

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

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

**Finding Aid To
THE ETHELYN ANDERSON, MD (1903-1978) PAPERS**

**Dates of Papers:
1912-1955**

**2 Linear Inches
(1 Box)**

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

Provenance:

This collection was given to the Medical Archives in October of 1980 by Harriet Kofalk Kimbro, Dr. Anderson's daughter.

Biography

Ethelyn Anderson was born into a large, closely-knit family on Jan. 23, 1903. In 1919, she graduated from high school in Olean, New York, a small upstate community. She attended Teacher's College at Syracuse University, receiving her degree in 1923. She taught high school in Leonardsville, New York for a year, and then travelled to St. Peter, Minnesota to be the Director of Physical Education for Women at Gustavus College. In the Fall of 1925, she entered Cornell University Medical College, spending her first year at Ithaca, returning to Olean in the summer of 1925 and 1926 to do playground work there. In the summer of 1928, she was the Assistant Director at the Tuberculosis Preventorium at Santa Clara, New York. During 1928, her 4th year at the Medical College, she was the Associate Director (Student) for Nurses at Bellevue Hospital. This entailed performing physicals on student nurses and holding office hours for them. Upon her graduation from medical school in 1929, Dr. Anderson went to Allentown General Hospital in Allentown, Pennsylvania for a rotating internship. After this, she set up a private practice in Annadale, Staten Island and was on the staff of Richmond Memorial Hospital. She also performed physical examination of girls for two high schools on Staten Island. In 1936, Dr. Anderson married Harry Kofalk and gave up her medical practice. Until 1942, she devoted all of her time to raising her only child, Harriet, excluding six months in 1940 which she spent in receiving residency training at Brandywine Sanatorium in Delaware. In July of 1942, Dr. Anderson reestablished her private practice in Ridgewood Park, New Jersey on the first floor of the family's house.

In 1951 the Kofalk family moved West, first settling in Oklahoma. For a short period of time (July 1951-March 1952) Dr. Anderson was the school physician at Oklahoma A&M. In December of that year she became a field worker to the Pueblo Indians and then spent the first two months of 1953 as the Assistant Director of the E. Taylor Indian Hospitals (Zuni). In 1955, she worked for the Los Angeles Board of Education and then became the Director of the Division of School Health for the New Mexico Department of Health.

In later years Dr. Anderson moved to California and died there on April 2, 1978.

Scope and Content

These records document Dr. Anderson's life from youth to middle age in 1955. Through a combination of slides, photographs and the written word, there arise vivid flashes of insight into particular periods of Dr. Anderson's life, but it is hard to get a comprehensive picture of the woman or her life over time. However, there is an interesting view of the woman in medicine during the late 1920s.

The most heavily documented period is that of her early years, up to and including medical school, first at Cornell University in Ithaca and then in New York City. This portion of her life is described through photographs, photographic scrapbooks, and her diary.

The diary is of special interest. It was begun her first day at Cornell in Ithaca and describes her life as a first year student: the courses she took, the dissections in Anatomy, walks around campus, her social life and frequent trips back to Syracuse to visit friends and watch football games. The diary skips 1927 and includes only 1 entry from 1928, discussing her experience at Bellevue Hospital and her attitude towards increased medical responsibilities. The 1929 entries detail her rotation at the Berwind Clinic where Cornell students received obstetrical training on an outdoor service. There is also a moving passage in the back of the book on Dr. Anderson's faith in God. Little is contained here detailing Anderson's life after she left Cornell. A brief selection of correspondence begins in 1937, but one gets little sense of her life during her years as a private practitioner. There is some World War II memorabilia, but again, it is more evocative of the times and less of Anderson herself. The file of correspondence with the Department of Public Health of New Mexico contains only a brief overview of Dr. Anderson's career up to 1955 when she was applying for a job with the department.

Non-Manuscript Material

A very important and exciting part of this collection is the photographic material. Dr. Anderson was a real "shutterbug" and she maintained scrapbooks of her early years and family life (Scrapbooks I A & B), including a 1920s trip to Sweden to visit relatives. Scrapbook II A and B contains photos she took while a student at Syracuse University: scenes of the campus, parades, football games, dorm rooms and friends.

Many other photographs (all black and white) were received with these papers. They are organized by place: Allentown, Sweden, Bermuda, Saint Peter, Minnesota, etc. There are also a series of color slides that begin in 1947 when Dr. Anderson was still in practice in New Jersey. There are representations of her office and lab, her assistants, and home. Other slides were taken while Dr. Anderson lived in Oklahoma and New Mexico. These are beautiful outdoor scenes, some of the hospital buildings, and a few glimpses of Indians and Indian

life.

All of the above non-manuscript items have been removed to the Photograph Collection of the Archives. Some have been entered into the Photo Digital Database available at the Archives.

Subjects

Bellevue Hospital
Berwind Clinic
Cornell University
Indians, American
Student Life
Wartime Activity
Women in Medicine

Discard Note:

In the fall of 1998, this collection was damaged by a flood. Some of the materials were discarded. This finding aid lists the materials that were saved.

Container List

- f.1. Accounts, Budgets, September 1919-June 1920, n.d.
- f.2 CUMC Grades, 1925-1927.
- f.3 Correspondence, Misc., 1937-1944.
- f.4 Dept. of Public Health, New Mexico Re: Job Applications, Correspondence and Related, 1955.
- f.5 Diary, 1925-1929.
- f.6 Diplomas and Certificates, 1912-1925.
- f.7 Genealogical Information.
- f.8 Invitations, Announcements of Office Openings, Birth Record Book, [1931].
- f.9 W.W.II Ration Books, Tokens, Licenses, Grocery Bills.
- f.10 red and white ribbon.
- f.11 bracelet.
- f.12 Sheets with friends names and comments by them to EA, 1920s.