac{\delta T}{T} = \frac{1}{\ln p_1 - \ln p_2} \left[ \left( \frac{\delta p_1}{p_1} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\delta p_2}{p_2} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\delta \Delta h}{\Delta h} \right)^2 \right]^{1/2} \tag{18}
$$

It is convenient to assume that all the uncertainty of a pressure-height point is in the pressure, and that the height increment is exact. In this case, the values of both $\delta p_1$ and $\delta p_2$ are correspondingly increased over their actual values, and the term involving $\delta \Delta h$ in equation 18 vanishes. It is further assumed that the relative uncertainty in measured values of $p$ is the same at $h_1$ and $h_2$, i.e., $\delta p_1/p_1 = \delta p_2/p_2 = \delta p/p$. These two assumptions permit equation (18) to be reduced to the simpler form,

$$
\frac{\delta T}{T} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{\ln p_1 - \ln p_2} \cdot \frac{\delta p}{p} \tag{19}
$$

From equation (6) it is apparent that $1/(\ln p_1 - \ln p_2)$ in equation (19) may be replaced by $(H/\Delta h)_{1,2}$ where $H$ is the mean scale height for the layer.
\[ h_2 - h_1 = (\Delta h)_{1,2}. \quad \text{Thus, equation (19) may be rewritten as} \]
\[
\frac{\delta T}{T} = \sqrt{2} \left( \frac{\Delta h}{h_2 - h_1} \right) \cdot \frac{\delta p}{p} = A_{1,2} \left( \frac{\delta p}{p} \right)
\]  

(20)

This equation indicates that \( \frac{\delta T}{T} \), the relative uncertainty in \( T \) the mean temperature of a layer \( (\Delta h)_{1,2} \) (i.e., the layer bounded by pressures \( p_1 \) and \( p_2 \)), is equal to the relative uncertainty in the pressure measurements \( \frac{\delta p}{p} \) times a coefficient \( A_{1,2} \). This coefficient is seen to depend upon only two quantities, the mean temperature \( \bar{T} \) of the layer \( h_2 - h_1 \) (\( \bar{T} \) being implicit in \( \bar{H} \)), and \( (1/\Delta h) \), the reciprocal of the thickness of the pressure-sampling interval \( (h_2 - h_1) \). Since the maximum value of \( \bar{T} \) in the earth's atmosphere below \( h = 100 \text{km} \) is less than twice its minimum value, and since \( \Delta h \) can, in principle, be made to vary over many orders of magnitude, it is apparent that \( \Delta h \) is the dominant factor in determining the propagation of \( \frac{\delta p}{p} \) into \( \frac{\delta T}{T} \).

A graph of the coefficient \( A_{1,2} \) as a function of \( \Delta h \) for three specific values of \( \bar{T} \), 169.10 K, 241.57 K, and 314.04 K, is given in Figure 3. The first and third of these temperatures were selected in part because they are close to the lowest and highest atmospheric temperatures normally observed at heights below 120 km, while the second is the mean of the extremes. In addition, these three values were specifically selected to correspond, respectively, to a particular set of three scale heights, i.e., \( (7/\sqrt{2}) \), \( (10/\sqrt{2}) \), and \( (13/\sqrt{2}) \text{km}' \). In each of these three cases, the value of \( A_{1,2} \) is unity when \( \Delta h \) (equal to \( \sqrt{2} \cdot \bar{H} \)) is a particular integer multiple of one geopotential kilometer, i.e., 7, 10, and 13 km', respectively.
Figure 3. Value of the Coefficient $A_{1,2}$ in Equation (20) as a Function of Pressure-Sampling Height Interval for Each of Three Atmospheric Temperatures Representing Approximately the Maximum, Median, and Minimum Values, Respectively, for Heights Below 100 Geopotential Kilometers.
It is interesting to note that, for the entire range of normally observed temperatures at heights below 100 km', the pressure-sampling interval $\Delta h$ corresponding to unity for the coefficient $A_{1,2}$ varies between the limited range of 7 to 13 km'. The pressure-sampling height interval, however, may actually vary over several orders of magnitude depending upon the design of the measuring system.

The value of the coefficient $A_{1,2}$ could correspondingly vary over several orders of magnitude depending upon the choice of $\Delta h$.

Concentrating on the median value of $\bar{T}$, and allowing the pressure-sampling interval $\Delta h$ to decrease, first from $10^4$ m' to $10^3$ m', and then to $10^2$ m', causes the value of $A_{1,2}$ to increase first from 1 to 10, and then to 100, respectively, such that the uncertainty in the value of $\bar{T}$ as expressed by equation (20) increases by identical factors for a fixed uncertainty in the pressure. Conversely, as $\Delta h$ is increased from $10^4$ m' to $10^5$ m', the value of $A_{1,2}$ decreases from unity to 0.1, such that the uncertainty in a related mean value of $T$ decreases correspondingly.

Figure 3 shows that when mean temperatures are deduced for successive layers from pressure observations having a fixed uncertainty, finer height resolution in the resulting temperature-height profile is obtained at the expense of temperature accuracy, while increased temperature accuracy is achieved at the expense of height resolution. Since the ultimate accuracy of pressures obtained from any high-altitude balloon-borne or rocket-borne pressure-sensing device is limited by considerations of various perturbing phenomena such as outgassing,
boundary layer, and shock wave, the value of \( \delta p/p \) has a practical lower bound. Thus, \((\delta \bar{T}/\bar{T}) \cdot (\Delta h/\sqrt{2} \cdot \bar{H})\) which is equal to \( \delta p/p \) similarly has a practical lower bound, and for this minimum value of \( \delta p/p \), \( \delta \bar{T}/\bar{T} \) is governed by the value of the ratio \( (\Delta h/\bar{H}) \).

Figure 3 shows the effect of variations of both \( T \) and \( \Delta h \) on the value of the coefficient \( A_{1,2} = (\sqrt{2} \cdot \bar{H}/\Delta h) \). By expressing \( \Delta h \) in multiples of one scale height, the number of variables in equation (20) is effectively reduced by one, and values of \( \delta \bar{T}/\bar{T} \) can be plotted as a function of \( \Delta h = n \cdot \bar{H} \) (where \( n \) is the value along the abscissa) for any particular value of \( \delta p/p \). Figure 4 presents such a graph for each of nine values of pressure uncertainty.

In Figure 4, the straight-line graph for 1% uncertainty in \( p \) intersects the coordinate for 1% uncertainty in \( \bar{T} \) at the abscissa coordinate value of 1.414. This same straight-line graph for 1% uncertainty in \( p \) intersects the ordinate values of 10%, 100%, and 1000% at abscissa values of \( \Delta h \) equal to 0.1414, 0.01414, and 0.001414, respectively. This series of four successively decreasing values of \( \Delta h \), each being one tenth of the preceding one, yields a geometric series of four increasing values of \( \delta \bar{T}/\bar{T} \), each being ten times the preceding one. A similar situation prevails for each of the eight other values of \( \delta p/p \), for which lines have been plotted. The value of \( \delta \bar{T}/\bar{T} \) is obviously varied over orders of magnitude by comparable variations of the value of the ratio \( \bar{H}/\Delta h \). For height increments with a value of \( \sqrt{2} \) times one scale
Figure 4. Percent uncertainty in the Mean Temperature of an Atmospheric Layer (for any one of nine percent uncertainties in the pressure-height data) as a function of the Pressure-Sampling Height Interval (i.e., the thickness of that Layer) when that Mean Temperature is Deduced from the Atmospheric Pressure at the Upper and Lower Boundaries of that Layer, and When the Mean Temperature is At or Near 241.57 K.
height, relative temperature uncertainties are seen to be equal to relative pressure uncertainties for all nine values plotted.

