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Isabel Hampton Robb Collection

Dates: 1882-2002

Collection Reference Code Element: RobIH

The Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives
5801 Smith Avenue, Suite 235
Baltimore, MD 21209
4107356800
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Processing Information: The Isabel Hampton Robb Collection was processed in 2001 by Phoebe Evans Letocha through a grant from the Johns Hopkins Nurses' Alumni Association.

Collection Overview

Extent: 2.5 cubic feet (5 boxes)

Creator: Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910

Administrative/Biographical History:

Isabel Adams Hampton was born in Welland, Ontario in August 26, 1859. At age 17, she started work as a public school teacher in Merriton, Ontario. She entered Bellevue Training School for Nurses in New York in 1881 and received her diploma in 1883. Upon graduation, for a few weeks she served as substitute for the superintendent of nurses in the Woman's Hospital, New York. She then spent two years in Rome as a nurse at St. Paul's House, which was run jointly by the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Church of England and provided English and American nurses to wealthy travelers in Rome. Upon returning from Rome, she served as a private duty nurse for the Conover family in South Amboy, New Jersey. In 1886 she went to Chicago where she was the superintendent of Illinois Training School for Nurses at Cook County Hospital. In 1889, she came to the newly opened Johns Hopkins Hospital, where she was the first Superintendent of Nurses and Principal of the Training School. Hampton was present in 1890 for the formation of the Women's Fund Committee, which called for the admission of women into the school of medicine. While Superintendent at Hopkins, she wrote the nursing text book, *Nursing: Its Principles and Practices*, published in 1893. In 1893 at the World's Fair in Chicago, she organized the Nurses section of the International Congress of Charities, Correction and Philanthropy, for which she arranged to have Florence Nightingale send an address. Out of these activities, the American Society of Superintendents of Training Schools for Nurses was organized, which would later become the National League for Nurses. She later served as its president. In 1894 she left Hopkins to marry Dr. Hunter Robb, an obstetrician/gynecologist at the Johns Hopkins Hospital. They were married in London, England on July 11, 1894. Florence Nightingale sent Hampton her wedding bouquet. The couple moved to Cleveland, Ohio. They had two sons, Hampton, born Dec. 25, 1895, and Phillip, born Feb. 28, 1902.

Isabel Hampton Robb continued her leadership in the nursing profession locally, nationally, and internationally through her writing, nursing organizations, and activities. She was active in the International Council of Nurses and

the Committee to Secure by Act of Congress the Employment of Graduate Women Nurses in the Hospital Service of the US Army, which worked toward the establishment of the Army Nurse Corps. In 1896, Isabel Hampton Robb became the first President of the Nurses' Associated Alumnae of the United States and Canada, which would later become the American Nurses Association. Robb helped to found the American Journal of Nurses. She was instrumental in establishing the course in Hospital Economics at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1899. She worked to secure a place for professional nurses within the Red Cross Nursing Service. Locally, she served as an advisor to the Lakeside Training School for Nurses in Cleveland and helped found the Cleveland Visiting Nurse Association. She continued to write and give speeches on various nursing topics. She wrote the books Nursing Ethics in 1900 and Educational Standards for Nurses in 1907. She was killed April 15, 1910 in a streetcar accident in Cleveland, Ohio.

Chronology: 1889-1894 - Johns Hopkins Hospital, Superintendent of Nurses and Principal of the Training School

Scope and Content:

The Isabel Hampton Robb Papers consist of correspondence, writings by Robb, publications from organizations associated with Robb, inspirational books owned by Robb, materials related to the biography of Robb, photographs and material evidence. Most of the correspondence consists of letters to Elizabeth Birdseye, later Mrs. Percival Merritt, whom Hampton met while she was a student at Bellevue. Copies of the correspondence with Florence Nightingale are included; originals are in the Florence Nightingale Collection. Materials related to Robb's wedding, death and memorial service are also included in the collection. The material evidence consists of Robb's wedding bouquet, which was sent to her by Florence Nightingale, 2 chairs used by Robb while at Hopkins, and locks of her hair.

