

Thomas Jefferson University Archives and Special Collections

MS 003

McClellan Family Papers, 1818-1914

.75 linear ft. (2 boxes)

Biographical Note

George McClellan (1796-1847)

George McClellan received his MD degree in 1819 from the University of Pennsylvania. Soon afterward he opened a dissecting room and began lecturing privately to medical students. Medical specialty schools such as McClellan's did much to augment the education that students received at the University of Pennsylvania, which was at that time the only institution in Philadelphia capable of conferring a medical diploma. In addition to teaching, McClellan also maintained a large medical practice and established the nation's first free eye clinic, the Institution for the Diseases of the Eye and Ear. Founded in 1821, the school dissolved in 1825 after McClellan obtained a charter for Philadelphia's second medical school – Jefferson Medical College. McClellan held the chair of surgery at Jefferson until the Board of Trustees reorganized the faculty in 1838. Due to a conflict between McClellan's personal authority, a founder, and the Board of Trustees' constitutional power as the institution's governing body, McClellan's name was dropped from the faculty. McClellan responded to his ouster by establishing Philadelphia's third medical school, the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, in 1839. Though the school survived until the outbreak of the civil War, McClellan's tenure on the faculty only lasted until 1843, when financial difficulties at the College (among other reasons) compelled the entire faculty to resign. George McClellan died suddenly on 9 May 1847 from an ulcerative perforation of the small intestine.

George McClellan (1849-1911)

Following his graduation from Jefferson Medical College in 1870, McClellan traveled to Europe and studied under the master anatomist, Professor Hyrtl of Vienna, who inspired McClellan to pursue an anatomical teaching career. In 1873, McClellan returned to Philadelphia where he resumed his medical practice and energetically pursued his other professional interests. Emulating his grandfather, the founder of Jefferson Medical College, McClellan began teaching private students in anatomy and surgery. McClellan's lectures attracted a large following, and in 1881, he established the Pennsylvania School of Anatomy and Surgery, where he remained until 1893. While teaching at this institution, McClellan also held the chair of artistic anatomy at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fire Arts. In 1905, McClellan was appointed to the chair of anatomy at Jefferson – a position he held until his death in 1911. McClellan's most well known publication, *Regional Anatomy*, went through four English editions and two French editions. The numerous illustrations were made from photographs taken and hand-colored by McClellan.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of material by or about George McClellan (1798-1847) or his grandson George McClellan (1849-1913) from 1818-1914. Materials relating to the founder include an 1836 Jefferson Medical College commencement address given by McClellan, miscellaneous correspondence (1829-1840) dealing with medical topics, McClellan's lecture notes (1825 and 1830), and an 1832 examination on surgery. Materials relating to George McClellan the grandson include hand-colored anatomical plates (1891-1892) and miscellaneous correspondence (1888, 1892, and 1907).

Organization and Arrangement

George McClellan (1796-1847)

- I. Addresses (1836)
- II. Correspondence (1829-1840)
- III. Events and Ephemera (1821-1829)
- IV. Writings (1818-ca. 1835)
- V. Necrology (1847-1849)

George McClellan (1849-1913)

- VI. Addresses (1911)
- VII. Correspondence (1892-1907)
- VIII. Anatomical Plates (1891-1892)
- IX. Necrology (1914)

Container List

I. Addresses

- 1.1 Jefferson Medical College, 1836 Commencement

II. Correspondence

- 1.2 n.d. from R.W.
Re: Opinions on a medical case referring to the use of ether.
- 1.3 1840 July 25 from President of the Louisiana Society of Natural History and Sciences
Re: Membership
- 1.4 1831 September 20 to Dr. Marcy
Re: A medical consultation on treatment of a patient and JMC announcement
- 1.5 1829 November 19 to Senator Isaac D. Barnard
Re: Letter of introduction

III. Events and Ephemera

- 1.6 Advertisement for the Institution for Diseases of the Eye and the Ear, 1821-1822
- 1.7 Certificate for the Louisiana Society of Natural History and Sciences
- 1.8 Examinations on surgery (JMC) 1832
- 1.9 Memorial of the medical faculty of JMC in reply to the memorial of the trustees of the University of Pennsylvania
- 1.10 Memorial of Philadelphia medical practitioners to the Pennsylvania State legislature
Re: Testimony against giving a charter to JMC
- 1.11 Report of the trial for an action for libel 1829