

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

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

**Finding Aid to the
THE LEWIS ATTERBURY STIMSON, MD (1844-1917) PAPERS**

**Dates:
1861-1933; 1965-1969**

**18.25 Linear Inches
(6 Boxes)**

ABSTRACT:

Lewis Atterbury Stimson, MD was a surgeon and educator, as well as an important contributor towards the founding of Cornell University Medical College in 1898. This collection contains correspondence, notebooks, a diary, will, and reprints, as well as biographies and memorial statements relating to L. A. Stimson.

PROVENANCE:

This collection was formed by combining L. A. Stimson material in the Philip Moen Stimson Papers (accessioned 1974) with two boxes of L. A. Stimson reprints received from the Pathology Department Library (which received them from Stimson himself) and the miscellaneous items acquired by the Archives over several years. The constant demand for material on and information about L. A. Stimson warrants these materials being drawn into a single collection.

ADMINISTRATIVE/BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

Lewis Atterbury Stimson was born August 24, 1844 in Paterson, New Jersey, the second son of Henry Clark and Julia Atterbury Stimson. He was educated in the Paterson schools and at Yale College from which he graduated in 1863.

After traveling in Europe and service in the Union Army, in 1866, Dr. Stimson entered his father's New York banking firm. That same year, in Paris, he married Candace T. Wheeler. The couple had two children, Henry Lewis (later *Secretary* of State and of War) and Candace Catherine Stimson. Dr. Stimson's wife, Candace T. Stimson, died prematurely in 1876.

Dissatisfied with his life as banker and stockbroker, Lewis A. Stimson left New York in 1871 with family to study medicine in Paris. He returned to New York in 1873 and entered Bellevue Hospital Medical College, receiving his M.D. in 1875.

He was named Visiting Surgeon at Presbyterian Hospital from 1876 to 1889, Attending Surgeon at The New York Hospital and its emergency branch -- The House of Relief -- from 1888 to 1909, as well as Visiting Surgeon at Bellevue Hospital for many years after 1879.

In addition to being a practicing surgeon, Dr. Stimson was a medical educator. From 1878 to 1898 he taught physiology, anatomy and, finally, surgery, at the Medical College of the University of the City of New York (now New York University). He was instrumental in founding the Cornell University Medical College in 1898 after a dispute with N.Y.U. and was CUMC's first Professor of Surgery from 1898 to 1917. Dr. Stimson also had a large part in the initial affiliation of New York Hospital and Cornell University Medical College in 1912, inducing his friend, George F. Baker, to put up \$250,000 for such purpose.

Dr. Stimson, trained in Europe just as the discoveries of Drs. Pasteur and Lister were receiving wide publicity, became a leading American proponent of the germ theory of infection and of

antisepsis in surgery, In 1876 he performed one of the first operations in the U.S. using Lister's methods and the year before had written "Bacteria and Their Influence Upon The Origin and Development of Septic Complications of Wounds," a pioneer work in the field. His long experience as Surgeon at the House of Relief was used in writing his influential Practical Treatise on Fractures and Dislocations which went through eight editions between 1899 and 1917.

After retiring from active practice in 1909, Dr. Stimson continued teaching and writing. He took a great interest in the First World War, visiting the front in 1915 and 1916 to bring anti-tetanus serum to battlefield hospitals. He died September 17, 1917 at Shinnecock Hills, Long Island.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

This collection contains correspondence, notebooks, a diary, will and reprints as well as biographies and memorial statements relating to L. A. Stimson.

A large part of the correspondence consists of typewritten excerpts made by Dr. Stimson's nephew, Philip Moen Stimson, from original letters now presumably in the Henry L. Stimson Papers at Yale University. The correspondence also contains letters from Henry L. Stimson, Harvey Cushing and William S. Halsted.

The diary was kept in 1916 when Dr. Stimson made a trip to French military hospitals. The notebooks consist of three volumes of medical notes taken in Paris, 1872-1873. The other major component of the collection is memorial statements and biographies relative to Dr. Stimson, most of them dating to 1917-1918 after Dr. Stimson's death. There is, in addition, a three-volume bound set of Dr. Stimson's reprints, several loose reprints and a copy of his Civil War Memories published in 1918. The reprints, besides scientific articles, contain several speeches made by Dr. Stimson, including one made at the opening of the CUMC Building in 1900.

The collection contains correspondence from 1965 to 1968 between Philip Stimson, M.D. and Cornell University Medical College's Library, as well as Dr. Stimson's correspondence with the Presbyterian Hospital. These letters pertain to Dr. Stimson's endeavors to obtain his uncle's records.

Non-Manuscript Material:

An 1867 deed between Stimson and Mason Young for a plot on East 13th Street has been removed to Oversize Box I. Photographs of Dr. Stimson can be found in the Philip M. Stimson Papers as well as in the regular Biographical Photo Collection.

