

Trent Associates Report History of Medicine Collections

David M. Rubenstein
Rare Book & Manuscript Library

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A Dear Friend Remembered

The History of Medicine Collections mourn the loss of our dear friend and supporter Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans. Mrs. Semans passed away on January 25, 2012, at the age of 91.

In 1956, Mrs. Semans donated one of the HOM's cornerstone collections, the Josiah C. Trent Collection. Dr. Trent was Mrs. Semans' first husband, and together they built a remarkable library of over 4,000 rare books, 2,500 manuscripts, and numerous unique artifacts and medical instruments. Many of the HOM's rarest and



Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans with Curator of Rare Books Thomas M. Simkins. Photo from the University Archives Photograph Collection.

most valuable holdings are in the Trent Collection, including first editions of monumental works, the collection of ivory anatomical manikins, and the unique anatomical flap engravings of the *Four Seasons*.

Mrs. Semans often attended the Trent History of Medicine lecture series events and remained engaged with and supportive of numerous programs and initiatives throughout the library and university community. Her loss will be felt by many across our campus, community, and state.

Medical Revolutionary War Archive Acquired

The History of Medicine Collections in the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library have acquired a collection documenting the state of the medical arts at the birth of our nation. The papers of Dr. Philip Turner (1740-1815), Surgeon General for the Eastern Department of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, contain correspondence, medical returns, printed materials, records from northeastern field and city hospitals, and ledgers documenting Turner's career as a surgeon in private practice, in the Continental Army, and in the United States Army. This important collection is now available to the public for the first time.

Records from the hospitals and a copy of an account ledger kept by Dr. John Morgan, head of the army medical services during the

Revolution, document the illnesses and injuries suffered by the soldiers and the outcome of the treatments attempted. This information was invaluable immediately to the army and subsequently informed general medical practice. Students and scholars can now study the original records for themselves. Turner's medical observations from his private practice in the years after the war provide an important window into health care in the new republic. His entries include an "enquiry into the Genius, understanding, and temper, which naturally fit a man for being a Physician." Surprisingly, Turner had difficulty getting a pension from the U.S. government for his wartime service. The collection documents the many years he and his family spent arguing their case—including Turner's correspondence

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Recent Acquisitions

du Coudray, Madame Le Boursier [Angélique Marguerite]: **Abrégé de l'art des accouchemens....** Paris: Chez la veuve Delaguette, 1759.

Vacher, Gilles. **Dissertation sur le cancer des mammelles où, sans recourir à aucune hipotéte, on donne une véritable idée de la nature, de ses différences, de ses signes et de ses causes, avec la méthode de le traiter fondée sur plusieurs faits de Pratique.** A Bruxelles, et se vend à Besançon, Chez Jean-Baptiste Charmet ... 1740.

Hubbard, S. Dana. Pamphlets including **Facts About Marriage Every Young Man & Woman Should Know, Facts About Motherhood, Sex Facts for Young Boys, Sex Facts for Young Men, Sex Knowledge for the Mature Mind, and Truth About Quacks and Self Medication.** New York : Claremont Printing Co., c1922.

Trent Associates*

Sustaining Members

Dr. George Engstrom
 Dr. and Mrs. Irwin and Therese Freundlich
 Dr. Rufus Hambricht
 Dr. John D. Hamilton
 Mr. and Mrs. James P. Jones
 Drs. Rebecca and John Kirkland
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 Dr. Edward L.C. Pritchett
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 Dr. Debara L. Tucci and Dr. Kevan E. VanLandingham
 Drs. Evelyn and George Wilbanks
 Dr. and Mrs. Robert and Gloria Wilkins
 Dr. Ruby Wilson

Gifts in Kind

Dr. George W. Paulson
 Dr. Michael McVaugh
 Dr. Andrew Nadell

Contributing Members

Mr. Kenneth Bieber (in memory of Annie Beery Bieber)
 Dr. and Mrs. Edward and Roxana Bossen
 Mr. Walter E. Campbell
 Mr. Christopher Harris (in honor of Mrs. Mary DBT Semans)
 Dr. A.T. Pagter, Jr.
 Dr. George W. Paulson
 Wentworth & Leggett Bookshop

Members

Ms. Barbara Busse
 Dr. Richard Weiner
 Dr. David Werman
 Ms. Judy Woodburn

*Contributions as of August 2011

Medical Revolutionary War Archive Acquired cont.

with President Thomas Jefferson on the subject.

Margaret Humphreys, Josiah Charles Trent Professor in the History of Medicine and Professor of Medicine at Duke University, underscores the importance of the collection for scholars. "This archive promises to open new windows into medical practice in the late colonial and early republic eras.

