

Mary V. Clymer papers

MC 16

Finding aid prepared by Gail E. Farr, updated by Bethany Myers.

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University of Pennsylvania, Barbara Bates Center for the Study of The History of Nursing

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Barbara Bates Center for the Study of The History of Nursing
Creator	Clymer, Mary V., 1888-1889
Title	Mary V. Clymer papers
Call number	MC 16
Date [inclusive]	1884-1888
Extent	02 linear feet
Language	English
Abstract	<p>This collection consists of notes taken by Mary V. Clymer, a nurse famous for her appearance in Thomas Eakins' painting "The Agnew Clinic." Clymer was a student at the Training School for Nurses at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, from 1888 to 1889. The notes documented the variety of experiences which were part of her educational program.</p>

Cite as:

Mary V. Clymer papers, Barbara Bates Center for The Study of The History of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Mary V. Clymer was a student at the Training School for Nurses of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from 1887 to 1889. She graduated from the School in 1889 (one of fifteen who completed the two-year course at the School that spring), at which time she was awarded the Nightingale medal. Clymer is believed to have been the nurse portrayed in Thomas Eakins's painting, *The Agnew Clinic*. In the painting, she is standing next to a group of physicians who are performing a surgical procedure on a patient at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School before an audience of medical students as the faculty member and surgeon, Dr. D. Hayes Agnew, conducts the clinic. The painting was presented to the University of Pennsylvania Medical School on May 1, 1889.

Scope and Contents

This collection consists of notes taken by Mary V. Clymer during her training at the Training School for Nurses at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from 1888 to 1889. The notes documented the variety of experiences which were part of her educational program at the School which included rotations in the hospital wards where she performed assigned duties under supervision of nursing school faculty and nursing staff employed by the hospital; as well as attendance at formal lectures taught by the medical school faculty. The Clymer notes were used extensively by Mary Virginia Stephenson, R.N., in writing *The First Fifty Years of the Training School for Nurses of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1940). A note filed in with the Clymer papers read, "Lecture notes taken by Mary V. Clymer 1887-1889/Mrs. George Baras [?], Given to M. V. Stephenson." The manuscript has sometimes been cited as covering the period from 1887 to 1889; however, a close examination suggests that the notes actually date from the period between May 1888 and March 1889.

The collection contains two small bound volumes, described in more detail below. The first volume contains ward notes. Volume 1 also contains (starting from the back of the volume and working toward the middle) a rough set of lecture notes. The second volume contains a clean copy of the lecture notes which are found in Volume 1. The contents of the second volume appear to have been recopied from the draft version in Volume 1 and submitted for a grade. There is no pagination in either volume.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Barbara Bates Center for the Study of The History of Nursing
Finding aid prepared by Gail E. Farr, updated by Bethany Myers.

Access Restrictions

Both notebooks are restricted from researcher use. Only photocopies can be requested by researchers.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may apply. Please contact the Center with requests for copying and for authorization to publish, quote or reproduce the material.

Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Gift of the Alumni Association of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. The Alumni Association deposited the papers at the Center for safekeeping around 1985. The organization formally donated them to the Center on April 5, 1991 (Acc. 1991.20). The deed of gift, approved by the organization on May 11, 2002 (Acc. 2002.10), completed the accession.

Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Lecture notes

OCCUPATION(S)

- Nurse

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Clymer, Mary V., 1888-1889
- Landis, Nadine, 1930-1988

SUBJECT(S)

- Nursing schools.

Collection Inventory

NOTEBOOK, VOLUME 1.

Scope and Contents note

The entries detail the daily activities that Clymer observed on the hospital ward. The entries date from August 4, 1888 to November 19, 1888. Clymer recorded her daily assigned duties, the care provided by herself as a nursing student, her interaction with staff nurses or hospital employees such as a Miss Bellamy [?], and other kinds of ward work which she performed such as housekeeping tasks. She described caring for typhoid fever and other cases, giving food and medicine to the sick, making dressings, assisting with preparations, helping Miss Bellamy prepare instruments for operations, making tea for patients, and bathing patients. Evidently at least part of the notes pertain to a tour of duty in the medical ward: the entry for August 24, 1888, notes, "Four months today in the medical ward..."

	Box	Volume
Ward Notes, August 4, 1888-November 19, 1888.	1	1
Rough Lecture Notes, circa October 15-October 29, 1888 to November 6, 1888 . .	1	1

NOTEBOOK, VOLUME 2.

Scope and Contents note

Volume 2 includes several of the lectures from the back portion of Volume I, which have been copied into Vol. 2 in a neater and clearer form, along with notes from other lectures. The instructor's comments and grade for each lecture appear in the document. Presumably all the contents of Volume 2 have been recopied from rough notes, including the rough notes in Volume I of this collection as well from other

notebooks which Clymer may have kept but which were not preserved with this collection. Volume 2 contains notes of lectures which were presented to the nursing students at the Training School from May 10 [1888] through sometime in the early part of 1889. The last lecture in the volume in which Clymer recorded a specific date was January 8, 1889. Researchers may wish to consult the "Outline of Lecture Courses and Practical Instruction used from 1886 to 1889," appearing in Stephenson, p. 200, for a complete list of the lecture topics and the lecturers.

	Box	Volume
Copied Lecture Notes, May 10 [1888]-[circa Jan.-March?] 1889.	1	2

PHOTOCOPIES FOR RESEARCH USE.

Scope and Contents note

Although the originals of the two volumes are bound notebooks, the binding has deteriorated and pages are loose. Because of the fragile character of the originals, researchers will only be allowed to use a photocopy of the documents. The photocopy is filed in Box 2. The photocopy has page numbers which were imprinted onto the copy at the time the photocopy was made. Researchers are reminded that the mechanical-looking numbers on the copy indicate the page number in the photocopied version and not to page numbers in the original notebooks, which were unpaginated. The photocopy shows two facing pages of the original in one frame, so the imprinted mechanical page number is roughly half the number of pages which are found in the original notebooks.

Request for Photocopies

The Center will only allow photocopying of the photocopy of the Clymer notebooks in Box 2, not of the original document.

The page count is as follows:

Volume 1, Ward Notes section, requires 38 pages of photocopying, which includes 2 pages per frame for most of the images.

Volume 1, Rough Lecture Notes section, requires 35 pages of photocopying, which includes 2 pages per frame for most of the images

Volume 2, Lecture Notes, requires 73 pages of photocopying, which includes 2 pages per frame for most of the images.

	Box	Folder
Vol. 1, Ward Notes, August 4, 1888-November 19, 1888 [photocopy paginated 1-38].	2	1
Vol. 1, Rough Lecture Notes, from between c. October 15-October 29, 1888 to November 6, 1888 [photocopy paginated 1-35].	2	2
Vol. 2, Lecture Notes, May 10 [1888]-[c. January-March?] 1889 [photocopy paginated 1-73].	2	3
