

Bertha Van Hoosen papers

SC.145

Finding aid prepared by Laurie Rizzo.

Last updated on November 17, 2011.

Drexel University, College of Medicine Legacy Center

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Summary Information

Repository	Drexel University: College of Medicine Legacy Center
Creator	Van Hoosen, Bertha, M.D., 1863-1952
Title	Bertha Van Hoosen papers
Call number	SC.145
Date [bulk]	1920-1950
Date [inclusive]	1913-1971
Extent	2 linear feet
Language	English
Language of Materials note	The majority of the materials in this collection are in English, however, there is some material in German, Ukranian, French and Russian.
Abstract	Bertha Van Hoosen (1863-1952), a doctor specializing in obstetrics and gynecology in Chicago, IL, founded the American Medical Women's Association. Her collection includes correspondence, journal articles, plans for a Medical Women's Library at Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, teaching material, images, and bibliographic material regarding women in medicine. A large part of the collection concerns Van Hoosen's interests in the National Medical Women's Association, later the American Medical Women's Association and the Medical Women's Library. There are also photographic images, x-rays and illustrations of medical case studies conducted by Van Hoosen.

Cite as:

Bertha Van Hoosen papers, 1913-1971, bulk 1920-1950. Drexel University College of Medicine, Legacy Center: Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine and Homeopathy

Biography/History

Bertha Van Hoosen was born on March 26, 1863 to Joshua and Sarah Taylor Van Hoosen at Stoney Creek, Michigan. Although very supportive of education generally, the Van Hoosen's did not support their daughter's desire to become a doctor. Despite their views, Van Hoosen graduated from the University of Michigan with her BA in 1884 and then became one of the first women to graduate from the University of Michigan Medical School with her MD in 1888.

Van Hoosen's medical career began with residences at the Women's Hospital in Detroit, the Michigan Asylum for the Insane at Kalamazoo, and the New England Hospital for Women and Children in Boston. In 1892, she opened her own practice in Chicago, specializing in gynecology and obstetrics. During her career, which spanned more than fifty years, Van Hoosen headed the obstetrical department of the Chicago Hospital for Women and Children from 1896 to 1899, was a member of the surgical staff at Provident Hospital, headed the gynecology department at the Northwestern University Women's Medical School in 1901, and was the first woman to serve on the Cook County (Chicago) medical staff from 1913 to 1920. She also taught as a professor of medicine at Northwestern University Women's Medical School from 1891 to 1902, at the University of Illinois from 1902 to 1912, and served as the head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Loyola University from 1919 to 1937. Van Hoosen founded and served as the first president of the American Medical Women's Association in 1915 and was an honorary member of the International Association of Medical Women.

Van Hoosen is known for developing the "buttonhole" appendectomy surgical technique and the use of scopolamine morphine, also known as "Twilight Sleep," as an anesthetic. Her work also included efforts to publicize the need for and value of sterilization of medical instruments. In her autobiography, *Petticoat Surgeon*, Van Hoosen states that "medical women have always had to struggle for representation," (p. 283), and she tried to reduce that struggle throughout her career.

Bertha Van Hoosen died on June 7, 1952.

Bibliography

Bertha Van Hoosen Papers at the University of Illinois at Chicago (<http://www.uic.edu/depts/lib/specialcoll/services/rjd/findingaids/BVanHoosenf.html>) Michigan Women's Hall of Fame (hall.michiganwomenshalloffame.org)

Scope and Contents

The Bertha Van Hoosen papers consist of correspondence, a compilation of journal articles, materials related to the creation of a Medical Women's Library at the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, illustrations and photographs of her medical work, and reference materials about women in medicine, generally. The collection contains valuable information related to the history of women in medicine and the institutional histories of the American Women's Hospital and the Medical College of Pennsylvania, as well as the American Women's Medical Association.