ARRANGEMENT:

The collection is arranged chronologically, with the exception of four fragile bound items placed in separate boxes at the end of the collection.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS:

Four folders are restricted because they contain protected health information (PHI). Advance permission is also needed to view fragile items in the collection, identified in the Contents List. Otherwise, the collection is open to researchers.

LANGUAGE OF MATERIAL:

The collection is mainly in English, but there are some materials written in French

PROCESSING NOTE:

The collection was processed and the original finding aid was written by Assistant Archivist Stephen Novak in the 1980s. The collection was reviewed in February 2020 for protected health information (PHI) by Archives Intern Rebecca Snyder. The collection was also rehoused and the Arrangement and Conditions Governing Access notes were updated by Rebecca Snyder and Head Archivist Nicole Milano in December 2020.

ACCESS POINTS:

Speeches, addresses, etc.
Biography.
Notebooks.
Cushing, Harvey, 1869-1939
Diaries.
France
Halsted, William, 1852-1922
House of Relief (New York, N.Y.)
Obituaries
Pasteur, Louis, 1822-1895
Payne, Oliver
Reprints (Publications)
Surgery
University of the City of New York. Medical Department
United States History Civil War, 1861-1865
New York Hospital
Cornell University. Medical College
Stimson, Lewis Atterbury, 1844-1917
World War, 1914-1918

PREFERRED CITATION:

Item Name or Identification; Box #, Folder #; The Lewis Atterbury Stimson, MD (1844-1917) Papers, 1861-1927; 1965-1968 (Medical Center Archives of New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell, New York, NY).

RELATED MATERIAL:

Julia C. Stimson, RN (1881-1948) Papers
Philip M. Stimson, MD (1888-1971) Papers

CONTENTS LIST:
Box 1:

Folder:	Description:
1	Papers (Includes Yale Composition and Empty Envelopes), 1861-1915
2	Correspondence, 1865-1917, Restricted – PHI
3	Correspondence: Excerpts Edited by Philip M. Stimson, 1872-1918; 1967, Restricted – PHI
4	Paris Medical School Notebook, 1873, Restricted- FRAGILE
5	Paris Medical School Notebook, 1873, Restricted- FRAGILE
6	Paris Medical School Notebook, 1874, Restricted- FRAGILE
7	Reprints (Articles), 1874-1890
8	Correspondence re: Pasteur and Antiseptic Operation, 1875-1876; 1933; 1966-1968, Restricted – PHI
9	Reprints (Articles), 1890-1902
10	Reprint (Address): "Pasteur's Life and Work in Relation to the Advancement of Medical Science", read at the New York Academy of Medicine in New York City, November 17, 1892
11	Last Will and Testament, circa 1893

Box 2:

Folder:	Description:
1	<u>A Manual of Operative Surgery</u> by Lewis A. Stimson, 1895
2	Reprints (Article): "Intravenous Saline Injections in Conditions of Severe Shock" by L.A. Stimson M.D., December 19, 1896
3	Correspondence: MacCracken, Henry (Chancellor, N.Y.U.) to L.A. Stimson re: formation of Cornell University Medical College, 1898
4	Reprint (Address): Read at the Opening of the New Building of the

- Medical Department at Cornell University in New York City, December 29, 1900
- 5 Reprint (Address): “Teaching and Research: Distinct and Indispensable Functions of a University”, read at Stimson Hall before the trustees, faculties, and students of the Medical College in Ithaca, New York, May 8, 1903
- 6 Reprint (Address): “The Combined Transverse and Longitudinal Incision in Laparotomy”, read at the New York Surgical Society, March 23, 1904
- 7 Reprint (Address): Read at opening of the surgical building and new clinical amphitheater at Johns Hopkins Hospital, October 5, 1904
- 8 Reprint (Address): “Simple Fracture: Some Points in its Diagnosis and Operative Treatment”, Read at a meeting of the Medical Society of the State of New York in Albany, January 27, 1909
- 9 Correspondence: George Rives to L. A. Stimson re Stimson's retirement from The New York Hospital, November 4, 1909
- 10 **Diary: Trip to France, 1916, Restricted- FRAGILE**
- 11 **Notebook, circa 1916, Restricted – PHI**
- 12 Cornell University Board of Trustees: Resolution honoring L. A. Stimson, 1917
- 13 Cornell University Medical College Faculty Resolution Honoring L. A. Stimson, 1917
- 14 Correspondence re L. A. Stimson's death, 1917
- 15 Memorial Statements/Biographies, 1917-1927; 1965-1968
- 16 Lewis Atterbury Stimson Publications List compiled by Cornell University Medical College Library Reference Department, 1969

Box 3: [Bound Reprints by L.A. Stimson, 1874-1885, Restricted- FRAGILE](#)

Box 4: [Bound Reprints by L.A. Stimson, 1887-1896, Restricted- FRAGILE](#)

Box 5: [Bound Reprints by L.A. Stimson, 1897-1907, Restricted- FRAGILE](#)

Box 6: [Personal Bible of Lewis A. Stimson, 1911, Restricted- FRAGILE](#)