

**MEDICAL CENTER ARCHIVES
OF
NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN/WEILL CORNELL**

**1300 York Avenue # 34
New York, NY 10065**

Finding Aid To

THE RUTH MORRIS BAKWIN, MD (1898-1985) PAPERS

**Dates of Papers:
1911-1984**

**65 Linear Inches
(7 Boxes)**

**Finding Aid Prepared By:
The Archival Staff
Undated**

Provenance

These papers were officially given to the Medical Archives by Dr. Ruth Morris Bakwin on March 23, 1984. They were gathered on repeated visits by the Archivist, Adele A. Lerner, to Dr. Bakwin's home in Westchester and apartment at the Westbury Hotel. Both homes were filled with works of art by Impressionist painters and sculptors. During these meetings the Archivist jotted down notes regarding the life and work of Dr. Ruth M. Bakwin and her husband, Dr. Harry Bakwin. Some of the memories of Dr. Ruth M. Bakwin can be found in the oral history program which she began under the auspices of the Archives.

Biographical Note

Ruth Morris Bakwin was born in 1898 in Chicago, the daughter of Edmund and Helen Swift Morris, both of whose families owned meat-packing companies.

After graduating from Wellesley College in 1919, Dr. Bakwin entered Cornell University Medical College in the Class of 1923. While at CUMC, she established the Class of 1923 Loan Fund, designed to make available loans to deserving medical students. Upon graduation Dr. Bakwin became the first woman intern at Fifth Avenue Hospital where she began her career in pediatrics.

A few years earlier, while still at Cornell, she had met a young instructor in pediatrics, Dr. Harry Bakwin. After she had completed her internship, she and Harry Bakwin continued their medical studies together in Berlin and Vienna; they were married in 1925.

The Bakwins' professional career was devoted to the care of children with particular interest in the care of emotionally disturbed children. Together they authored Clinical Management of Behavior Disorders in Children, a highly regarded medical textbook, while Ruth Bakwin was a founder of the League for Emotionally Disturbed Children.

Along with her husband, Dr. Bakwin had a long association with the New York University Medical School where she was a member of the Department of Pediatrics from 1930 until her death. In addition, she was Director of Pediatric Services at the New York Infirmary from 1936 to 1954 and was elected a member of its Board in 1961, continuing as a trustee after the Infirmary's merger with Beekman Hospital in 1979. In 1950 she received the New York Infirmary's Elizabeth Blackwell award for her distinguished career in pediatrics.

In their private lives the Doctors Bakwin raised four children and amassed a notable collection of twentieth century art. Dr. Harry Bakwin died on Christmas Day 1973 at the age of 79; Dr. Ruth Bakwin passed away on July 31, 1985, age 87, at Kodiak Island, Alaska, where she was vacationing. For more information on Dr. Bakwin's life see the oral history by Archives volunteer Malvina Douglas as

well as the notes taken by the Medical Archivist, Adele Lerner, during interviews with Dr. Bakwin in 1984.

Scope and Content

The papers gathered together in this collection do not provide an exhaustive overview of the life of Ruth Bakwin. They do, however, at least touch on many aspects of her life.

There is a thin folder of general correspondence, 1942-1983 (2:6); material relating to the New York Infirmary (2:10; 3:1) and to Wellesley College (3:7); as well as papers and lectures by both Bakwins, 1923-1973. There are also a number of folders relating to Ruth Bakwin's interest in the history of women in medicine. This includes papers on Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell; correspondence with the American Medical Women's Association; and notes made by Dr. Bakwin on the subject, especially concerning women physicians in the Army during World War II.

The potentially most interesting material in the collection are those records compiled by Ruth Bakwin for what was apparently to be a long-term study of children, heredity and I.Q. Begun in the early 1930s, the study's subjects were among those who attended Dr. Bakwin's pediatric clinic at Fifth Avenue Hospital and, after 1936, at the New York Infirmary's Clinic. Although most of Dr. Bakwin's study dates from the 1930s-1940s, she followed her children into the 1980s, often coming to know their grandchildren.

The records are of four types. First there are the actual patient records (1930s-1940s) of 132 children who participated in the study (whether this was the total number in the study is not known). These were kept like any other patient records and contain information on the subjects' health, inoculations, visits to the clinic, etc.

Box Five houses the I.Q. tests. These were given between 1935-1952 with the bulk dating from 1935-1945. They are broken down by sex, age, income and hospital (Fifth Avenue, New York Infirmary and Bellevue). Many of the children who have I.Q. test results do not have patient records and it's not certain that all of the I.Q. test children were part of Bakwin's study.