The collection is divided into the following series: "Correspondence," "Teaching Material," "Journal Articles," "Women in Medicine Reference Material," "Medical Women's Library Plans," "Images," "Artifacts," and "Mary Elizabeth Bates Records."

Van Hoosen's "Correspondence," dating from 1924 to 1971 (bulk: 1924 to 1950), makes up the majority of the collection. Correspondence includes information related to the American Medical Association and missionary work, as well as other more general topics. Intermingled among the correspondence, researchers will find related magazine articles, newspaper clippings, invitations, event programs, speeches, postcards and Christmas cards. There is also correspondence filed in the Medical Women's Library series, regarding Van Hoosen's hopes to create a library at the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania. Her plans for the medical library focused on highlighting the history of women in medicine and she corresponded with physicians and librarians around the world compiling bibliographies on the subject and collecting books and other related materials for the library.

The "Journal Articles," from 1913 to 1929, are primarily written in Russian and German, however, some are in English or Ukrainian. They are arranged alphabetically by language and then chronologically within those groups. Most of the foreign language articles pertain to the practice of gynecology and obstetrics. Of the English language articles, one is about Van Hoosen, and two are about women in medicine. The reference materials and bibliographic information, which van Hoosen collected, are related to women in medicine and include a list of handwritten citations (1850-1934) that were likely compiled by Mrs. Clara Eliza Axtell Poynter (1876-1952) and sent to Van Hoosen on January 31, 1941. In addition, there is a bibliographical card index of women physicians mentioned in the Medical Women's Journal from 1941 to 1948. The cards are arranged alphabetically by physician's name and note the issue addressed and page number on which she was referenced in the Medical Women's Journal. The collection also includes photographs, illustrations and x-rays that were created during medical case studies and/or used in journal articles. The patient case study photographs include male and female genitalia, women demonstrating the breast pump, and one photograph of just the breast pump. The illustrations are generally of reproductive organs. There is also a series of illustrations that appear to demonstrate the "buttonhole" appendectomy surgical technique developed by Van Hoosen.

The last two series in the collection, "Artifacts" and "Mary Elizabeth Bates Records," do not immediately relate to Van Hoosen. The "Artifacts" series houses the following items: a seal of the Medical College of

Pennsylvania and a banner of the American Women's Hospital. Mary Elizabeth Bates (1861-1954) was a physician who studied and worked in Chicago, Illinois in the 1880s and was a member of the American Medical Association. Materials regarding Bates' scholarly and professional accomplishments are included in this series.

Administrative Information

Drexel University, College of Medicine Legacy Center
Finding aid prepared by Laurie Rizzo.

Sponsor

The processing of this collection was made possible through generous funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, administered through the Council on Library and Information Resources' ? Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives? Project.

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use, however, Series VI. Images, is restricted. Contact the Drexel University College of Medicine, Legacy Center: Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine and Homeopathy for information about access to these materials.

Use Restrictions

Copyright restrictions may apply. Please contact the Drexel University College of Medicine, Legacy Center: Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine and Homeopathy with requests for copying and for authorization to publish, quote or reproduce the material.

Processing Information note

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This collection was *minimally processed* in 2009-2011, as part of an experimental project conducted under the auspices of the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries to help eliminate processing backlog in Philadelphia repositories. A minimally processed collection is one processed at a less intensive rate than traditionally thought necessary to make a collection ready for use by researchers. When citing sources from this collection, researchers are advised to defer to folder titles provided in the finding aid rather than those provided on the physical folder.

Employing processing strategies outlined in Mark Greene's and Dennis Meissner's 2005 article, *More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Processing Approaches to Deal With Late 20th-Century Collections*, the project team tested the limits of minimal processing on collections of all types and ages, in 23 Philadelphia area repositories. A primary goal of the project, the team processed at an average rate of 2-3 hours per linear foot of records, a fraction of the time ordinarily reserved for the arrangement and description of collections. Among other time saving strategies, the project team did not extensively review the content of the collections, replace acidic folders or complete any preservation work.