In order to show simultaneously the small additional influence produced by the allowable range in the value of $\bar{T}$ as it appears both in $\delta \bar{T}/\bar{T}$ as well as intrinsically in $H$, the single-line graph for each value of $\delta p/p$ in Figure 4 is expanded into a band in Figure 5 where the pressure-sampling height is expressed in meters as in Figure 3.

The lower left-hand edge of each band corresponds to $T = 169.10$ K, while the upper right-hand edge of each band corresponds to $T = 314.04$ K with other points across each band corresponding linearly to intermediate temperatures. Thus, Figure 5 serves as a nomograph from which one may estimate the percent uncertainty in particular atmospheric temperatures computed from pressure-height data measured with a specified uncertainty over particular height increments.

Three sample applications of this nomograph are cited: In the first it is desired to determine the maximum pressure-gauge uncertainty allowable to achieve a 1% uncertainty in a mean temperature of about 240 K for a layer thickness of 100 m'. We look for the intersection of the 100 m' abscissa value with the 1% ordinate value, and find that it lies near the 242 K value of the 0.01% pressure-uncertainty band. Thus, pressures would have to be measured with an uncertainty no greater than 0.01% to achieve the desired results. Since it is
Figure 5. Nomograph for Estimating Relative Uncertainty in Temperatures (Calculated from Pressure-Height Data) as a Function of the Pressure-Height Sampling Interval, and as a Function of the Value of the Temperature, for Each of Nine Values of Relative Uncertainty in the Pressure-Height Observations.
essentially impossible to achieve such a small uncertainty in any rocket or balloon measurements of pressure, this combination of height resolution and temperature uncertainty is essentially impossible to achieve from pressure-height data.

In the second example, we assume a pressure-gauge uncertainty of 3 percent, and a mean temperature of 180 K, and seek the temperature uncertainty associated with particular sampling-height increments. If the pressure sampling-height interval is 3 kilometers, this ordinate value is seen to intersect the appropriate region of the band for 3 percent pressure uncertainty at a value corresponding to a temperature uncertainty on the ordinate scale of about 7.4%, or about 13.3 K. A doubling of the layer thickness to 6 km would halve the temperature uncertainty.

The third example involves the inverse problem of estimating the uncertainty in the computed pressure differential associated with an assumed isothermal layer of fixed thickness. If the layer has a thickness of 3 km, as may be the situation in the grenade experiment (Nordberg and Smith 1964), and if there is an uncertainty of about 2% or 5 K in an assumed mean temperature of 250 K, the graph shows that the combined uncertainty of the two boundary pressures lies between 0.3% and 1.0% or about 0.6% on a logarithmic scale. For a layer thickness of 1 km, the boundary-pressure uncertainties would increase by a factor of 3. If the assumed isothermal layers were used to generate
density-height profiles rather than pressure-height profiles, the uncertainties in the densities would be somewhat larger than in the pressures because of the required vector addition of the temperature uncertainty and the pressure uncertainty to obtain the density uncertainty.
IV. UNCERTAINTY IN TEMPERATURES DEDUCED FROM DENSITIES

Applying the first-order Gaussian method, equation (14), to the determination of the uncertainty in temperatures deduced from density-height data through equation (11) leads to

\[
\delta T_q = \left[ \left( \frac{\partial T_q}{\partial T_1} \cdot \delta T_1 \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\partial T_q}{\partial \rho_1} \cdot \delta \rho_1 \right)^2 + \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left( \frac{\partial T_q}{\partial \rho_j} \cdot \delta \rho_j \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\partial T_q}{\partial \rho_q} \cdot \delta \rho_q \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}}
\]  

(21)

provided that we assume all the uncertainty in a density-height point to be concentrated in the density. Because scale height combines the temperature with several constants, its use facilitates the expansion and analysis of an equation like equation (21). Consequently, it is convenient to rewrite that equation as

\[
\delta H_q = \left[ \left( \frac{\partial H_q}{\partial H_1} \cdot \delta H_1 \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\partial H_q}{\partial \rho_1} \cdot \delta \rho_1 \right)^2 + \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left( \frac{\partial H_q}{\partial \rho_j} \cdot \delta \rho_j \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\partial H_q}{\partial \rho_q} \cdot \delta \rho_q \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}}
\]  

(22)

Both equations (21) and (22) involve \((q + 1)\) terms, where \(q\) is the number of density-height data points. The first term is associated with the uncertainty of the temperature or the scale height at \(h_1\), while each of the \(q\) additional terms deals with the uncertainty of one of the successive \(q\) density-height data points, respectively. Three of the \((q + 1)\) terms have a unique format. These are the first, the second, and the last terms; those involving \(\delta T_1\) (or \(\delta H_1\)), \(\delta \rho_1\), and \(\delta \rho_q\), respectively. The remaining terms, however, the third through the \(q\)th term involving \(\delta \rho_2\) through \(\delta \rho_{q-1}\), respectively, have a common format.

Thus the sum of these common-format terms may be expressed as the summation of a general term. Applying the operators indicated in equation (22), dividing
both sides of the resulting equation by \( H_q \), and introducing equation (10a) yields

the following equation:

\[
\left( \frac{\delta H_q}{H_q} \right)^2 = \left( \frac{H_1}{H_q} \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \right)^2 \left( \frac{\delta H_1}{H_1} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{H_1}{H_q} \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} - \alpha_{1,2} \left[ \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} - \left( \frac{\rho_2 - \rho_1}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right) \right] \right)^2 \left( \frac{\delta \rho_1}{\rho_1} \right)^2 + \\
\sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left\{ \alpha_{q-1,j} \left[ \frac{\rho_q}{\rho_q} - \left( \frac{\rho_q - \rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right) \right] - \alpha_{j,j+1} \left[ \frac{\rho_j}{\rho_q} - \left( \frac{\rho_{j+1} - \rho_j}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right) \right] \right\}^2 \left( \frac{\delta \rho_j}{\rho_j} \right)^2
\]

\begin{equation}
(23)
\end{equation}

where

\[
\alpha_{1,2} = \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{H_q} \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2}
\]

\begin{equation}
(24)
\end{equation}

\[
\alpha_{j-1,j} = \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{H_q} \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j-1,j}
\]

\begin{equation}
(25)
\end{equation}

\[
\alpha_{j,j+1} = \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{H_q} \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j,j+1}
\]

\begin{equation}
(26)
\end{equation}

\[
\alpha_{q-1,q} = \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{H_q} \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{q-1,q}
\]

\begin{equation}
(27)
\end{equation}

Equation (23), which is developed in Appendix A, is very much more complicated

than the comparable uncertainty expression in terms of pressure-height data as

represented by equation (18). The considerable difference in the complexity

between the two equations stems largely from the fact that equation (18) involves

the uncertainty of only two pressure-height data points and the mean temperature

for the corresponding height layer, while equation (23) involves the uncertainty

of many consecutive density-height data points, each of which contributes at

least a small amount to the value and uncertainty of the temperature or scale
height at height \( h_q \). It is emphasized that the quantities \( T_q \) or \( H_q \) in equations (11) through (13), and again in equations (21) through (23), represent values for specific heights, and not mean values for specific layers as in the case of the pressure-related equations.

