DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Collection name: Frank Billings Papers (1896-1970s, 1984)

Repository: Rush University Medical Center Archives

Creator: Billings, Frank, (1854-1932)

Call Number: 4758

Language: English

Extent:
- Items: About 200 items
- Linear feet: 1.0

Abstract:
Physician Frank Billings, 1854-1932, he received his medical degree from Northwestern University, 1881. Billings served as an attending physician at several Chicago area hospitals, including Mercy Hospital, St. Luke’s Hospital, Cook County Hospital, and Presbyterian Hospital. He served as Dean of Rush Medical College, 1900-1920. In 1917, Billings headed a commission to Russia to report on the needs of the Russian people. Billings’s contributions to medical literature include writings on topics such as anemia, pneumococcc infections, and heart disease. The collection of physician Frank Billings includes biographical material, correspondence, writings, clippings, material related to the Billings Medical Club, miscellaneous items, and pictures. Pictures include photographs of Billings and others in Egypt, 1906; Japan, 1917; and other photographs.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Restrictions to access:
None

Usage Restrictions:
None

Acquisitions Information:
Artificial collection created from biographical files from the reference collection, medical reprints, and other unaccessioned material.

Processing Information:
Processed by: Nathalie Wheaton and Rene Ruzicka (April 2009)

Preferred Citation:
[Identification of item], in the Frank Billings Papers, #4758, Rush University Medical Center Archives.

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Subject Headings:
Billings, Frank  
Chicago, Ill.  
History of medicine. United States. Chicago (Ill.)  
Rush Medical College  
Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke’s Medical Center—History, 20th century  
Rush University Medical Center—History, 20th century

RELATED COLLECTIONS:
Rush Medical College Records, #4707, Rush University Medical Center Archives  
Various Images, Photograph Collection, RG4400, Rush University Medical Center Archives  
Frank Billings Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:  
Physician Frank Billings was born in Wisconsin, 2 April 1854. Upon completing high school, he taught in the Wisconsin schools from 1874 to 1876. In 1881, he received his medical degree from Northwestern University. He continued his medical studies in Vienna, Paris, and London, 1885-1886. Billings was an attending physician at Mercy Hospital, 1890-1898; St. Luke’s Hospital, 1890-1906; Cook County Hospital, 1890-1901; and Presbyterian Hospital, 1898-1920. He served as Dean of Rush Medical College, 1900-1920. He introduced residents and the clerkship system to Presbyterian Hospital.

Billings served as president of the Chicago Medical Society, 1891; the American Medical Association, 1902-1903; the Association of American Physicians, 1906; the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, 1907; and the Institute of Medicine, 1922. In 1917, Billings headed a commission to Russia to report on the needs of the Russian people. He was an advocate for better medical care and a dedicated educator. He was instrumental in securing funds for fellowships and the construction of many buildings, including the Rawson Laboratory of Medicine and Surgery on the Rush Medical College campus and the Albert Merritt Billings Hospital at the University of
Chicago. Billings’s contributions to medical literature include writings on topics such as anemia, pneumococcic infections, and heart disease. Billings married Dane Ford Brawley in 1887. He had one daughter, Margaret (Billings) Nichols. Billings died of a gastric hemorrhage, 20 September 1932.

COLLECTION OVERVIEW:

The collection of physician Frank Billings includes biographical material, correspondence, writings, clippings, material related to the Billings Medical Club, miscellaneous items, and pictures. Biographical material includes biographies, bibliographies, friends’ reflections on Billings, and genealogical information. Correspondence includes letters to, from, and about Billings. Writings include medical articles by Billings on a variety of topics including leukemia, anemia, pneumococcic infections, and heart disease. Clippings mostly relate to Billings’s time in Russia during World War I. Billings Medical Club material mostly includes meeting minutes. Miscellaneous material includes programs and Billings’s badge and pin from the Red Cross, 1896. Pictures include photographs of Billings and others in Egypt, 1906; Japan, 1917; and other photographs.

ARRANGEMENT OF SERIES:

1. Biographical information, 1920s-1930s
2. Correspondence, 1896-1920s, 1947
3. Writings, 1888-1928 and undated
4. Clippings, 1906-1924
6. Miscellaneous, 1917-1927
7. Photographs, 1906 and 1917

ITEMS SEPARATED:

OVERSIZED PAPERS
OVERSIZED PICTURES

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION:

Series 1. Biographical Information, 1920s-1930s
About 30 items
Scope Content: Biographical material includes biographies written mostly after Dr. Billings’ death in 1932, bibliographies, friends’ reflections on Billings, and genealogical information.