Related Materials

Related Archival Materials note

Bertha Van Hoosen Papers at the University of Illinois at Chicago: [Bertha Van Hoosen papers](#)

Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan: [Berth Van Hoosen papers](#)

Separated Materials note

The artifacts and Mary Elizabeth Bates' certificates have been separated from this collection and are stored in offsite storage.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- American Medical Women's Association.
- American Women's Hospitals.
- Medical College of Pennsylvania.
- Medical Women's National Association (U.S.).
- University of Michigan.
- Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania.

Form/Genre(s)

- Articles
- Biographies
- Card indexes
- Correspondence
- Photographs

Geographic Name(s)

- Chicago (Ill.)

Personal Name(s)

- Bates, Mary Elizabeth, 1861-1954
- Poynter, Clara Eliza Axtell, 1876-1952
- Van Hoosen, Bertha, -1863

Subject(s)

- Anesthetics
- Gynecology
- Libraries
- Medical libraries
- Medicine
- Medicine--History
- Obstetrics
- Physicians
- Women in medicine
- Women physicians

Series I. Correspondence

Collection Inventory

Series I. Correspondence, 1917-1971.

	Box	Folder
1924, 1928.	1	1
1926-1946.	1	2
1928-1940.	1	3
1928-1964, 1971.	1	4
1929 January-August.	1	5
1929 September-December.	1	6
1930-1939.	1	7
1937-1942.	1	8
1937-1949.	1	9
1940.	1	10
1941-1945.	1	11
1946, 1946.	1	12
1947.	1	13
1948-1949.	1	14

Series II. Teaching Material

1950, 1950.	1	15
American Medical Association, 1921-1940.	1	16
Foreign languages, 1917-1921.	1	17
From Carrie Chapman Catt to Van Hoosen, 1940-1941.	1	18
undated.	1	19

Series II. Teaching Material, 1925.	Box	Folder
	2	1

Series III. Journal Articles, 1913-1929.

	Box	Folder
English language article, "A Woman Surgeon," (from the Bohemian of Karel Palant), Undated.	2	2
English language article, "The Ladies Review," about Van Hoosen, 1916 November.	2	3
English language article, "Census of Women Physicians", 1918 November 11.	2	4
German language reprints, 1924-1926, 1928.	2	5
Russian language reprints, 1913, 1926-1929.	2	6
Russian language reprints, 1913, 1927.	2	7
Russian language reprints, 1915, 1917, 1924.	2	8

Series IV. Women in Medicine Reference File

Russian Language reprint, <i>Kazan Medical Journal</i> , 1926.	2	9
Russian language reprints, 1927.	2	10
Ukrainian language reprint, "Ukrainian Medical Archive", (1928).	2	11

Series IV. Women in Medicine Reference File, undated.

	Box	Folder
Bibliography, 1941.	2	12
Card Index, 1941-1948.	4	

Series V. Medical Women's Library plans, 1946-1961.

	Box	Folder
Personal leather-bound exhibit folder (empty) and exhibit abstract, Undated.	3	1
Journals, 1940-1943.	3	2
Correspondence, 1940-1951.	3	3
Correspondence, 1940-1957.	3	4
Correspondence, 1946-1961.	3	5

Series VI. Images [RESTRICTED]

Series VI. Images [RESTRICTED], Undated.

	Box	Folder
Article illustrations.	3	6
Article illustrations.	3	7
Patient photographs.	3	8
Patient photographs.	3	9
Patient photographs.	3	10
Patient x-rays.	3	11
Patient x-rays.	3	12
Patient photographs/illustrations.	3	13
Illustration.	3	14
Photocopies of images in photograph collection.	3	15

Series VII. Artifacts, undated.**Scope and Contents note**

Please contact the Drexel University College of Medicine, Legacy Center: Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine and Homeopathy for information about access to the artifacts.