Accruals Description: 2002-047, 2010-034, 2010-045, 2010-046, 2010-048, 2010-058

Custodial History:

The Isabel Hampton Robb Papers came from a variety of sources. Correspondence including with Miss CV Birdseye, locks of Robb's hair, and some photographs came from her son, P. H. Robb in 1952-1953. Materials related to the Committee on the Life of Isabel Hampton Robb were part of the Alumni Association files and document the Alumni Association's effort to write a biography of Robb. When that effort failed, the resources from it were turned over to the Alumni Association's project to write a history of the School of Nursing. Other items remained at Hopkins from Robb's time as Superintendent or were later added to the historical collection by various alumni. Isabel Hampton Robb gave the school the letter she received from Florence Nightingale.

Language: English

Subject - Name:

Robb, Hunter, 1863-1940
Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910
Johns Hopkins Hospital. School of Nursing--People

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Series 1: Correspondence - 1886-2001

Creator: Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910

Scope and Content: This series consists of personal correspondence from Robb to E.V. "Violet" Birdseye, later Mrs. Percival Merritt, correspondence with Elsie Lawler, and other nursing figures including Florence Nightingale. Some letters are the original handwritten copies, while others are transcriptions or photostatic copies. The photostatic copies were processed as part of the Alumni Association's efforts to publish a history book. The series also contains correspondence from other members of the Robb family.

Subject -- Name: Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910

Subject -- Topical: Levels of Nursing Education; Nursing, Future of; Nursing Profession

Folder 1/1/1: Grace Osler to Dr. Hunter Robb - n.d.

Creator: Osler, Grace Revere Gross, Lady

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/1/2: Isabel Hampton to Mrs. Lawrence regarding organizing nurses - 1890 July 13

Extent: 1 folder

Technical Access Element: transcript

Folder 1/1/3: H. Newell Martin to Miss Hampton - Nov. 15, 1893

Creator: Martin, Newell

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/1/4: Isabel Hampton Robb and Florence Nightingale - 1893-1896

Creator: Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910

Extent: 6 letters; 1 folder

Technical Access Element: copies

Folder 1/1/5: Isabel Hampton Robb to Miss C.V. Birdseye (Mrs. Percival Merritt) - 1886; 1909

Extent: 13 letters; 1 folder

Scope and Content: Letters are addressed from Rosamund to Violetta. Letter dated Oct. 3, 1886 has a dried violet attached.

Technical Access Element: originals

Location & Availability of Copies: 2 photostat sets of copies are available.

Folder 1/1/6: Isabel Hampton Robb to Miss C.V. Birdseye (Mrs. Percival Merritt) - 1909; 1884-1886

Extent: 14 letters; 1 folder

Technical Access Element: negative photostat copies
Location & Availability of Copies: See originals and rolled positive photostat copies.

Folder 1/1/7: Isabel Hampton Robb to Elsie Lawler - 1910 Easter

Extent: 1 folder
Technical Access Element: original and copy

Folder 1/1/8: Hampton Robb to Aunt Betty (Mrs. Percival Merritt) - 1910 March 27

Extent: 1 folder
Technical Access Element: original and copy

Folder 1/1/9: Robb relatives and the JH Nurses Alumni Association - 1939-2001

Extent: 1 folder

Series 2: Writings - 1889-1909

Creator: Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910

Scope and Content: This series consists of writings and reprints of speeches given by Robb throughout her career. These include the inauguration address of 1889 which laid out many of the early Johns Hopkins Training School for Nurses policies. Also included are commentaries on the current state of nursing education and practice.