Each element of equations (23) through (27) is associated either with a specific height or with a specific layer. Elements having a single subscript, e.g., \( H_1 \), \( \rho_1 \), \( \rho_j \), \( \rho_{j-1} \), \( \rho_{j+1} \), \( \rho_{q-1} \), \( \rho_q \), and \( H_q \) signify the value of the particular quantity at heights \( h_i \), \( h_j \), \( h_{j-1} \), \( h_{j+1} \), \( h_{q-1} \), and \( h_q \), respectively. Quantities with a double subscript, e.g., \( \alpha_{i,2} \), \( \alpha_{j-1,j} \), etc., represent a quantity associated with particular layers, i.e., the layers bounded by \( h_1 \) and \( h_2 \), or by \( h_{j-1} \) and \( h_j \), etc., respectively. Thus, \( \alpha_{j,2} \), as expressed by equation (24), represents an algebraic expression of four different quantities three of which, namely \( \bar{H} \), \( \Delta h \), and \( \Delta H \), are associated with the layer \( h_1 \) to \( h_2 \). In equation (24), \( \bar{H} \) is the mean scale height for the layer \( \Delta h = h_1 - h_2 \), while \( \Delta H \) represents the change in scale height within that layer, i.e., \( H_1 - H_2 \), such that only in a region where the gradient of \( H \) or \( T \) with respect to height is positive will \( \Delta H \) be positive. The quantity \( H_q \) is, of course, the value of \( H \) at height \( h_q \). Similarly, \( \alpha_{j-1,j} \), \( \alpha_{j,j+1} \), \( \alpha_{q-1,q} \), as defined by equations (25), (26), and (27), respectively, each represent quantities associated with the particular appropriate layers. Equation (23) also includes the doubly subscripted quantities

\[
\left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2}, \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j-1,j}, \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j,j+1}, \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{q-1,q}
\]
each of which represents one factor of the right-hand side of equations (24), (25), (26), and (27), respectively. The influence of non-zero gradients in the temperature-height profile is impressed upon $\delta H_q/H_q$ through all the double subscripted quantities in equation (23).

In order to more clearly see the influence of sampling-height interval alone on $\delta H_q$, it is convenient to assume an isothermal atmosphere, and to correspondingly simplify equation (23). In this case, scale height would not vary, but would remain fixed at a value $H$ over the entire region of integration, and the following relationships would apply: $H_1 = H_q = H$, $\bar{H} = H$, and $\Delta H$ is zero in all layers. Under these conditions, equations (24), (25), (26), and (27) become unity, as does the ratio $H_1/H_q$, and equation (23) may be rewritten as

$$\left( \frac{\delta H_q}{H_q} \right)^2 = \left[ \left( \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\delta H_1}{H_1} \right) \right]^2 + \left[ \left( \frac{\rho_2 - \rho_1}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h_{1,2}} \right) \cdot \left( \frac{\delta \rho_1}{\rho_1} \right) \right]^2$$

$$+ \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left[ \left( \frac{\rho_j + 1 - \rho_j}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h_{j,j+1}} \right) - \left( \frac{\rho_j - \rho_{j-1}}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h_{j-1,j}} \right) \right] \left( \frac{\delta \rho_j}{\rho_j} \right)^2$$

$$+ \left[ \left( 1 - \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \right) - \sum_{j=1}^{q} \left( \frac{\rho_j - \rho_{j-1}}{\rho_q} \right) - \left( \frac{\rho_q - \rho_1}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h_{q-1,q}} \right) \right] \left( \frac{\delta \rho_q}{\rho_q} \right)^2 \tag{28}$$

It can be shown that

$$\sum_{j=1}^{q} \left( \frac{\rho_j - \rho_{j-1}}{\rho_q} \right) = \left( 1 - \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \right) \tag{29}.$$
such that these two terms in the coefficient of \((\delta \rho_q / \rho_q)\) in equation (28) cancel each other. Then, if we impose the additional condition that the height increments between successive density-height data points are constant over the entire region of integration, this condition plus equation (29) permit the further simplification of equation (28) to

\[
\left( \frac{\delta H_q}{H_q} \right)^2 = \left( \frac{\rho_i}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{\delta H_1}{H_1} \right)^2 
+ \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h} \right)^2 \left[ \left( \frac{\rho_2 - \rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{\delta \rho_1}{\rho_1} \right)^2 + \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left( \frac{\rho_{j+1} - 2 \rho_j + \rho_{j-1}}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{\delta \rho_j}{\rho_j} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\rho_q - \rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{\delta \rho_q}{\rho_q} \right)^2 \right] \tag{30}
\]

If we impose still another restriction, i.e., that the relative uncertainty of the density data has the constant value \(\delta \rho / \rho\) for all heights within the range of integration, \(\delta \rho_1 / \rho_1 = \delta \rho_j / \rho_j = \delta \rho_q / \rho_q = \delta \rho / \rho\), and we may rewrite equation (30) as

\[
\left( \frac{\delta H_q}{H_q} \right)^2 = \left( \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \right)^2 \left( \frac{\delta H_1}{H_1} \right)^2 
+ \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h} \right)^2 \left[ \left( \frac{\rho_2 - \rho_1}{\rho_q} \right)^2 + \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left( \frac{\rho_{j+1} - 2 \rho_j + \rho_{j-1}}{\rho_q} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\rho_q - \rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} \right)^2 \right] \left( \frac{\delta \rho}{\rho} \right)^2 \tag{31}
\]

The restriction permitting this simplification, while somewhat unrealistic from the point of view of any measuring system, is acceptable because, it will be shown below, the relative uncertainty of only \(\rho_q\) enters significantly into the value of \(\delta H_q / H_q\). It is convenient to represent the sum of the series of the squares of the several density ratios in the coefficient of \((\delta \rho / \rho)^2\) in equation (31) by \((S_q)^2\), such that

\[
S_q = \left[ \left( \frac{\rho_2 - \rho_1}{\rho_q} \right)^2 + \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left( \frac{\rho_{j+1} - 2 \rho_j + \rho_{j-1}}{\rho_q} \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\rho_q - \rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}} \tag{32}
\]

with this simplification equation (31) may be rewritten as

\[
\left( \frac{\delta H_q}{H_q} \right)^2 = \left[ \left( \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\delta H_1}{H_1} \right) \right]^2 + \left[ S_q \cdot \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h} \right) \left( \frac{\delta \rho}{\rho} \right) \right]^2 \tag{33}
\]
Finally, recalling from Figure 2 that the ratio \( \rho_1 / \rho_1 \) causes the contribution of \( H_1 \) to \( H_q \) in equation (13) to become negligible when the integration has proceeded downward from \( h_1 \) by more than about three scale heights, we recognize that the contribution of \( \delta H_1 / H_1 \) to \( \delta H_q / H_q \) in equation (33) must similarly be negligible for \( h_q \) sufficiently below \( h_1 \). Thus, for this condition, equation (33) may be approximated by

\[
\frac{\delta H_q}{H_q} \simeq S_q \cdot \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h} \right) \left( \frac{\delta \rho}{\rho} \right)
\]  

(34)

Also, since \( \delta H_q / H_q \) is identically equal to \( \delta T_q / T_q \), it is convenient at this point to return from scale-height notation to temperature notation, and equation (34) is rewritten as

\[
\frac{\delta T_q}{T_q} \simeq S_q \cdot \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h} \right) \left( \frac{\delta \rho}{\rho} \right)
\]  

(35)

This equation represents the relative uncertainty in \( T_q \), the temperature at height \( h_q \), as deduced from a set of density-height data measured with a constant relative uncertainty \( (\delta \rho / \rho) \) over the entire range of a height region \( h_1 \) down to \( h_q \), where \( (h_1 - h_q) \) is equal to at least three scale heights, in a portion of a planetary atmosphere which is isothermal, at some value associated with \( \bar{H} \). These conditions might apply to the earth's atmosphere at heights above about 400 km.

