

Thomas Jefferson University Archives and Special Collections

MS 013

John Hill Brinton Collection, 1805-1923

2.5 linear feet (5 boxes)

Biographical Note

Born on 21 May 1832 in Philadelphia, John Hill Brinton (1832-1907) was the son of George and Mary M. Smith Brinton. Brinton received his BA from the University of Pennsylvania (1850), then enrolled at Jefferson Medical College and obtained his MD in 1852. After spending a year in Europe conducting post-graduate work, Dr. Brinton established a private practice in Philadelphia. In 1853, Brinton also procured his first teaching position at the Philadelphia School of Anatomy delivering courses on Anatomy and Operative Surgery. Soon after the outbreak of the Civil War, Dr. Brinton received a Presidential Appointment as a Brigade Surgeon in the Volunteer Corps (1861). In this capacity Brinton worked beside General Ulysses S. Grant in the Tennessee and Cumberland River Campaigns. In 1862 Brinton was ordered to Washington by the Surgeon General's Office to begin work on *The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*. He was also given responsibility for the formation of the Army Medical Museum. Brinton's subsequent duties included assignments as Superintendent of the Hospitals in Nashville and Medical Director of the Army of the Cumberland.

After the war, Brinton returned to Philadelphia and assumed responsibilities that brought him into closer contact with the Jefferson Medical College faculty. In 1866, he received an appointment as a Lecturer in Operative Surgery during the summer course. Brinton also formed strong personal associations with Samuel D. Gross and assisted him in the formation of the Jefferson Medical College Alumni Association (1870), the Philadelphia Academy of Surgery (1879), and the American Surgical Association (1880). Brinton's ties to the College of Physicians are also noteworthy: he was the Mütter lecturer on surgery and pathology in 1869 and a lifelong member the Committee of the Mütter Museum. In 1877, the Jefferson Medical College Board of Trustees acknowledged Brinton's role in fundraising activities for the construction of the school's first detached hospital by giving him an appointment as one of the surgeons in the new facility. For five years Brinton served as Staff President at the hospital. Though disappointed in an earlier bid to obtain the chair of anatomy at Jefferson (upon the retirement of Joseph Pancoast in 1873), the Trustees selected Brinton, along with Samuel W. Gross, to fill the chair of surgery when it was divided after the retirement of Samuel D. Gross in 1882. Brinton held this position until 1906, when poor health forced him to relinquish his chair. Brinton retained the title of Emeritus Professor until his death on March 18, 1907.

John Hill Brinton's role in the history of Jefferson Medical College includes family connections with the founder, Dr. George McClellan. Brinton's aunt, Elizabeth Sophia Brinton, married Dr. McClellan in 1820. Through this relationship Dr. Brinton became the founder's nephew, and first cousin to Dr. McClellan's son, the Civil War General George Brinton McClellan.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of material by or about John Hill Brinton from 1805-1923 including addresses, correspondence, medical journal articles, genealogy, lectures, notes and certificates. The correspondence includes personal correspondence written by Brinton during his Civil War service to family members back home, letters of recommendation written by Brinton's commanding officers in the army, as well as official military orders/correspondence (many signed by Ulysses S. Grant). Of particular interest is Ulysses S. Grant's June 11, 1873 endorsement for Brinton's application for the chair of anatomy at Jefferson Medical College. Another significant letter, dated 7 September 1891, from William S. Rosecrans, reveals that Brinton was relieved of his duty in charge of the Medical History of the War of the Rebellion for political reasons arising from his kinship with General George B. McClellan, the Democratic candidate for Vice President. Some of the material is associated with John Hill Brinton's son, Ward Brinton.

Organization and Arrangement

Note: (*) indicates legal size materials
(**) indicates oversize (map case) materials

I. Addresses (1865-1896)*

Arranged in alphabetical order by the name of the sponsoring organization and in chronological order within each of these alphabetical subject headings.

II. Correspondence (1805-1923)*

Arranged in chronological order.

III. Publications (1854-1902)

Arranged in chronological order

IV. Events & Ephemera (1850-1934)*

Arranged in alphabetical order by subject heading

V. Writings (1852-1930)*

Arranged in chronological order

VI. Necrology (1907)*

VII. Genealogy (1892-1894)

VIII. Certificates (1861)**

Arranged in alphabetical order.

