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Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom Collection

Dates: 1901-1957

Collection Reference Code Element: VanCC

The Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives
5801 Smith Avenue, Suite 235
Baltimore, MD 21209
4107356800
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Processing Information: The Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom Collection was processed in 2001-2003 by Phoebe Evans Letocha and Anthony Dellureficio through a grant from the Johns Hopkins Nurses' Alumni Association.

Collection Overview

Creator: Van Blarcom, Carolyn Conant

Administrative/Biographical History:

Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom

1875-1961

Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom was born in Alton, Illinois in 1875. She grew up in St. Louis. Her grandfather was the painter Alban Jasper Conant. In 1896 she moved to New Jersey to be with an aunt. She was connected with the Hasbrouck Institute, Jersey City, as a chaperon. In 1898 she entered Johns Hopkins Hospital Training School for Nurses as a pupil nurse. She graduated in 1901 and remained at Hopkins until 1904. While at Hopkins she served as an Instructor, Supervisor, and Second Assistant Superintendent of Nurses. She specialized in the obstetrical wards as the head nurse and was in charge of the Nurses Home. In 1904 she represented Hopkins at the St. Louis Exhibit. Between 1904-1905, she was Superintendent of Nurses at St. Luke's Hospital in St. Louis where she reorganized the training school. In 1908, she organized a Graduate Nurses Club and Central Registry for Nurses in Pasadena, California. Briefly in 1908, she was Superintendent of Nurses at the Maryland State Sanatorium for Tuberculosis in Sabillasville. In 1909 she organized work in connection with a private sanitarium for tuberculosis patients in New Bedford, Mass. From 1909 to 1916, she was Executive Secretary of the New York Association for the Prevention of Blindness, later the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness. During these years she made a survey of all state, county and city laws in the United States relating to mother and infant health during childbirth. She registered as a midwife with the New York City Department of Health, the first trained nurse to do so. She then surveyed European laws regulating midwives. In 1911, through the Russell Sage Foundation, she studied the results in England of the Midwives Act of 1902. This work was published in 1913 as "The Midwife in England." She helped organize the curriculum for the first midwives school in the United States in connection with Bellevue Hospital. Between 1916 and 1917, she was Executive Secretary of the Illinois Association for the Prevention of Blindness. In 1917, she took charge of the New York office of the Red Cross Nursing Service as Director of the Atlantic Division of the American Red Cross, where she was in charge of outfitting and supplying Red Cross nurses going overseas in World War I. From 1919 to 1920, she was Health Editor for the Delineator

Magazine, where she published a series of articles, "Making the World Safe for Babies." In 1922, she published the book, *Obstetrical Nursing*, a widely used nursing textbook. She also published a companion book, *Getting Ready to be a Mother*, an advice book for mothers. In 1924, she addressed the third English speaking Conference on Infant Welfare in London. In 1929, the Chicago Tribune published another of her health advice books *Building the Baby*. She was the author of numerous articles advocating trained nurse midwives, birth control, infant and maternal healthcare, and the prevention of blindness. In 1926 she, along with Dr. William Welch and Dr. Whitridge Williams, secured for Johns Hopkins University the E. Bayard Halsted Fund for Medical Research, which funds a chair in Bacteriology. She also secured from E. Bayard Halsted a gift to Johns Hopkins for the Study of Mental Deficiency in Child-bearing Women from 1929-1932. In the 1930s she was also on the Board of Trustees of Margaret Sanger's Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau. In 1942, she organized a Red Cross Nurses Aides course in Pasadena, California. She died in 1961.

JHHSO class of 1901

Chronology: 1898-1901 - Johns Hopkins Training School for Nurses, student

Scope and Content:

The Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom collection consists of correspondence, writings and publications, clippings, scrapbooks, and photographs.

Accruals Description: 2000-109, 2016-069

Custodial History:

Some time around 1949-1951, while she was in California, Carolyn Van Blarcom sent her papers to Louise Zabriskie in New York for safe keeping. Van Blarcom then requested in 1957 that Zabriskie send the papers to Johns Hopkins to be a part of the Johns Hopkins Nursing Historical Collection. Upon their donation to the Johns Hopkins Nursing Historical Collection in 1957, the Van Blarcom Papers were housed in the Library at the Johns Hopkins Hospital School of Nursing with the rest of the Historical Collection. In 1968, they were moved with the Historical Collection to the Nightingale Room in Welch Library. In 2000, the papers were found by Librarian Christine Ruggere in the cabinet under the window in the main room of Nightingale Room in Welch Library. At that time, they moved to the Alan Mason Chesney Archives to be with the rest of the Historical Collection.

Language: English

Subject - Name:

Johns Hopkins Hospital. School of Nursing. Class of 1901
Van Blarcom, Carolyn Conant

Table of Contents

- Series Biographical Material
- Series Correspondence
- Series Photographs
- Series Publications, Writings, and Speeches

Series : Biographical Material - 1926; 1904-1935; n.d.; 1904-1926; 1928

Scope and Content: This series consists of a biographical brochure published in 1928 by The Biographical Cyclopaedia of American Women, a typed page of biographical information by Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom from the years after the publication of the brochure, 5 versions of Van Blarcom's curriculum vitae, correspondence and drafts regarding the biographical

brochure, articles and clippings from 1904-1935 about her life and work, a bookplate, and a scrapbook from 1904-1926 of articles about Van Blarcom's life and family, her work, and her books.