Since equation (35) excludes several of the variables included in the most general form of the uncertainty expression as given by equation (23), this simpler version is more readily examined for the influence which variations in the sampling-height interval \( \Delta h \) alone have upon \( \delta T_q / T_q \).
Equation (35) for $\delta T_q/T_q$, in terms of the relative uncertainty in density, is very similar to equation (20) for $\delta T/T$ in terms of the relative uncertainty in pressure, except that $S_q$ in equation (35) takes the place of $\sqrt{2}$ in equation (20). Therein lies a great difference, because the quantity $S_q$ is a dimensionless function of three variables, $\bar{H}$, $\Delta h$, and $(h_1 - h_q)$, and has a value which varies between $\sqrt{2}$ and zero, as $\Delta h$ varies from large values to zero. For $\Delta h > 5 H$, the value of $S_q$ approaches $\sqrt{2}$ asymptotically as $\Delta h$ approaches infinity, independently of the value of $\bar{H}$ or $(h_1 - h_q)$. For $\Delta h < 0.2 H$, the value of $S_q$ decreases linearly with decreasing values of $\Delta h$, for any fixed value of $\bar{H}$ or $(h_1 - h_q)$.

The influence of variations of both $\Delta h$ and $(h_1 - h_q)$ upon $S_q$, and implicitly upon $\delta T_q/T_q$, is seen in Figure 6. Here, for a fixed value of $\bar{H} = (10/\sqrt{2})$ km, a band of values of $S_q$ is plotted as a function of $\Delta h$ on a fully logarithmic scale, with ordinate values of $S_q$ given on the right-hand side of the figure. The upper limit of the band is designated $S_{q,max}$, and is plotted as a line of long dashes, while the lower limit of the band is designated $S_{q,min}$, and is plotted as a solid line. The range of the values of $S_q$ within the band, at any particular value of $\Delta h$, represents the influence of variations of $(h_1 - h_q)$ at that value of $\Delta h$, with the value of $S_q$ increasing as $(h_1 - h_q)$ decreases. The smallest possible value of $(h_1 - h_q)$, at any particular value of $\Delta h$, is of course $\Delta h$, and hence $S_{q,max}$ depicts the locus of the values of $S_q$ associated with the condition that $(h_1 - h_q) = \Delta h$. Thus, this upper limit of $S_q$ represents the value of equation (32) when that equation involves only the first two density-altitude points of a data set, i.e., the value of $S_q$ for the case when $\delta T_q/T_q$ is being computed for the height $h_q$ associated with the
Figure 6. Graphs of Three Quantities as a Function of Density-Sampling Height Interval $\Delta h$, i.e., (1) the Limited Band of Values of a Particular Series of Terms Defined by $S_q$, and Related to $\Delta h$, (2) the Value of the Last Term of that Series, and (3) the Value of the Ratio of Mean Scale Height to $\Delta h$

second-highest density-height data point in the sounding. For this situation, the right-hand side of equation (32) reduces to $[\sqrt{2}(\rho_q - \rho_1)/\rho_q]$. As the height for which one computes $\delta T_q/T_q$ is lowered from $h_1$, such that $(h_1 - h_q)$ becomes increasingly large, the value of $S_q$ slowly decreases, and asymptotically approaches a lower limit $S_{q,\text{min}}$ when $(h_1 - h_q)$ is greater than three scale heights.

It is convenient to define the ratio of $S_{q,\text{max}}$ to $S_{q,\text{min}}$ as $R$, and to examine the variation of $R$ with respect to variations in $\Delta h$. As long as $\Delta h$ is smaller than
about 0.2 H, R retains a nearly constant value (a value which is seen graphically
to be approximately equal to \( \sqrt{2} \)), and both \( S_{q,\text{max}} \) and \( S_{q,\text{min}} \) are seen to make
an angle of about \(+45^\circ\) with respect to the abscissa. Because of the feature of
a nearly constant slope of +1 for both \( S_{q,\text{max}} \) and \( S_{q,\text{min}} \) in the region where
\( \Delta h < 0.2 H \), this region is hereafter designated as the small-increment regime.
As \( \Delta h \) exceeds 0.2 H, and increases toward 5 H, the slopes of both \( S_{q,\text{max}} \) and
\( S_{q,\text{min}} \) gradually decrease toward zero. However, the slope of \( S_{q,\text{max}} \) decreases
more rapidly than that of \( S_{q,\text{min}} \) so that \( S_{q,\text{max}} \) approaches \( S_{q,\text{min}} \) at a common
value \( \sqrt{2} \), while the value of the ratio R decreases from \( \sqrt{2} \) toward unity. For
\( \Delta h > 5H \), the value of R is essentially constant at unity, and the slope of the line
common to both \( S_{q,\text{max}} \) and \( S_{q,\text{min}} \) is essentially zero. The feature of an essen-
tially zero slope for this common line representing \( S_q \) versus \( \Delta h \), specifies a
region which, because of the related large value of \( \Delta h \) (i.e., \( \Delta h > 5H \)) is here-
after referred to as the large-increment regime. The region between the small-
increment regime and the large-increment regime, i.e., the region for which
\( 0.2 H < \Delta h < 5H \), is hereafter referred to as the transition regime.

In the large-increment regime, where \( S_{q,\text{max}} \) and \( S_{q,\text{min}} \) are essentially identical,
it is apparent that \( S_q \) is essentially independent of \( (h_1 - h_q) \). In the small-increment
regime, the concern for the influence of \( (h_1 - h_q) \) upon \( S_q \) remains only for values
of \( (h_1 - h_q) \) less than about 3 H. Because equation (35) is based upon the restric-
tion that \( (h_1 - h_q) \) is greater than 3 H, and because \( S_q \) approaches \( S_{q,\text{min}} \) for
such values of \( (h_1 - h_q) \) in all three regimes, it is immediately apparent that the
general factor $S_q$ in equation (35) should be replaced by the specific value $S_{q,min}$. It is somewhat less apparent that $\delta \rho/\rho$, the general expression for relative uncertainty in equation (35), aught to be replaced by $\delta \rho_q/\rho_q$, the specific relative uncertainty for $\rho_q$, particularly when equation (35) is applied to the small-increment regime. The reasons for the latter replacement stem from the facts that the following dual relationship exists for the dual conditions $(\rho_1 - \rho_q) > 3 \ H$, and $\Delta h < 0.2 \ H$:

(1) The value of the series $S_q$, which becomes essentially $S_{q,min}$ for $(\rho_1 - \rho_q) > 3 \ H$, simultaneously approaches the value of $(\rho_q - \rho_{q-1})/\rho_q$, the last term in equation (32), defining $S_q$. This near equality between $S_{q,min}$ and $(\rho_q - \rho_{q-1})/\rho_q$ in the small-increment regime is demonstrated graphically in Figure 6.