BOX 1

Biographies, bibliographies, 1920s-1930s
Friends’ reflections on Billings, 1928, 1938 and undated
Genealogical information related to the Billings family

**Series 2. Correspondence, 1896-1920s, 1947**
About 50 items  
Arrangement: Chronological  
Scope Content: Correspondence includes letters and telegrams from Dr. Billings, mostly to his daughter, Margaret Billings (Nichols) from when she was about eight-years-old until she was in her late 20s; letters to Billings from the Rush Medical College Library concerning his contributions; letters about Billings, including one about his portrait. Some letters refer to his time in Russia when he served in the Army’s Medical Corps during World War I.

**BOX 1 (continued)**

Letters to, from, and about Billings, 1896-1920s, 1947

**Series 3. Writings, 1888-1928 and undated**
66 items  
Arrangement: Chronological  
Scope Content: Articles and other writings by Frank Billings on a variety of topics in medicine including leukemia, anemia, pneumococcic infections, and heart disease.

**BOX 1 (continued)**

“Report of the Committee on the Practice of Medicine,” 1888  
“Cystic Degeneration of the Kidney,” 1895  
“Arthropathies of Nervous Origin,” 1895  
“Intercostal Neuralgia,” 1895  
“The Relation of General Medicine to the Specialist,” 1898  
“The Differentiation of the Cardiac Incompetency of Intrinsic Heart Disease and of Chronic Nephritis,” 1898  
“The Limitations of Medicine,” 1898  
“Pneumococcus Infection,” 1900  
“Two Interesting Cases: Gallstone of the Cystic Duct, with Situs Viscerum Inversus, and Gumma of the Liver,” 1900  
“Treatment of Typhoid Fever,” 1900  
“A Report of Pernicious Anemia with Special Reference to Blood Findings,” 1900  
“Carcinoma of Pylorus,” 1901  
“What are the Qualifications Necessary for Success in the Practice of Medicine?” 1901  
“Uric Acid Fallacies,” 1901  
“Clinical Observations in Pericarditis,” 1901  
“Pernicious Anemia,” 1901  
“Report of the Presence of Anguillula Aceti in the Urine of Two Patients Mistaken for Stronyloides Intestinalis,” 1902  
“The Stokes-Adams Syndrome, with Report of Two Cases,” 1902
“The Relation of Medical Science to Commerce,” 1902
“Clinical Manifestations of the Early Stages of Cirrhosis of the Liver,” 1902
“The Changes in the Spinal Cord and Medulla in Pernicious Anemia,” 1902
“The Changes in the Spinal Cord and Medulla in Pernicious Anemia,” 1903
“Acute Myelogenic Leukemia,” 1903
“Primary Intestinal Tuberculosis,” 1903
“Medical Education in the United States,” 1903
“An Historical Sketch of the American Medical Association,” 1904
“Arteriosclerosis due to Lead,” 1904
“The Secret Nostrum Evil,” 1905
“Recent Advances in the Physiology of Human Nutrition,” 1905
“Etiology and Diagnosis of Gastric and Duodenal Ulcer,” 1906
“The Medical Profession and the Medical Journals in Relation to Nostrums,” 1906
“Rush Medical College Clinic,” 1906
“Achylia Gastrica and its Relation to Diarrhea,” 1907
“Gastromotor Insufficiency due to Perigastric and Duodenal Adhesions,” 1907
“Chronic Infectious Endocarditis,” 1909
“Vaccine Therapy in Colon-Bacillus Infection of the Urinary Tract,” 1910
“The Local Effects of Gall-Bladder Infections and Gall-Stones Upon the Digestive Tract and Liver,” 1910

