

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

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

**Finding Aid To**

**THE MARY BEARD (1876-1946) PAPERS**

**Dates of Papers:  
1925-1946**

**15 Linear Inches  
(3 Boxes)**

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

## Preface

The Beard Papers were transferred to the Medical Archives from the Cornell University-New York Hospital School of Nursing c. 1975. Their original provenance remains unknown.

## Biographical Note

Mary Beard was born November 14, 1876 in Dover, New Hampshire, the daughter of the Rev. Ithamar W. Beard, an Episcopal clergyman, and his wife, Marcy Foster Beard. After education in local schools, she entered the New York Hospital Training School for Nurses, graduating in 1903.

Except for two years, 1910-1912, when she was an assistant at the Pathology Laboratory of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, Mary Beard spent her entire career in Public Health nursing. She was a Visiting Nurse, 1904-1909, in Waterbury, Connecticut and for ten years directed the Boston District Nursing Association (1912-1922).

In 1924, while Director of the Boston Community Health Association, she was sent by the Rockefeller Foundation to study Maternal Care in England. This began her long association with the Rockefeller Foundation. In 1925 she was appointed Special Assistant to the Director of the Division of Studies; she later became Assistant Director, Division of Nursing Education (1927-1931) and Associate Director, International Health Division (1931-1938).

Mary Beard directed the Foundation's efforts to develop nursing education overseas. She made numerous trips to Europe, the Orient and the Middle East and helped set up a program of fellowship studies for foreign nurses who wanted to study in the United States.

In 1938, Mary Beard became Director of the American Red Cross Nursing Service where she was responsible for mobilizing the nation's nurses in wartime. She was first chairman of the Nursing Subcommittee of the Health and Medical Committee of the Council of National Defense and, as such, was responsible for the education, recruitment and placement of nurses during the Second World War.

Mary Beard retired in August, 1944 due to poor health and moved to Westport, Connecticut. She died December 4, 1946 at New York Hospital.

## Scope and Content

The bulk of the collection documents Mary Beard's years with the Rockefeller Foundation with little dating before or after her tenure there (1925-1938). The Rockefeller material includes correspondence; reports on nursing in England, India and China; studies of psychiatric and public health nursing and pamphlets,

brochures, statements and correspondence relating to the birth control and eugenics movements in the United States.

Mary Beard's connection with The New York Hospital is seen in the minutes, notes and correspondence of the Committee on Nursing Organization of The New York Hospital of which she was a member. There is also her unfinished history of nursing at NYH, "Nursing and The New York Hospital, 1798-1931," which includes considerable biographical information on famous New York Hospital Training School graduates.

In addition, material can be found in the collection on the Henry Street Visiting Nurse Association, the Florence Nightingale International Foundation Committee and the International Council of Nurses. There is also a folder of comments received by Mary Beard after the publication of her volume The Nurse in Public Health (1929). A calendar of items in this collection has been completed; it can be found in the same folder as this finding aid.

### Non-Manuscript Material

Three pins (American Red Cross, NYH Training School and National Organization of Public Health Nurses) and a Red Cross Identification bracelet belonging to Mary Beard have been transferred to the Alumnae Medals Box on 32G. A photo album with pictures of Tokyo's St. Luke's Hospital, its School of Nursing and its public health clinics has been transferred to the Personal Photograph Collections.

### Subjects

Affiliation 2:7  
Asia 1:3-4  
Birth Control 1:2,8  
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## Subjects (cont)

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Wald, Lillian 2:8; 3:7

Wolf, Anna D. 1:5; 2:7, 12; 3:3

## Box 1

- f.1 Biographical Information
- f.2 Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau, NYC: brochures, pamphlets and articles, c. 1930s
- f.3 China: "Development of Army Nursing School in China" - thesis by Mei-yu Chow, February, 1944
- f.4 Correspondence, Confidential Office, 1931-1938
- f.5 Correspondence, Personal, 1934-1944
- f.6 England, Report on Nursing in : pamphlets, course announcement, etc., from British Nursing Schools; some correspondence, 1937-1942
- f.7 England, Study of Maternal Care in : Mary Beard's Report, c. 1926
- f.8 Eugenics: correspondence, pamphlets, statements re U.S. eugenics movement, 1936-1938
- f.9 Florence Nightingale International Foundation Committee: minutes, correspondence, reports, 1934-1935
- f.10 Goodrich, Annie W.: Draft of tribute to, n.d.

## Box 2

- f.1 Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service: Nursing Committee - minutes and correspondence, 1937-1938
- f.2 Honorary Certificate and Letter to Beard from American Red Cross, 1946
- f.3 India: Beard's reports on public health nursing in India, Ceylon and Burma, 1932-1933
- f.4 International Council of Nurses: correspondence, papers, 1936-1937
- f.5 I.C.N. and Nightingale Study of Nursing, Education Needs: correspondence, minutes, reports, 1935-1938
- f.6 "K" Correspondence 1939-1942
- f.7 New York Hospital School of Nursing: correspondence re Irene Sutcliffe Memorial; affiliation with Cornell, etc. 1937-1939
- f.8 Nursing and The New York Hospital: correspondence; biographical information on famous NYH School of Nursing graduates; drafts of Ms. Beard's never published "Nursing and the New York Hospital, 1798-1931."
- f.9 Nursing Organization of NYH, Committee on: correspondence between Ethel Johns and Beard, 1930-1931
- f.10 Nursing Organization of NYH, Committee on: Reports on Public Health Nursing; U.S. Schools of Nursing

Box 2 (cont)

- f.11 Nursing Organization of NYH, Committee on: Staff Estimates and Tentative Budget by Ethel Johns, 1931
- f.12 Nursing Organization of NYH, Committee on: correspondence between Ms. Beard and Anna D. Wolf, 1931-1939

Box 3

- f.1 Nursing Organization of NYH, Committee on: correspondence and reports from G. Canby Robinson, 1930-1931
- f.2 Nursing Organization of NYH, Committee on: minutes of meetings, 1930
- f.3 Nursing Organization of NYH, Committee on: Council of the School of Nursing, minutes, 1932-1939; reports of the Director of Nursing (Anna Wolf), 1936-1939
- f.4 Psychiatric Nursing Study: Articles and reports, 1936-1939
- f.5 Public Health Nursing: Five Year Plan and Materials for Study, 1930s.
- f.6 The Nurse in Public Health: comments on this volume written by M. Beard; notebook on public health nursing, 1929
- f.7 Publications: Items on various nursing and health care subjects, 1933 - 1940
- f.8 Westchester County Conference on Group Visiting Nursing: correspondence, minutes, reports, 1936-1938