(2) The term $(\rho_q - \rho_{q-1})/\rho_q$ is properly associated with the specific uncertainty $\delta \rho_q/\rho_q$ rather than with $\delta \rho/\rho$. This situation is evident from the fact that the quantity $(\rho_q - \rho_{q-1})/\rho_q$ is a coefficient of $\delta \rho_q/\rho_q$ in equation (30), which, except for an isothermal condition, is a general expression equally applicable to both $\delta H_q/H_q$ and $\delta T_q/T_q$. Thus, at least for the small-increment regime, equation (35) may be rewritten as

$$\frac{\delta T_q}{T_q} \approx S_{q,min} \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h} \right) \left( \frac{\delta \rho_q}{\rho_q} \right)$$

Even in the large-increment regime, where the value of $S_{q,min}$ approaches $\sqrt{2}(\rho_q - \rho_{q-1})/\rho_q$, the value of $S_{q,min}$ is still dominated by $(\rho_q - \rho_{q-1})/\rho_q$.
(which is equal to unity in this regime), and therefore, $S_{q,\min}$ should still be associated with $\delta \rho_q / \rho_q$.

Because $(\rho_q - \rho_{q-1}) / \rho_q$ approaches unity in the large-increment regime, while $S_{q,\min}$ approaches $\sqrt{2}$, it is reasonable to write the following special form of equation (36) for that regime:

$$\frac{\delta T_q}{T_q} \approx \sqrt{2} \cdot \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h} \right) \left( \frac{\delta \rho_q}{\rho_q} \right)$$  \hspace{1cm} (37)

This equation is seen to be analogous to equation (20) involving uncertainties in pressure-height data.

In addition to the graphs of $S_{q,\max}$, $S_{q,\min}$, and $(\rho_q - \rho_{q-1}) / \rho_q$ versus $\Delta h$, Figure 6 also contains a graph of the function $(\bar{H} / \Delta h)$ versus $\Delta h$, for $\bar{H} = (10/\sqrt{2})$ km, or $\bar{T} = 241.57$ K. This function, which obviously varies inversely with $\Delta h$, is seen to have a constant negative $45^\circ$ slope for a fixed value of $\bar{H}$. When this function is multiplied by $S_{q,\min}$, a quantity which according to Figure 6 is seen to have a $+45^\circ$ slope in the small-increment regime, the product for the small-increment regime is essentially a constant (independent of $\Delta h$) with a value near unity, for all values of $\bar{H}$ or $\bar{T}$. This situation is depicted in Figure 7 where the value of the product $[S_{q,\min} \cdot (\bar{H} / \Delta h)]$ versus $\Delta h$ is plotted in all three regimes for each of three values of $\bar{H}$, $(7/\sqrt{2})$, $(10/\sqrt{2})$, and $(13/\sqrt{2})$ km', consistent with the mean temperatures 169.10, 241.57, and 314.04 K, respectively. Because of the characteristics of this product, equation (35) as applied
Figure 7. Value of the Product of Two Factors (Comprising the Coefficient of the Uncertainty of Observed Densities) in Equation (36) as a Function of Density-Sampling Height Interval, for Each of Three Values of Mean Scale Height Consistent with Three Specified Temperatures

to the small-increment regime may be replaced by

$$\frac{\delta T_q}{T_q} \sim \frac{\delta \rho_q}{\rho_q}$$  \hspace{1cm} (38)

Thus, three different expressions represent the value of $\delta T_q / T_q$ as a function of uncertainty in density-height data, equation (38) in the small-increment regime, equation (37) in the large-increment regime, and equation (36) in the transition regime.

The application of the data from Figure 7, as representative of the three equations noted, to each of nine particular values of uncertainty in density-height
data, yielded the nomograph shown in Figure 8. This figure shows the percent uncertainty in the temperature, derived from density-height data through equation (12), as a function of density-sampling height interval for a band of normal atmospheric temperatures, 169 K to 314 K, and for a wide range of density-height uncertainty, 0.01% to 100%. This nomograph can serve as the basis for estimating the relationship between the uncertainty in each value of a set of density-height data to each point of the related Temperature-height profile, or vice versa, for the region of the earth's atmosphere below about 120 km.

The examples of hypothetical use of the pressure-data nomograph, discussed in Section III, could be readily transposed to apply to this density-data nomograph. In particular, Figure 8 shows that, in order to have no more than a 1% uncertainty in a 245 K temperature, for a temperature height-profile with a height resolution of 100 meters, the relative uncertainty in the density observations need not be smaller than 1%. This value is 100 times larger than the 0.01% uncertainty required of pressure data to meet the same conditions, and represents a very significant relaxation of the measurement requirements.

The estimates deduced from the use of this nomograph are theoretically accurate, as long as the data to which the nomograph is applied comply with the three restrictions imposed during the preceding development. It will be seen, however, that one of these restrictions may be essentially eliminated, while a second has
Figure 8. Nomograph for Estimating Relative Uncertainty in Temperatures (Calculated from Density-Height Data) as a Function of the Density-Height Sampling Interval, and as a Function of the Value of the Temperature, for Each of Nine Values of Relative Uncertainty in the Density-Height Observations
only a small influence. One may recall that these restrictions are as follows:

1. The height $h_q$ associated with $T_q$ is more than 3 scale heights below $h_i$ the greatest height of the sounding, i.e., $(h_i - h_q) > 3 H$.

2. The relative uncertainty of the density-height data is constant over the entire height range of the sounding.

3. The atmosphere is isothermal over the height range of the sounding.

The first of these restrictions must be retained unless one has some independent means for determining $T_1$ or $H_1$ and its uncertainty as required by equation (33). Only for $(h_i - h_q) > 3 H$ will the ratio $\rho_1/\rho_q$ be sufficiently small to permit the associated term to be neglected in equations (34) through (38).

The second restriction is not a very significant one since it has been shown that the constant factor $(\delta \rho / \rho)$, used as the general expression for density uncertainty in equation (35), is dominated by the particular value $(\delta \rho_q / \rho_q)$ associated with the density-height data at $h_q$. Thus, the need for $(\delta \rho / \rho)$ to be constant over the entire height range of a particular sounding can be relaxed without significantly affecting the validity of any of equations (36), (37), or (38).

The third restriction appears to be philosophically important because the earth's atmosphere below 120 km is certainly not isothermal. Actually, however, the existence of the various non-zero gradients in the temperature profile has little effect on $\delta T_q / T_q$. This situation is due to the fact that $\delta T_q / T_q$ depends primarily on the conditions between the data points $(\rho_{q-1}, h_{q-1})$ and $(\rho_q, h_q)$, and
hardly at all upon the condition between other pairs of data points. Even a non-
zero temperature gradient between the two specified data points has only a small
effect, and this can be readily accounted for. This is accomplished by reintro-
ducing into equation (36) certain temperature-gradient-dependent coefficients
which are associated with $\delta \rho_q / \rho_q$ in the general version of $\delta H_q / H_q$ (or equiva-
lently $\delta T_q / T_q$), as expressed by equation (23).