BOX 2

“Visceral Syphilis,” 1911
“Chronic Focal Infections and their Etiologic Relations to Arthritis and Nephritis,” 1912
“Pellagra in Illinois,” 1912
“The Etiology and Vaccine Treatment of Hodgkin’s Disease,” 1913
“Benzol in the Treatment of Leukemia,” 1913
“Internal Hemorrhages: Can we control them?” 1913
“Chronic Fetal Infection as a Causative Factor in Chronic Arthritis,” 1913
“Focal Infection: Its Broader Application in the Etiology of General Disease,” 1914
“Clinical Aspect and Medical Management of Arthritis Doformans,” 1914
“The Medical Management of Chronic Arthritis,” 1914
“The Modern Hospital,” 1914
“The Principles Involved in Focal Infection as Related to Systemic Disease,” 1916
“Pneumotypoid, with Report of a Case,” 1916
“American Red Cross Mission in Russia,” 1917
“The Work of the American Red Cross Mission to Russia,” 1917
“Rehabilitation of the Disabled,” 1919
“The Policy and Program of Physical Reconstruction of Disabled Soldiers of the United States Army,” 1919
“Physical Reconstruction Applied in the Treatment of Pulmonary Tuberculosis,” 1919
“The Physical and Mental Rehabilitation of Disabled Soldiers of the United States Army,” 1919
“Modern Military Medical and Surgical Reconstruction and the Measures of Cooperation Practiced by the Medical Department of the Army and Federal Board for Vocational Education,” 1920
“American Conference on Hospital Service,” 1920
“Chronic Infectious Arthritis: Statistical Report with End-Results,” 1922
“George H. Simmons: A Testimonial,” 1924
“Medicine and Human Progress,” 1927
“Fifty Years: Landmarks in the Practice of Medicine,” 1928
“Education Against Venereal Disease a Need of the State,” undated
“The Limitations of Medical Therapeutics,” undated
“Sexual Hygiene for Young Men,” undated
“Focal Infections,” undated

**Series 4. Clippings, 1906-1924**
21 items
Scope Content: Various newspaper clippings, primarily from 1917 when Dr. Billings was abroad in Russia.

**BOX 2 (continued)**

Clippings, 1906-1924

**Series 5. Billings Medical Club, 1914-1951, 1970s, 1984**
About 50 items
Arrangement: Mostly chronological
Scope Content: Billings Medical Club material includes original and typed meeting minutes from sessions of the Billings Medical Club. A note in the minutes states, “Minutes 1951-1974 in possession of Dr. Nicholas Wetzel,” which explains the missing minutes. The Billings Medical Club of Chicago was established in 1913, by six men who had been associated with Dr. Frank Billings at Presbyterian Hospital. Although the association was named for Billings, he was never in attendance. It started as a monthly dinner meeting where members discussed medical and scientific matters and read papers. Over time they began to collect dues in support of research and aiding in the tuition of underprivileged medical students. Billings donated money to the club before he died. This series also includes a fictitious “Address Delivered before the 300th Annual Dinner of the B.M.C.” which featured comic send-ups of members, possibly from 1942. The Club was incorporated in 1924 and dissolved in 1976. Material from 1984 concerns the final dispersal of the Club’s trust.

**BOX 2 (continued)**

Minutes of Billings Medical Club and Related Correspondence, 1914-1951, 1970s, 1984 (2 folders)

**Series 6. Miscellaneous, 1917-1927**
About 10 items
Scope Content: Miscellaneous material includes programs from events at which Billings was a speaker, 1917-1927; and his “Right of Way” badge and pin from the Red Cross, 1896. Billings gave address in 1917 and 1918, “The Red Cross Commission to Russia and Impressions Received.”

BOX 2 (continued)

Programs and other miscellaneous, 1917-1927

[ITEM SEPARATED] Oversized Papers: Menu, Dinner given for Billings by “his friends of Room 6,” (Mrs. Mary Ella Ferguson” embossed on cover; caricatures by McCutcheon), 13 February 1908

Series 7. Pictures, 1906, 1917 and undated
8 items
Scope Content: Photographs of Billings and others in Egypt, 1906, and in Japan, 1917. Also includes photograph of banquet in honor of Billings, 1917.

BOX 3 (Separated Material)

Billings in Egypt, including Billings on dahabeah (boat on Nile River); Billings on donkey; group in front of Great Pyramids, 1906
Billings and others in Japan on way to Red Cross Mission in Russia, [c. 1917]
Billings’s Dog, undated

[ITEM SEPARATED] Oversized Pictures: “Testimonial Banquet Tendered to Dr. Frank Billings by the Physicians Club of Chicago,” 1 November 1917