Folder 1/2/10: Address by Isabel A. Hampton on the opening of JHH Training School for Nurses - 1889 Oct 9

Creator: Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910
Extent: 1 folder
Scope and Content: This is a reprint from The Johns Hopkins Hospital Bulletin, No. 1, Dec. 1889 of the speech given at the inauguration of the Training School for Nurses.
Subject - Topical: Nursing Education, Types

Folder 1/2/11: "The Quality of Thoroughness in Nurses Work," by Isabel Hampton Robb - 1903 May 28

Creator: Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910
Extent: 1 folder
Scope and Content: This paper was published in American Journal of Nursing, 4:3 (Dec. 1903) 168-177. It originally was presented to the graduating class of the Johns Hopkins Hospital Training School for Nurses on May 28, 1903, and was published in the Johns Hopkins Bulletin.

Folder 1/2/12: "Woman's Responsibility in the Prevention of Tuberculosis," by Isabel Hampton Robb - 1908 Dec. 5

Creator: Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: This is a transcript of a paper originally published as part of the Proceedings of the International Congress on Tuberculosis, Washington DC.

Folder 1/2/13: "An International Educational Standard for Nurses" by Isabel Hampton Robb - Nov. 15, 1909

Creator: Robb, Isabel Hampton, 1859-1910

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: This is a reprint from New York Medical Journal, Jan. 15, 1910. The paper was originally presented by Robb before the Medical Association of the Greater City of New York on November 15, 1909.

Series 3: Publications of organizations associated with Robb - 1883-1907

Scope and Content: This series includes annual reports and bulletins from schools and associations with which Robb was affiliated during her career. They are resources on the history of nursing practice and education.

Folder 1/3/14: Illinois Training School for Nurses, Annual Reports - 1883-1889

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: Robb was superintendent of this school during the period of the publications.

Folder 1/3/15: Alumni Society of the Training School for Nurses, Bellevue Hospital, 16th Annual Report - 1889 Jan 1

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: Robb graduated from this school in 1883.

Folder 1/3/16: Nurses Associated Alumnae of the United States and Canada, formation announcement - 1896

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: This document describes the founding of the Nurses Associated Alumnae of the United States and Canada which later became the American Nurses Association. Robb was the first President of the association and was instrumental in organizing the meeting in 1896.

Folder 1/3/17: Visiting Nurse Association of Cleveland, 6th Annual Report - 1907

Extent: 1 folder

Scope and Content: This annual report is included because Isabel Hampton Robb was a member of the Board of Trustees and the Printing Committee.

Series 4: Personal Records - 1873-2002

Scope and Content: This series includes accounts of Robb's personal life, including her career, marriage, death, and family history. Newspaper clippings, eulogies from her memorial service, and modern geneological materials all contribute to a broad understanding of Robb's influential

life.

Folder 1/18: Excerpts from Board of Trustees, JHH, regarding formation of the School of Nursing and Isabel Hampton - 1873-1894

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/19: Wedding to Dr. Hunter Robb - 1894

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/20: Memorial Services - 1910

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/21: Memorial service announcement in the Bulletin of the Johns Hopkins Hospital - 1910

Folder 1/22: Clippings, includes a death notice - 1910-1927

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/23: Description of Isabel Hampton Robb by Grace Baxter - 1944

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/24: Hampton Family genealogy - 1977-2002

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/25: Hunter Robb scrapbook page - 1894-1902

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 1/26: Lists and labels

Scope and Content: These are from previous exhibits and catalogs in the Nightingale Room, made by Jessie Black McVicar and Anna D. Wolf.

Folder 1/27: Wedding bouquet subject file

Scope and Content: Includes later articles written about the bouquet given to Robb by Florence Nightingale.

Folder 1/28: Locks of Hair

Folder 4/1: Hunter Robb scrapbook page (original)

Extent: 1 folder

Subject - Robb, Hunter, 1863-1940

Folder 4/2: Hunter Robb, American College of Surgeons, memorial certificate

Extent: 1 folder

Series 5: Biographical and Commemorative Materials - 1937-1979

Scope and Content: This series includes the records of the Committee on the Life of Isabel Hampton Robb, as well as information about the memorial fund and portrait, which include valuable accounts of her life and work.