To begin with, $(H/Ah)$ in equation (36) is replaced by its original form $\bar{H}/(\Delta h + \Delta H)$
as used in equation (23). Then, $S_{q,min}$, which has been shown to be almost
exactly equal to $[(\rho_q - \rho_{q-1})/\rho_q]$ for isothermal conditions in the small-increment
regime, is replaced by the product of this ratio times its associated coefficient
$\alpha_{q-1,q}$ from equation (23). Thus, for an atmosphere with varying temperature
or scale height, we may rewrite equation (38) for the small-increment regime as

$$
\frac{\delta T_q}{T_q} \approx \alpha_{q-1,q} \left( \frac{\rho_q - \rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} \right) \left[ \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H_{q-1,q}} \right] \left( \frac{\delta \rho_q}{\rho_q} \right)
$$

(39)

Using the value of $\alpha_{q-1,q}$, as defined by equation (27), and replacing $\bar{H}$ by $(2H_q + 
\Delta H)/2$, where $\Delta H = (H_{q-1} - H_q)$, and remembering that $\Delta h = (h_{q-1} - h_q)$, we
have an expression for $\delta T_q / T_q$ in terms of $H_q$ and $\rho_q$ at height $h_{q-1}$, and
in terms of $H_q$, $\rho_q$, and $\delta \rho_q$ at height $h_q$:

$$
\frac{\delta T_q}{T_q} \approx \left[ \frac{(2H_q + \Delta H)^2}{4H_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{(\Delta h + \Delta H)^2} \right]_{q-1,q} \left( \frac{\rho_q - \rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\delta \rho_q}{\rho_q} \right)
$$

(40)
It is interesting to examine an example of the use of equation (40) in terms of a realistic set of data, applicable to the small-increment regime, as taken from the U.S. Standard Atmosphere 1962. Choosing the height interval, $\Delta h = 1 \text{ km}'$, between $h_{q-1} = 66 \text{ km}'$ and $h_q = 65 \text{ km}'$, in a region of negative temperature gradient, $\Delta T/\Delta h = -4 \text{ K/km}'$, we find $\rho_{q-1}$ and $\rho_q$ to be $1.3482 \times 10^{-4}$ and $1.5331 \times 10^{-4} \text{ kg m}^{-3}$ respectively, $H_q = 7.0709 \text{ km}'$, and $\Delta H = -0.1173 \text{ km}'$. The substitution of these data into equation (40) leads to a value of 1.076 for the coefficient of $\delta \rho_q/\rho_q$, a value involving only a second-order difference from the unity coefficient of equation (38); i.e., $\delta T_q/T_q$, in this case, would be 1.076 times $\delta \rho_q/\rho_q$, instead of 1.000 times $\delta \rho_q/\rho_q$ for the isothermal case. Thus, the assumption of isothermality, both in the development and use of equations 36, 37, and 38, is seen to introduce only a second-order error, and accounting for this error is unnecessary in most uncertainty determinations.
V. CONCLUSIONS: A COMPARISON OF THE DENSITY-DATA NOMOGRAPH WITH THAT FOR PRESSURE DATA

The nomograph relating $\delta T/T$ to sampling-height interval of density data for various temperatures and density uncertainties depicted in Figure 8 is based on the same range of values of temperature and sampling-height interval used in the nomograph of Figure 5, which relates $\delta T/T$ to the sampling-height interval of pressure data. In addition, the nine assumed values of $\delta p/p$ in Figure 8 are identical to the nine assumed values of $\delta p/p$ in Figure 5. Thus, the two figures are exactly comparable, with the only difference being that Figure 8 is for density data, while Figure 5 is for pressure data. A comparison of these two figures shows that, at least from the point of view of height resolution and uncertainty of derived temperatures, density-height data are to be preferred over pressure-height data.

In the large-increment regime, i.e., $\Delta h > 5\bar{H}$, the nomograph of Figure 8 is essentially identical to that of Figure 5. In this regime, both figures show that the uncertainty in the derived temperature is decreased as the height resolution of the related temperature profile is decreased, i.e., as the sampling-height interval is increased. Even the smaller sampling-height intervals within this regime are so large, however, i.e., $\Delta h \approx 5\bar{H}$, or about 30 km, that the height resolution makes this regime essentially useless for temperature-height determinations at heights below 120 km.
In the small-increment regime as well as in the transition regime, Figure 5 and 8 are quite different from each other. In the small-increment regime (Δh < 0.2H), the uncertainty in the temperatures derived from density-height data is seen to be independent of both Δh and T (or H), as long as (h₁ - hₚ) > 3H. In this regime, δT_q/T_q derived from densities is dependent only upon the uncertainty of the density-height value associated with the related height hₚ. It is apparent that uncertainty considerations place no limits on the usable fineness of the height resolution of the density-height data. This situation is in contrast to that associated with pressure-height data in Figure 5 where δT/TT is seen to depend upon T and Δh, as well as upon δp/p, and where δT/TT becomes prohibitively large for reasonable values of δp/p when Δh becomes smaller than about 1 km.

In the transition regime, Figure 8 shows less difference from Figure 5 than in the small-increment regime. In this transition regime, the characteristics of the function determining δT/T from density-height data vary between those of the small-increment regime and those of the large-increment regime, such that δT/T decreases slightly as Δh varies from about 0.2H to about 5H. In going from the small-increment regime to the transition regime, however, the increased coarseness of the height resolution of the related temperature-height profile would more than offset the correspondingly small decrease in temperature uncertainty, particularly since the minimum values of Δh in this regime are already of the order of 1 km. Even in this regime, however, the
density-height data yield smaller values of $\delta T/T$ than are obtained from pressure-height data.

In general, a comparison of Figure 8 with Figure 5 shows that the density-height data are far more desirable than pressure-height data at least from the point of view of the size of the uncertainty and of the height resolution of the derived temperature-height profile.
REFERENCES


It is well known that temperature may be deduced from density-height data by means of the following relationship:

\[ T_q = \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot T_1 + \frac{GM}{R} \cdot \frac{1}{\rho_q} \int_{h_1}^{h_q} \rho(h) \, dh \]  

(A-1)

where

\( \rho(h) \) is the function relating atmospheric density to geopotential height,

\( h_1 \) is the geopotential height of the upper limit of the region of integration, in geopotential meters (m'),

\( h_q \) is the geopotential height of the lower limit of the region of integration, in geopotential meters (m'),

\( G \) is the geopotential gravity constant \( 9.80665 \text{ m}^2 \text{ sec}^{-2} (\text{m}')^{-1} \),

\( M \) is the mean molecular weight of the air \( 28.9644 \text{ kg (kmol)}^{-1} \),

\( R \) is the universal gas constant \( 8.31432 \times 10^3 \text{ joules K}^{-1} \text{ kmol}^{-1} \),

\( \rho_1 \) is the atmospheric density at \( h_1 \),

\( T_1 \) is the atmospheric temperature at \( h_1 \),

\( \rho_q \) is the atmospheric density at \( h_q \), and

\( T_q \) is the sought-after atmospheric temperature at \( h_q \).
Because of the defined relationship between temperature and scale height $H$, i.e., $H = \frac{TR}{GM}$, it is convenient to rewrite equation (A-1) as

$$H_q = \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot H_1 + \frac{1}{\rho_q} \int_{h_1}^{h_q} \rho(h) \, dh$$  \hspace{1cm} (A-2)

where

- $H_1$ is the scale height at $h_1$ and
- $H_q$ is the scale height at $h_q$.