Folder 1/1: Biographical Brochure - nd; 1928

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/2: Curriculum Vitae

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/3: Correspondence and Drafts of Biographical Sketch - 1926

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/4: Clippings and Articles - 1904-1935

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/5: Bookplate - n.d.

Extent: 1 folder

Bound volume 4/5: Scrapbook - 1904-1926

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: Bound volume contains a biographical sketch, biographical articles, articles about Van Blarcom's life and family, articles about her work, and articles about her books. The articles come from newspapers, journals, and magazines.

Series : Correspondence - 1909-1916; 1947-1957

Scope and Content: This series contains correspondence of Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom regarding the prevention of blindness and correspondence with the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing and the Johns Hopkins Nurses Alumni Association.

Folder 1/6: Prevention of Blindness - 1909-1916

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/7: JHH School of Nursing and JH Nurses Alumnae Association - 1947-1957

Extent: 1 folder

Series : Photographs - c. 1875-1920's

Scope and Content: The photo series contains 6 photos of Van Blarcom and family members during her early childhood, a photo of her and her sister as young women, a photo of her and siblings as a young woman, a photo of her in her nurses graduate uniform with 2 other nurses, a photo of her in her student uniform with another woman and 2 men, a photo of her in her graduate uniform with three other nurses, a photo of her in graduate uniform with a group of nursing students and 5 men, a photo of her in a nurses uniform sitting in a chair, a

photo of her in nurses uniform walking out of a building, 5 photos of her with patients during her work at one of the sanitariums, 8 photos of her holding babies, a photo of her administering eye drops to an infant, a group photo of her with 3 men and another woman, a photo of the previous group in horse drawn sleighs, 4 photos of her and another woman in the snow, and 22 portraits of her at various ages.

Folder 3/1: Childhood/Family - c. 1875-1896

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 3/2: Nurses Uniform - c. 1898-1904

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 3/3: Photographs with patients - 1901-1908

Extent: 1 folder

Item 104984: [Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom, administering silver nitrate eye drops to infant] - 1901-1904

Extent: 1 photographic print : gelatin silver ; 6.5 x 8.5 in.

Use/Reproduction Photograph may be subject to copyright restrictions. Contact the Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives for reproduction permissions.

Subject - Name: Johns Hopkins Hospital. School of Nursing--People
Johns Hopkins Hospital--People
Van Blarcom, Carolyn Conant

Subject - Topical: Nurses--Maryland--Baltimore--1900-1910; Nursing students--Maryland--Baltimore--1900-1910; Children--Hospital care

Digital Content: Yes

Folder 3/4: Recreation - c. 1900's - 1910's

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 3/5: Portraits - c. 1900 - 1920's

Extent: 1 folder

Item 236136: [Carolyn Conant Van Blarcom, seated portrait in nursing uniform with hands folded in lap] - circa 1901

Creator: Flickinger, William M., 1860-

Extent: 1 photographic print : gelatin silver ; 6.5 x 3 in.

Use/Reproduction Photograph may be subject to copyright restrictions. Contact the Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives for reproduction permissions.

Subject - Name: Van Blarcom, Carolyn Conant

Subject - Topical: Nurses--Maryland--Baltimore--1900-1910; Portrait photographs

Digital Content: Yes

Folder 4/1: Portraits Oversized - c. 1905-1928

Extent: 1 folder

Series : Publications, Writings, and Speeches - 1914-1934

Scope and Content: This series consists of writings, publications, and speeches by Van Blarcom, containing articles of Van Blarcom's, or used by Van Blarcom between 1914 and 1934. It includes her JHH Circulars of Information, booklets from the Committee on Prevention of Blindness, numerous leaflets about the cause and prevention of blindness, leaflets about the problems with mid-wives, leaflets about obstetrical nursing, a copy of her book "The Midwife in England" and reviews of that book, booklets from the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness, speeches about the prevention of blindness, articles, leaflets, drafts of articles, and correspondence with readers of the Deliniator, correspondence, book reviews, and lists of hospitals adopting her book "Obstetrical Nursing" as a text, book reviews written by Van Blarcom, book reviews of "Getting Ready to Be a Mother", a copy of Harpers Magazine containing her article "Rat Pie", her speech from a Cream of Wheat commercial, an article in french about prenatal care, an essay about Miss Nutting's resignation, 2 copies of Literary Digest containing her article "To Save the Eyes of Babies", and a copy of The Deliniator containing her article "Save the Seventh Baby."