Container List

Note : (Ph.) indicates phase box storage
(M) indicates map case location

I. Addresses

- 1.1 Army Medical School - 1896 Mar. 13 - Commencement
- 1.2 Association of Genito-urinary Surgeons - 1887 May 19 - "On horny growth of the penis"
- 1.3 Dale General Hospital - 1865 Feb. 22 - The Army Medical Staff
- 1.4 (Jefferson Medical College ?) - 1902 - Clinical lecture - "Retention of urine and its relief"
- 1.5 Jefferson Medical College - 1892 April 27 - Commencement
- 1.6 Jefferson Medical College - 1891 - Clinical lecture - "The nature and treatment of organic structure of the urethra in the male"
- 1.7 Jefferson Medical College - 1891 Oct. 31 - Clinical lecture - "Remarkable case of voluntary control of the muscles"
- 1.8 Jefferson Medical College - 1882 Oct. 2 - Introductory
- 1.9 Jefferson Medical College - 1884 March 29 - Commencement
- 1.10 Jefferson Medical College - 1884 March 29 - Commencement
- 1.11 Jefferson Medical College - 1882 Oct. 2 - Introductory
- 1.12 Jefferson Medical College - 1880 March 11 - Alumni Assoc. - "The Faculty of 1841"
(Note : This lecture also served as an introductory to the 1895-1896 session)
- 1.13 Jefferson Medical College - 1880 March 11 - Alumni Assoc. - "The Faculty of 1841"
- 5.1 Jefferson Medical College - 1879 Mar. 26 - Surgical Clinic - Urethral stricture - Lithotomy : Two cases [galley proofs]
- 5.2 Jefferson Medical College - 1879 Mar. 26 - Surgical Clinic - Urethral stricture - Lithotomy : Two cases [galley proofs]
- 5.3 Jefferson Medical College - 1879 Mar. 26 - Surgical Clinic - Urethral stricture - Lithotomy : Two cases [galley proofs]
- 1.14 Jefferson Medical College - 1878 May 2 - Surgical clinic - Phymosis; Hare-lip; Double Hare-lip; and Encysted Hydrocele of the Spermatic Cord
- 1.15 Phila. Academy of Surgery - 1894 Ap. 2 - "The surgical relations of the thoracic duct in the neck"
- 1.16 Phila. Academy of Surgery - 1884 Jan. 7 - "Surgical traditions"
- 1.17 Phila. County Medical Society - 1887 Jan. 12 - "Remarks on the use of whalebone bougies in the treatment of urethral stricture"
- 5.4 Philadelphia Hospital - 1872 Feb. 14 - Clinical lecture on urethral fever

II. Correspondence

- 1.18 1923 Sept. 7 - From : Prince, L. C. (JMC 1900)
To: Dean, Jefferson Medical College
Re: Donation of five Photostat letters written to Drs. S. W. Mitchell, W. W. Keen, and W. S. Forbes.
- 1.19 1916 Mar. 28 - From : Norris, George W.
To : Brinton, Ward
Re:Phila. Hospital - Medical demonstration schedule
- 1.20 1897 Feb. 2 - From : Vollum, Edward P. (JMC 1851)

- Re : Prevention of premature burials in Great Britain
Enc. : A plan for forming an association to prevent the burial of persons still alive
- 5.26 1894 Ward, Chas. S.
Re.: Ward family history
- 1.21 1894 Mar. 6 - From : Spalding, A. Eugene (JMC 1874)
Re: Malpractice Suit. Requests deposition from Dr. Brinton about a plan of dressing a fractured femur at upper third.
- 5.26 1893 Feb. 13 - From : Leach, ?
Re: Family history (Col. James Burd)
- 1.22 1892 Sept. 9 - From : Post, Chas. H.
Re: Copies of Dr. Talcott's records
- 5.25 1892 Sept. 16 - From : Post, Chas. H.
Re: Ward and Meigs family records
- 5.25 1892 Aug. 22 -From : Wilcox, G. A.
1892 July 5 - From : Wilcox, G. A
Re: Genealogical information
- 1.23 1870 Jan 24 - From : Emory, A. G.
1870 Feb 14 - From : Emory, A. G
Re: Examples of instantaneous rigor associated with sudden and violent death (particularly in relation to evidence in a case of suspected murder)
- Ph.1 Letters Home 1861-1862, V. I
Ph.2 Letters Home 1862 to 1865, V. II
Ph.3 Army Orders and Correspondence 1861 to 1895, V. III
Note: V. III also includes personal correspondence and letters of recommendation written by Brinton's commanding officers in the army, notably U. S. Grant's 1873 June 11 endorsement for Brinton's application for the chair of anatomy at Jefferson Medical College. Another significant letter, dated 1891 Sec. 7, from William. S. Rosecrans, reveals that Brinton was relieved of his duty in charge of the Medical History of the War of the Rebellion for political reasons arising from his kinship with Gen. George B. McClellan, the Democratic candidate for Vice President.
- M1.7 1861 June 20 - From : W. C. Spencer
Re: Examination permit for the position of Brigade Surgeon in the Volunteer Corps.
- 1.24 1805 May 8 - From : Rush, Benjamin To : Brinton, (?)
Re: Lantsinger estate settlement

III. Publications

- 2.1 1902 - Remarks on some effects of fire arms at short range
- 2.2 1899 Nov. 15 - On the choice of operation for stone
- 2.3 1897 Jul. 10 - On digital manipulation for the removal of a piece of catheter...accidentally broken off...in the deep urethra of the male
- 2.4 1885 - Report of two cases of intra-uterine fracture
- 2.5 1871 July - Bibliographical notice
- 2.6 1870 Jan. - Instantaneous rigor accompanying sudden or violent death
- 2.7 1868 April - Amputation at the knee joint
- 2.8 1866 - Ligation of the axillary artery