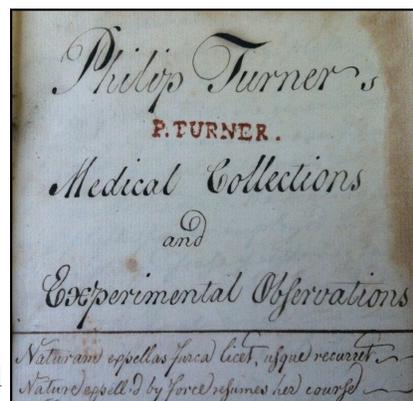
Given the wealth of ledgers, journals and correspondence, the collection will illuminate the life and work of the 'ordinary surgeon' from a time period known mainly from the stories of leading figures like Benjamin Rush, John Morgan, and William Shippen (all, as it turns out,

represented in Turner's correspondence.)

The collection should bring new balance to our knowledge of this seminal era in American medical history."

The Philip Turner papers complement other materials within Duke's Rubenstein Library and the History of Medicine Collections, including manuscripts related to American Founder and physician Benjamin Rush.

The collection strengthens the Rubenstein Library's already fine holdings in medical military materials, including Civil War surgeons' diaries, nursing accounts from World War I, and medical war advertisements from World War II.



A page from the journal of Philip Turner, a surgeon during the Revolutionary War.

Trent Foundation Grant Supports Manuscript Discovery By Jacqueline Chapman

We are half-way through the History of Medicine Manuscript Collections Access Project, generously funded by a grant from the Josiah Charles Trent Memorial Foundation. The grant supports a yearlong effort to provide more accurate and detailed descriptions for small manuscript collections within the History of Medicine Collections. These manuscripts include correspondence, diplomas, account books, land deeds, prescriptions, letters of recommendation, drawings, portraits, articles and speeches, and even collections of eighteenth- to twentieth- century medical school notes. Over the course of the project, we will reorganize the materials and provide more detailed descriptions for them. At the end of the project, staff will have increased knowledge of the contents of the collections, and historians, physicians, and students will be able to more easily discover and use them.

As the History of Medicine Collections Intern, I have had the pleasure over the past few months of working with one of the key collections in this group, the Trent Manuscripts, an assemblage of hundreds of small correspondence collections spanning the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. With guidance from Rachel Ingold, Curator of the History of Medicine Collections, and Paula Jeannet Mangiafico, Rubenstein Library Senior Processing Archivist, I developed project workflows and have assessed and described hundreds of individual letters and other manuscripts. There are many items of interest, but I will share two highlights from my experience with the collection:

A letter from Aaron Burr to his wife shows that second opinions were highly valued.

Burr speaks with Dr. Benjamin Rush concerning his wife's condition, who suggests hemlock as a curative. Burr writes, "I was the more pleased with this advice, as I had not told him that you had been in the use of this medicine, the concurrence of his opinion gives me great faith in it." Mrs. Burr died not long after the letter was written.

A letter from Charles Darwin reveals insights into his relationship with fellow evolution theorist Alfred Wallace. In correspondence to Jenner Weir, Darwin writes that he disagrees with Wallace's most recent articles, explaining that "I always distrust myself when I differ from him; but I cannot admit that birds learn to make their nests from having seen them whilst young. I must think it as true an instinct as that which leads a caterpillar to suspend its cocoon [sic] in a particular manner."

The incoming HOM Collections Intern, Nathalie Baudrand, will continue to work with the collections to promote their use to increase their visibility to the research community.

Jacqueline Chapman is a graduate student at UNC - Chapel Hill's School of Information and Library Science and HOM intern from September 2011 to January 2012.

Please see our website for more information about upcoming events including the Trent History of Medicine Speaker Series.

library.duke.edu/rubenstein/history-of-medicine

HOM in the Classroom

The following are a sampling of classes that received instruction from the History of Medicine Collections.

First Year Medical Students: Anatomy Day



First year medical students view materials on Anatomy Day

Second Year Medical Students: Pre-clerkship classes

Writing 20: On the Boundaries of Medicine

History: The Physician in History; Epidemic Disease in America, 1492-Present

DUKE UNIVERSITY

LIBRARIES

History of Medicine Collections

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Upcoming Events

Symposium on the Civil War

On March 16, 2012, Duke University Libraries will co-sponsor “**Another March Madness: The American Civil War at 150.**” Speakers include Dr. Margaret Humphreys and Dr. Shauna Devine who will be presenting on the topic of medicine in the Civil War. More information can be found at library.duke.edu/civilwar.

New Exhibit Opening in April

The History of Medicine Collections and Duke’s Medical Center Archives have partnered on a new exhibition titled “**What Does Your Doctor Know? Exploring the History of Physician Education from Early Greek Theory to the Practice of Duke Medicine.**” The exhibit will be on display in the Perkins Gallery from April through July of 2012.