The third group of records is the physical measurements of children. Dating from the 1930s into the 1960s these statistics are broken down by sex, religion (Jewish/Non-Jewish), income, school (public/private) and ethnic background (Central European, Northern European & Mediterranean).

The last group of records relating to this study is the correspondence and questionnaires from the 1970s & 1980s. These consist of letters and Christmas cards received by Dr. Bakwin in 1981-1983 from the study's children (by this time

often grandparents); answers to the questionnaires she sent to them in 1977 and 1983; and address books from the 1950s to the 1970s containing addresses, phone numbers and often vital statistics of the children who participated in her study.

There are several problems in using this material that researchers should be aware of. First, there is no complete explanation by Dr. Bakwin as to why she collected this data and what she was trying to prove with it. The results of these tests and measurements don't seem to have ever been published. Most importantly, perhaps, we have no idea what Dr. Bakwin's criteria was for such categories as upper/lower income Jewish/Non-Jewish, or Central European, Northern European, Mediterranean.

Restrictions

All patient records, I.Q. test results and physical measurements (Boxes 4-6) can be seen only with the permission of the Medical Archivist. [Patient records are protected under the federal HIPAA law]

Subjects

American Medical Women's Association 2:1
Bakwin, Harry, M.D.
Blackwell, Elizabeth 2:4-5
Certificates 2:3
Medical Records Boxes 4-6
New York Infirmary 2;10; 3:1
Pediatrics
Psychiatry 3:2-4
Reprints 2:12-14
Russia 2:7
Scholarships 2:8
Speeches 2:12-14
Statistics 2_9; Boxes 5-6
Wartime Activities 3:10
Women
Women in Medicine 2:1; 3:5, 9-11

Box 1

- f.1 New York Infirmary Patients: Christmas cards/letters, 1981
- f.2 New York Infirmary Patients: Christmas cards/letters, 1981,-1982
- f.3 New York Infirmary Patients: Christmas cards/letters, 1982-1983
- f.4 New York Infirmary Patients: Questionnaires, c. 1977
- f.5 New York Infirmary Patients: Questionnaires, 1983
- f.6 New York Infirmary Patients: Address Book I

Box 1 (cont)

- f.7 New York Infirmary Patients: Address Book II
- f.8 New York Infirmary Patients: Address Book III
- f.9. Adolescent Suicide, 1975
- f.10 American Academy of Pediatrics: Candidates for Elected Office, District II, 1978
- f.11 American Academy of Pediatrics, Section on Adolescent Health: correspondence, 1979

Box 2

- f.1 American Women's Medical Association: correspondence, articles, 1973-1977
- f.2 Archives, NYH-CMC: correspondence, 1982-1984
- f.3 Awards and Certificates, 1971-1983
- f.4 Elizabeth Blackwell: articles, papers, etc.
- f.5 Emily and Elizabeth Blackwell: Memorial Statements, New York Academy of Medicine, 1911
- f.6 Correspondence, 1942-1983
- f.7 Diary of trip to Russia - kept by Harry Bakwin, 1956
- f.8 Loan Fund, Class of 1923, CUMC: correspondence, 1921-1974
- f.9 Mortality Rates: statistics gathered and compiled by Harry Bakwin, 1918-1962
- f.10 New York Infirmary: correspondence and miscellaneous papers, c. 1950s-1982
- f.11 Newsclipping, Ruth and Harry Bakwin, 1957
- f.12 Papers and lectures: miscellaneous subjects, 1923, 1967 and undated
- f.13 Papers and lectures by Harry and Ruth Bakwin, 1930s-1971
- f.14 Papers and lectures by Harry and Ruth Bakwin, 1939-1973

Box 3

- f.1 Reading Clinic, New York Infirmary: Report, 1975
- f.2 Schizophrenia Lectures, 1958-1968
- f.3 Schizophrenia Film: notes; English and Spanish text, 1955-1957
- f.4 "Intellectual and Social Development of So-called Schizophrenic Child" - Article and correspondence, 1968-1971
- f.5 Tax Deductions for Women Physicians who Employ Domestic Help, 1975
- f.6 "Title V and the AAP," Robert A. Hockelman, M.D., 1978
- f.7 Wellesley College: miscellaneous material, 1958, 1983
- f.8 "Women of Tomorrow," Dr. James M. Hester, 1962
- f.9 Early notes on "Women in Medicine" 1939-1972
- f.10 Material for paper on "Women in Medicine" especially women physicians in Armed Services, WW II
- f.11 Status of Women Physicians, Women in Medicine, 1940s-1970s