Folder 1/8: JHH School for Nurses Circular of Information - 1928; 1902-1903; 1904-1905

Extent: 1 folder

Sub-series 1/9-12: Committee on Prevention of Blindness Reports - 1909-1916

Folder 1/9: Committee on Prevention of Blindness Reports - Nov. 1909; Nov. 1910

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/10: Committee on the Prevention of Blindness Reports - Nov. 1912; Nov. 1911

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/11: Committee on the Prevention of Blindness Reports - Jan. 1915; Nov. 1913

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/12: Committee on Prevention of Blindness Reports - Nov. 1916; Jan. 1915

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/13: Ophthalmia Neonatorum as a Cause of Blindness - July 1910

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/14: A Possible Solution to the Midwife Problem - 1910

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/15: The Prevention of Blindness - Oct. 1910

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/16: A Brief Account of Organized Work for Prevention of Blindness - May 1910

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/17: Visiting Obstetrical Nursing - Nov. 1911

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/18: The Midwife in England - Dec. 1913

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/19: The Midwife in England Book Reviews - March 1914

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/20: Health News - Sept. 1915

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/21: The Harm Done in Ascribing All Babies Sore Eyes to Gonorrhoea - Sept. 1915

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/22: Saving the Sight of Babies - Feb. 1916; April 1915

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/23: Articles on Prevention of Blindness in "The Modern Hospital" - 1915-1917

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/24: Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness Report - Oct. 1916; Oct. 1917

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/25: Writings and Speeches: Prevention of Blindness - c. 1916

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/26: Does the Young American Wife Want Children - Nov. 1923

Extent: 1 folder

Sub-series 2/1-6 and 4/3-4: Deliniator - 1917-1920

Scope and Content: This sub-series contains a reprint of an article and the December 1917 Deliniator issue from which it came, infant welfare leaflets from the Deliniator, extracts from correspondence with readers of the Deliniator, drafts of articles for the Deliniator, 3 other articles ("Eat and Stay Young", "Our Child-Helping Service", and "Drugs' Deadly Stealth") from the Deliniator, and a scrapbook of articles and leaflets written by Van Blarcom for the Deliniator.

Folder 2/1: Deliniator Article - Dec. 1917

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/2: Infant Welfare Leaflets from the Deliniator - 1918-1920

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/3: Correspondence Extracts from "Deliniator" Readers - c. 1919-1920

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/4: Drafts of Articles for "Deliniator" - n.d.

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5: Deliniator Articles - Nov. 1919; 1920

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/6: Drugs' Deadly Stealth - Nov. 1919

Extent: 1 folder

Publication 4/3: The Deliniator - Dec. 1917

Bound volume 4/4: Deliniator Scrapbook - 1919-1920

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: contains articles written by Van Blarcom for The Deliniator

Sub-series 2/7-12: Obstetrical Nursing - 1919-1928

Scope and Content: This sub-series contains correspondence in regards to the feeding of infants and other correspondence made in preparation for the Obstetrical Nursing book, reviews of the book, correspondence made with regards to the book after its publication and with regards to the second edition publication of the book, and lists of hospitals which had adopted the book as a text as of January and December 1924.

Folder 2/7: Correspondence Regarding Infant Feeding - April-May 1919

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/8: Correspondence Obstetrical Nursing - 1921- May 1922

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/9: Correspondence Obstetrical Nursing - June-Dec. 1922

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/10: Book Reviews Obstetrical Nursing - July 1922; June 1925

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/11: Correspondence Obstetrical Nursing - 1923-1928

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/12: List of Hospitals Adopting "Obstetrical Nursing" as a Text - Jan. 1924; Dec. 1925

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/13: Pictorial Review "Making Ready for the Baby" - May 1923

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/14: Nursing Notes and Midwives Chronicle - Oct. 1924

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/15: Provisions for Maternity Care in the US - May 1925

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/16: The Obstetrical Department - c. 1926

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/17: A Nurses Part in a State Program of Prenatal Care - 1926

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/18: Book Reviews Written by Van Blarcom - 1926-1932

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/19: The International Council of Nurses - April 1927

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/20: Book Reviews "Getting Ready to Be a Mother - March 1929

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/21: "Rat Pie" in Harpers Magazine - Feb. 1930

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/22: "The Trained Nurse and the Depression" - Oct. 11, 1933

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/23: Cream of Wheat Commercial - 1934

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/24: Midwifery and Infant Mortality

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/25: Preventable Blindness

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/26: "Do You Want Your Baby to Brow Up Blind"

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/27: "Good Eyes Are Your Protection"

Extent: 1 folder

Item 226742: Good eyes are your protection / prepared and distributed by the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness - 1917

Creator: Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness; White, Katherine Field

Extent: 1 pamphlet : offset lithograph ;

Subject - Topical: Pamphlets; Eye

Digital Content: Yes

Folder 2/28: Needlessly Blind for Life

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/29: "Baby's Sore Eyes"

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/30: Midwives in America

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/31: "Mothers! To Their Health"

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/32: "Worth His Weight in Gold"

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/33: La Part de l'Infirmiere dans une Campagne d'Assistance Prenatale

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/34: Miss Nutting Resigns

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 4/2: "To Save the Eyes of Babies" - May 1914

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: 1 reprint of the article and 2 copies of the Literary Digest

Artifacts