- 2.9 1856 July - Description of a valve at the termination of the right spermatic vein in the vena cava
- 2.10 1854 May - Anatomical preparations
- 3.1 Busch, Wm. - 1871 - Max & Maurice : A juvenile history in seven tricks - [Children's book property of Ward Brinton]
- 3.2 Chapman, Henry C. - 1884 - History of the discovery of the circulation of the blood
- 3.3 Hood, John W. - 1848 - Principles & practice of medicine
- 3.4 Krough, August - 1929 - The progress of physiology
- 3.5 Leke, Chauncy - 1930 - Chemical adjuncts to general anesthesia
- 3.6 Meyer, Willy - n.d. - Total extirpation of the Ureter
- 3.7 Mütter, Thomas D. - c.1850 - Syllabus of the course of lectures on the principles & practice of surgery delivered in the Jefferson Medical College, Phila.
- 3.8 Serre, M. - 1835 - Memoire sur L'Efficacite des injections

IV. Events and Ephemera

- 2.11 Army Medical Museum , History of
- 2.12 Army Song Book [Ward Brinton's] - 1918
- 2.13 College of Physicians of Phila. - Centennial celebration catalog [1887 Jan. 3]; lecture tickets [n.d.]; and name card
- 2.14 College of Physicians of Phila. - Mutter Museum - Petition, Common Pleas, No. 2 - 1884 March - Re: Disposition of Mutter trust funds
- 5.5 Examinations - Anatomy & Surgery - n.d.
- 5.6 Examinations - Anatomy & Surgery - n.d.
- 2.15 Jefferson Medical College - Dept. of Obstetrics - Conduct & care of maternity patients in private homes [student's guide] - 1934
- 2.16 Jefferson Medical College - Summer Course tickets
- 2.17 Jefferson Medical College - Winter Examinations - Advertisement
- 2.18 Medical Club of Phila. - By Laws & Membership Roste - 1910
- 2.19 Pennsylvania Historical Register - 1884
- 2.20 Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution - Pamphlet
- 5.7 Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution - Membership application - 1892
- 2.21 Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution - Membership papers - 1892
- 2.22 Phila. Hospital - Pathological Museum - Catalog - 1874
- 2.23 Phila. Hospital - Surgical staff examination - 1873
- 2.24 Phila. School of Anatomy - Operative surgery course circular & ticket - c. 1850
- 2.25 Phila. School of Anatomy - Operative surgery lectures circulars; order of examination card; and list of class membership, 1853-1857.
- 2.26 Philomathean Society - Catalog of members - 1850
- 2.27 Private instruction - Advertisements & tickets - c.1850

V. Writings

- 4.1 n.d. - Address - Jefferson Medical College ? - Commencement ?
- 4.2 n.d. - Lecture notes
- 5.21 Lecture notes [n.d.]
- 5.22 Lecture notes [n.d.]
- 5.23 Lecture notes [n.d.]

- 5.24 Lecture notes [n.d.]
- 4.3 1930-1931 - Editorial revisions [typescript] - Therapeutic referendum in progressive medicine
- 4.4 c.1884 - Notebook - "Notes on Various Lectures"
- 4.5 1856-1884 - Lecture notes
- 4.6 1856-1884 - Lecture notes
- 4.7 1880 - Address - Jefferson Medical College - Alumni Assoc. - "The Faculty of 1841"
- 5.8 c.1879 - Lecture notes (?)
- 4.8 c.1876 - Notebook - "Memoranda"
- 5.9 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material
- 5.10 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material
- 5.11 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material
- 5.12 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material
- 5.13 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material
- 5.14 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material - ref. #59-258
- 5.15 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material - ref. #203-244
- 5.16 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material - ref. #439-499
- 5.17 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material - ref. #526-547
- 5.18 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material - ref. #656-697
- 5.19 c.1869 - Mütter Lectures - Rough notes & loose material - ref. # 625-827
- 4.9 c.1868 - Address - U.S. Congress - Re: Establishment of Military Medical School
- 4.10 c.1867 - Lecture notes
- 5.20 c.1865 - Lecture notes
- 4.11 1855-1861 - Notebook - Phila. School of Anatomy - Identification of lecture topics and class members
- 4.12 1852 - Thesis - Jefferson Medical College - "Record of microscopical observations on one hundred tumors"

VI. Necrology

- 4.13 Obituaries
- 5.27 Obituaries

VII. Genealogy

- 5.25 Family records 1892
- 5.26 Family records 1893-1894

VIII. Certificates

- M1.7 Certificate - 1861 Aug. 3 - Appointment as Assistant Surgeon in the Uniformed Militia of the City of Philadelphia by authority of Andrew G. Curtin, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- M1.7 Certificate - 1861 Aug. 3 - Appointment as Brigade Surgeon in the Volunteer Corps by the authority of Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States.
Note : folder includes correspondence - 1861 June 20 - From : W. C. Spencer
Re: Examination permit for the position of Brigade Surgeon in the Volunteer Corps.