Folder 2/5/10: Isabel Hampton Robb, portrait restoration - 1953-1955

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5/11: Isabel Hampton Robb Memorial Fund, ANA and NLNE - 1913-1940

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5/12: Isabel Hampton Robb, Dissertation by Nancy Noel - 1979

Extent: 1 folder

Sub-series 5.1: Committee on the Life of Isabel Hampton Robb - 1937-1947

Folder 2/5.1/1: Committee Correspondence - 1937-1938

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5.1/2: Committee Correspondence - 1939-1947

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5.1/3: Correspondence with Francis Payne Bolton - 1938-1941

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5.1/4: Correspondence with JHH Women's Auxiliary - 1939

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5.1/5: Correspondence with Dr. Hunter Robb - 1937-1938

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5.1/6: Correspondence with Edith Ware - 1937-1946

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5.1/7: Committee Reports - 1937-1946

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5.1/8: Edith Ware Interviews, Vol. 1 - 1939-1940

Extent: 1 folder

Folder 2/5.1/9: Edith Ware Interviews, Vol. 1-4 - 1939-1942

Extent: 1 folder

Series 6: Books owned and used by Robb - 1886-1893

Extent: 7 chapbooks

Scope and Content: This series contains small devotional books, other books, and an address book. It includes "Sweetness and Light" by Matthew Arnold, "Of the Imitation of Christ" by Thomas a Kempis, and the Book of Common Prayer.

Book : "Daily Light on the Daily Path: Evening Hour" - nd

Scope and Content: Inscribed "Sleep after toils, Port after stormy seas, Life after death, Doth greatly please."

Book : "Daily Light on the Daily Path: the Morning Hour" - 1886 June

Scope and Content: Inscribed "He that is born is listed, life is war." [a quotation from Edward Young's "Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality: In Nine Nights."]

Book : "Of the Imitation of Christ" by Thomas a Kempis - nd

Scope and Content: Inscribed "I. Hampton from an Irish Pap----- New Year '90."

Book : "Sweetness and Light" by Matthew Arnold - 1889

Scope and Content: Published by G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

Book : Address book - 1888

Scope and Content: Inscribed "I.A. Hampton 304 Honore St. Chicago, Ill."

Book : The Book of Common Prayer - 1893

Book : The Book of Common Prayer - nd

Series 7: Photographs, Isabel Hampton Robb

Folder : Bouquet photo shoot negatives and contact sheets; Robb descendents with bouquet - 2001

Scope and Content: Also includes Alumni luncheon with Melinda Rose and Archives staff members.

Folder : Hunter Robb at his desk in the Administration building - 1891

Folder : Robb Family descendents - 2001-2002

Extent: 6 snapshots

Scope and Content: Includes photographs of the summer home of Isabel Hampton Robb, in Cap a l'Aigle, Quebec, and photographs of Robb and Heather Paterson visiting the grave of Sarah and Samuel Hampton.

Folder : slides from Bouquet/Alumni meeting photo shoots - 2001

Series 8: Research

Scope and Content: Includes modern research about Robb, including the reconstruction of her wedding bouquet and her correspondence with Florence Nightingale.

Folder : background material and articles about the bouquet reconstruction - 2001

Folder : collection description and notes

Folder : correspondence re: floral reconstruction by the Dutch Connection - 2001

Folder : correspondence re: identifying the bouquet materials - 2001

Folder : University of Guelph project on Florence Nightingale

Folder : websearch results on Florence Nightingale and Isabel Hampton Robb

Series 9: Material Culture related to Isabel Hampton Robb

Artifacts Title: Isabel Adams Hampton Robb

Artifacts Number: 2464A

Artifacts Title: Isabel Hampton Robb

Artifacts Number: 3990A

Artifacts Title: Isabel Hampton Robb wedding bouquet

Artifacts Number: 495A

Artifacts