Since $\rho(h)$ is generally not known as an analytical function, for which one might find a perfect integral, but rather is known as a set of numerical values of density versus geometric or geopotential height, it is convenient to replace the integral term in equation (A-2) by a series approximation. One possible form of such an approximation is a series of terms each representing the area of successive trapezoids under the graph of the natural logarithm of density versus $h$. When the data, $\rho$ versus $h$, is plotted on a semilogarithmic scale, i.e., $\ln \rho$ versus $h$, with successive data points connected by straight-line segments, as is frequently the situation for closely spaced density-height data, the series of logarithmic trapezoids exactly fits the area under the graph. In using this approximation to the integral equation, (A-2) may be rewritten as

$$H_q = \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot H_1 + \frac{1}{\rho_q} \sum_{j=2}^{q} \frac{(h_{j-1} - h_j)(\rho_j - \rho_{j-1})}{\ln \rho_j - \ln \rho_{j-1}}$$  \hspace{1cm} (A-3)

The validity of the approximation of equation (A-2) by equation (A-3) improves as the height increment between successive density values decreases.
The uncertainty in the computed value of $H_q$ is based on a function involving the partial derivative of $H_q$ with respect to each of the independent variables. These include $H_i$, and the appropriate number of density-height data pairs; i.e., $h_1$, $ho_1; h_j, \rho_j$ (for $j = 2$ to $q - 1$); as well as $h_q, \rho_q$. With the assumption that the uncertainty in each data pair is entirely in the density value, we are interested in the partial derivatives of $H_q$, as expressed by equation (A-3), with respect to only the following variables: $H_1, \rho_1, \rho_j$ (for $j = 2$ to $q - 1$), and $\rho_q$, having the general designation $y_i$. These partial derivatives $\partial H_q / \partial y_i$ multiplied by the corresponding uncertainty $\delta y_i$ are given in the following equations:

The product of $\delta H_1$ times the partial derivative of $H_q$ with respect to $H_1$ is simply

$$\frac{\partial H_q}{\partial H_1} \cdot \delta H_1 = \left\{ \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{H_1}{H_1} \right\} \frac{\delta H_1}{H_1} \quad (A-4)$$

The product of $\delta \rho_1$ times the partial derivative of $H_q$ with respect to $\rho_1$ is

$$\frac{\partial H_q}{\partial \rho_1} \cdot \delta \rho_1 = \left\{ \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{H_i}{1} - \left( \frac{\Delta h}{\ln \rho_2 - \ln \rho_1} \right) \left[ \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} - \left( \frac{\rho_2 - \rho_1}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{1}{\ln \rho_2 - \ln \rho_1} \right) \right] \right\} \frac{\delta \rho_1}{\rho_1} \quad (A-5)$$

It can be shown, however, that

$$\frac{1}{\ln \rho_2 - \ln \rho_1} = \left( \frac{\overline{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2} \quad (A-6)$$

where the double subscript "1, 2" on the right-hand member of equation (A-6) indicates that $\Delta h = (h_1 - h_2)$, $\Delta H = (H_1 - H_2)$, and $\overline{H} = (H_1 + H_2)/2$. When $h_1$ is greater than $h_2$, the left-hand side of equation (A-6) is positive, $\Delta h$ is positive, and $\Delta H$ has the sign of the temperature gradient $\partial T / \partial h$ in the region.
\( h_1 \) to \( h_2 \). The same equation, with other consecutive digits, as for example, 2, 3 or 3, 4, etc., indicates these same relationships for the corresponding height intervals.

Equation (A-6) combined with equation (A-5) yields

\[
\frac{\partial H_q}{\partial \rho_1} \cdot \delta \rho_1 = \left\{ \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{H_1}{l} \left[ \left( \frac{H}{1} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2} \right] \left[ \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} - \frac{\rho_2 - \rho_1}{\rho_q} \left( \frac{H}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2} \right] \right\} \frac{\delta \rho_1}{\rho_1} \quad (A-7)
\]

The product of \( \delta \rho_2 \) times the derivative of \( H_q \) with respect to \( \rho_2 \) is a quantity which, when modified by the introduction of equation (A-6), with each of two different, but appropriate pairs of digits, becomes

\[
\frac{\partial H_q}{\partial \rho_2} \cdot \delta \rho_2 = \left\{ \left[ \left( \frac{H}{1} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2} \right] \left[ \frac{\rho_2}{\rho_q} - \frac{\rho_2 - \rho_1}{\rho_q} \left( \frac{H}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2} \right] + \right\} \frac{\delta \rho_2}{\rho_2} \quad (A-8)
\]

In this equation the subscript "1, 2" on each of two factors has the same significance as it has on these same two factors in equation (A-7), while the subscript "2, 3" on each of two other factors signifies that the quantities \( \overline{H} \), \( \Delta H \), and \( \Delta h \) within each of these factors are associated with the geopotential height increment \( h_2 \) to \( h_3 \). Thus, for these two factors, \( \Delta h = h_2 - h_3 \), \( \overline{H} = (H_2 + H_3)/2 \), and \( \Delta H = H_2 - H_3 \). Equation (A-8) obviously involves two height increments, the two which are separated by the height \( h_2 \).

The partial derivative of \( H_q \) with respect to each of \( \rho_3 \), \( \rho_4 \), \ldots, \( \rho_{q-2} \), and \( \rho_{q-1} \), when multiplied by \( \delta \rho_j \) (where \( j \) is successively 3, 4, \ldots, q-2, and q-1)
and, when further modified by the appropriate introduction of equation (A-6), is identical to equation (A-8) except for the successive incrementing of the subscripts. Thus, a convenient form of the product of \( \delta \rho_{q-1} \) times the particular expression for the partial derivative of \( H_q \) with respect to \( \rho_{q-1} \) is

\[
\frac{\delta H_q}{\delta H_{q-1}} \cdot \delta \rho_{q-1} = \left\{ \left( \frac{H}{\bar{H}} \right) \left( H_{q-2} \right) \right\} \left[ \frac{\rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} - \left( \frac{\rho_{q-1} - \rho_{q-2}}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{q-2,q-1} \right] + \\
- \left\{ \left( \frac{H}{\bar{H}} \right) \left( H_{q-1} \right) \right\} \left[ \frac{\rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} - \left( \frac{\rho_{q-1} - \rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{q-1,q} \right] \frac{\delta \rho_{q-1}}{\rho_{q-1}} \tag{A-9}
\]

In equation (A-9) the subscript "q-2, q-1" on each of two factors signifies that the quantities \( \bar{H} \), \( \Delta H \), and \( \Delta h \) within each of those two factors are associated with the geopotential-height increment \( h_{q-2} \) to \( h_{q-1} \), so that \( \Delta h = h_{q-2} - h_{q-1} \), \( \bar{H} = (H_{q-2} + H_{q-1})/2 \), and \( \Delta H = H_{q-2} - H_{q-1} \). Similarly, in that equation, the subscript "q-1, q" on each of two other factors signifies that the quantities \( \bar{H} \), \( \Delta H \), and \( \Delta h \) within each of these two factors are associated with the geopotential-height increment \( h_{q-1} \) to \( h_q \), so that \( \Delta h = h_{q-1} - h_q \), \( \bar{H} = (H_{q-1} + H_q)/2 \), and \( \Delta H = H_{q-1} - H_q \). Again this expression involves two height increments, in this instance the two separated by the height \( h_{q-1} \).