Box 3 (cont)

f.12 World Medical Journal, Nov. 1964

Box 4

Patients' Records, New York Infirmiry, c. 1930s-1940s, 132 patients

Box 5

I.Q. Tests, New York Infirmiry Patients and others, 1935-1952

- f.1 Card file of patient visits
- f.2 I.Q. Tests: Upper Income, NYI, Boys, 4-10 yrs, 1935-45
- f.3 I.Q. Tests: Upper Income, NYI, Girls, A-F, 1935-1942
- f.4 I.Q. Tests: Upper Income, NYI, Girls, Follow-ups, 1936-1945
- f.5 I.Q. Tests: Upper Income, Fifth Avenue Hospital & NYI: Girls, 4-10 yrs., 1936-1942
- f.6 I.Q. Tests: Upper Income, Fifth Avenue Hospital & NYI: Girls, 4-10 yrs., 1936-1942
- f.7 I.Q. Tests: Upper Income, NYI: Boys and Girls, 1937-1944
- f.8 I.Q. Tests: Upper Income, NYI: Boys and Girls K-V, 1935-1946
- f.9 I.Q. Tests: Lower Income, Bellevue, Girls, 1938-1942
- f.10 I.Q. Tests: Lower Income, Bellevue, Girls, 1936-1942
- f.11 I.Q. Tests: Lower Income, Bellevue, Girls, 1936-1941
- f.12 I.Q. Tests: Lower Income, Bellevue, Girls, 1937-1941
- f.13 I.Q. Tests: Lower Income, Bellevue & NYI: Boys (some follow-ups) 1936-1946
- f.14 I.Q. Tests: Lower Income, Bellevue: Boys (some follow-ups) 1939, 1941
- f.15 I.Q. Tests: Lower Income, Bellevue: Boys (some follow-ups), 1938-1941
- f.16 I.Q. Tests: Lower Income, Bellevue: Boys & Girls (younger children) 1939
- f.17 I.Q. Tests: Miscellaneous tests and follow-ups, Bellevue, NYI & Fifth Avenue; lists of names with parents' occupation, nationality and monthly wage; list of testers and dates, 1935-1945

Box 6

Physical Measurements of Children

- f.1 Upper Income Group, Fifth Avenue Hospital, Total Sex Series, Sept. 1931
- f.2 New York Infirmiry Follow-ups: Notes on visits with 17 patients, Medical Examinations, 1931-1951
- f.3 Upper Income, Private Income: Males, Non-Jewish, measurements
- f.4 Upper Income, Private School: Males, Jewish, measurements
- f.5 Upper Income, Private Schools: Female, Non-Jewish, measurements
- f.6 Upper Income, Private Schools: Jewish Females, measurements

Box 6 (cont)

- f.7 Upper Income, Private Schools: Growth Graphs and Charts, 1940, 1943, 1964
- f.8 Upper Income, New York Infirmary: Individual Measurement Sheets, Boys & Girls, 1943-1944
- f.9 Upper Income, Boys & Girls: Measurements, Averages Compared
- f.10 Upper Income: Boys & Girls, Measurements not calculated
- f.11 Upper Income: 5th Avenue and Private Schools: Boys and Girls, measurements
- f.12 Upper Income, Private Schools, 5th Avenue & NYI: Individual Work Sheets, Boys and Girls, with number of patients measured and size
- f.13 Upper Income, 5th Avenue Hosp., NYI & Private Schools: Comparison Averages, Boys & Girls, Upper and Lower Extremities
- f.14 Lower Income, Public Schools: Central European, Boys & Girls, separately
- f.15 Lower Income, Public Schools: Mediterranean, Boys & Girls separately
- f.16 Lower Income, Public Schools: North European, Boys, measurement work sheets
- f.17 Lower Income, Public Schools: Boys, 56 weeks, through 15 1/4 years
- f.18 Lower Income, Public Schools: Boys & Girls, averages and graphs
- f.19 Lower Income, Public Schools: Girls, 56 weeks, through 15 1/4 years
- f.20 Lower Income, Public Schools: Girls, 56 weeks, through 15 1/4 years
- f.21 Lower Income, Bellevue Hospital: Measurements & Averages, 0-3 yrs., calculated by vertex and another measurement, boys and girls separately
- f.22 Lower Income Group, Bellevue Hospital: Follow-up measurements
- f.23 Lower Income, Bellevue Hospital: Individual curves, weight and height, 9/1940
- f.24 Lower Income, AICP & Bellevue-Yorkville: Summaries of Averages
- f.25 Miscellaneous unlabelled measurements

Box 7

Abstracts of articles; notes for lectures, papers