Because of the common form of the partial derivatives of \( H_q \) with respect to \( \rho_2, \rho_3, \ldots, \rho_{q-2} \), and \( \rho_{q-1} \), it is desirable to write a general version of equations (A-8) and (A-9) to express the product of \( \delta \rho_j \) times the partial derivative of \( H_q \) with respect to \( \rho_j \), where \( j \) is understood to have values ranging from 2 to \( q-1 \).
This general equation is

\[ \frac{\partial H_q}{\partial \rho_q} \cdot \delta \rho_j = \left\{ \left[ \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{1} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j-1,j} \right] \left[ \frac{\rho_j}{\rho_q} - \left( \frac{\rho_j - \rho_{j-1}}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j-1,j} \right] + \right. \\
\left. - \left[ \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{1} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j,j+1} \right] \left[ \frac{\rho_j}{\rho_q} - \left( \frac{\rho_{j+1} - \rho_j}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j,j+1} \right] \right\} \delta \rho_j \]  

(A-10)

Finally, the product of \( \delta \rho_q \) times the partial derivative of \( H_q \) with respect to \( \rho_q \) when modified by the introduction of equation (A-6), is

\[ \frac{\partial H_q}{\partial \rho_q} \cdot \delta \rho_q = \left\{ \left[ \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{1} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{q-1,q} \right] \left[ \frac{\rho_q}{\rho_q} - \left( \frac{\rho_q - \rho_{q-1}}{\rho_q} \right) \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{q-1,q} \right] + \right. \\
\left. - \left( \frac{H_1}{1} \cdot \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \right) - \sum_{j=1}^{q} \left[ \left( \frac{\bar{H}}{1} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j-1,j} \left( \frac{\rho_j - \rho_{j-1}}{\rho_q} \right) \right] \right\} \delta \rho_q \]  

(A-11)

In this equation the subscript "q-1, q" on each of two factors has the same significance as in equation (A-9), while the subscript "j-1, j" on another factor in the general term signifies that the quantities \( \bar{H}, \Delta H, \) and \( \Delta h \) within that term are associated with the general geopotential height increment \( h_{j-1} \) to \( h_j \). Thus, for this factor, \( \Delta h = h_{j-1} - h_j \), \( \bar{H} = (H_{j-1} + H_j)/2 \), and \( \Delta H = H_{j-1} - H_j \).

It is evident that one part of this equation deals with the data associated with the single height increment \( \Delta h = (h_{q-1} - h_q) \) between the lowest two density-height values involved in the calculation of \( H_q \), while another part of the equation deals with all the height increments between \( h_1 \) and \( h_q \), and their associated density data.
Each of equations (A-4), (A-7), (A-10), and (A-11) is directly involved in the Gaussian expression for relative uncertainty $\delta H_q/H_q$ which follows:

$$\frac{\delta H_q}{H_q} = \frac{1}{H_q} \left[ \left( \frac{\partial q}{\partial H_1} \cdot \delta H_1 \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\partial q}{\partial \rho_1} \cdot \delta \rho_1 \right)^2 + \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left( \frac{\partial q}{\partial \rho_j} \cdot \delta \rho_j \right)^2 + \left( \frac{\partial q}{\partial \rho_q} \cdot \delta \rho_q \right)^2 \right]^{1/2}$$  \hspace{1cm} (A-12)

The first, second, and fourth terms within the brackets of this equation are seen to represent exactly the squares of equation (A-4), (A-7), and (A-11), respectively. The third term represents the squares of equation (A-10) evaluated for $j$ ranging from 2 to $q-1$. The bracketed portion of the right-hand side of equation (A-12) is seen to be multiplied by the reciprocal of $H_q$, thereby implying that each term of equations (A-4), (A-7), (A-10), and (A-11) must ultimately be multiplied by $1/H_q$, either before or after these equations are squared and summed to equal $(\delta H_q/H_q)^2$. It is convenient in this case to do the multiplication before squaring and summing. Equations (A-7), (A-10), and (A-11), each contain the doubly subscripted factor

$$\left( \frac{H}{1 - \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H}} \right)$$

in at least one term. It is convenient therefore to accomplish this multiplication operation in the appropriate terms by introducing $H_q$ into the denominator of this doubly subscripted factor, thereby converting this factor into a nondimensional coefficient with a value close to unity. Then, in order to put the resulting coefficient into proper prospective with respect to the remainder of the equation, and also to conserve space in the uncertainty expression being developed, it is
convenient to define each of these modified factors by a specific symbol. Thus, from equation (A-7) the modified factor is defined as the coefficient $\alpha_{1,2}$, i.e.,

$$\alpha_{1,2} = \left( \frac{H}{H_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2}$$  \hspace{1cm} (A-13)

while the two modified factors involved in equation (A-11) are defined as

$$\alpha_{q-1,j} = \left( \frac{H}{H_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j-1,j}$$  \hspace{1cm} (A-14)

and

$$\alpha_{j,j+1} = \left( \frac{H}{H_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j,j+1}$$  \hspace{1cm} (A-15)

The modified factor from equation (A-10) is defined as the coefficient $\alpha_{q-1,q}$, i.e.,

$$\alpha_{q-1,q} = \left( \frac{H}{H_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{q-1,q}$$  \hspace{1cm} (A-16)

Substituting equations (A-4), (A-7), (A-10), and (A-11), respectively, into the successive terms on the right-hand side of equation (A-12), dividing each of these equations by $H_q$ (i.e., replacing each of the "1's" in the denominators of these equations by $H_q$), and simultaneously replacing the resulting modified doubly subscripted factors in these equations by the equivalent coefficient forms defined in equations (A-13) through (A-16), leads to the following expression for $(\delta H_q/H_q)^2$:

$$\left( \frac{\delta H_q}{H_q} \right)^2 = \left( \frac{H_1}{H_q} \cdot \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta H_1}{\Delta H} \right)^2 + \left[ \frac{H_1}{H_q} \cdot \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot \delta \alpha_{1,2} \right] \left[ \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right] \left( \frac{H}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{1,2} \cdot \left( \frac{\delta \rho_1}{\rho_1} \right)^2 + \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left[ \alpha_{q-1,j} \cdot \left( \frac{\rho_q}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{j-1,j} \right] \cdot \delta \alpha_{j,j+1} \cdot \left[ \frac{\rho_j}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right]_{j,j+1} \cdot \left( \frac{\delta \rho_j}{\rho_j} \right)^2 + \left[ \frac{\rho_q}{\rho_q} \cdot \frac{\Delta h}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right]_{q-1,q} \cdot \left( \frac{H}{\Delta h + \Delta H} \right)_{q-1,q} \cdot \left( \frac{\delta \rho_q}{\rho_q} \right)^2$$  \hspace{1cm} (A-17)
Because $\delta H_q/H_q$ is identically equal to $\delta T_q/T_q$, equation (A-17) may be re-written as

\[
\left(\frac{\delta T_q}{T_q}\right)^2 = \left(\frac{H_1}{H_q} - \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q}\right)^2 \left(\frac{\delta H_1}{H_1}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{H_1}{H_q} - \frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q}\right)^2 \left(\frac{\rho_1 - \rho_{\text{ref}}}{\rho_q}\right)^2 \left(\frac{\bar{H}}{\Delta h + \Delta H}\right)_{1,1} \left(\frac{\rho_1}{\rho_q}\right)^2 + \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left(\frac{\rho_j - \rho_{\text{ref}}}{\rho_q}\right)^2 \left(\frac{\Delta h + \Delta H}{\bar{H}}\right)_{j-1,j} \left(\frac{\rho_j}{\rho_q}\right)^2 + \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \left(\frac{\rho_{\text{ref}}}{\rho_q}\right)^2 \left(\frac{\Delta h + \Delta H}{\bar{H}}\right)_{q-1,q} \left(\frac{\rho_{\text{ref}}}{\rho_q}\right)^2 \sum_{j=2}^{q-1} \alpha_{j-1,j} \left(\frac{\rho_j - \rho_{\text{ref}}}{\rho_q}\right)^2 \left(\frac{\rho_{\text{ref}}}{\rho_q}\right)^2 \left(\frac{\Delta h + \Delta H}{\bar{H}}\right)_{q-1,q} \left(\frac{\rho_{\text{ref}}}{\rho_q}\right)^2 .
\]