

XII

The Library in Operation, 1895–1913

DAY-TO-DAY OPERATION OF THE LIBRARY

THROUGH the administration of four different librarians between 1895 and 1913 the Library moved along year after year, growing slowly.¹ During the hours of service, 9 to 4:30, there was a steady succession of readers, including local physicians, students from Washington medical schools, researchers, writers of texts and monographs, officers attending the Army Medical School, and employees of companies sent to the Library to research and abstract.² For the convenience of local physicians who were in their offices during the day, the librarians, from time to time, suggested that the building be kept open until 9 or 10 o'clock at night, but the Medical Department never had funds to pay the salaries of the additional clerks who would have been needed. Thomas Cullen recalled how useful the institution had been in providing him with literature on gynecology:³

During the years I wrote five books and three volumes of short articles. The literature for all of the books and nearly all of the separate monographs was furnished me by the Surgeon General's Library.

During the preparation of "Diseases of the Umbilicus," I spent approximately three afternoons a week for three years in the Library looking up the extensive literature in this field. Over a long period I was given one corner of the large room adjoining the stacks and kept this for months at a time, through the kindness of the late Charles G. Toepper, who had charge of that department.

During the reading of the galleys of the umbilical book, I made fifty trips from Baltimore to Washington to check all the references.

* * * * *

There is no other man in the United States who is under a deeper debt of gratitude to the Surgeon General's Library than I am. For nearly fifty years its vast stores of medical information have been mine for the asking. From the beginning I have been treated royally; if I had been one of the most important personages in the country more consideration of me could not have been shown.

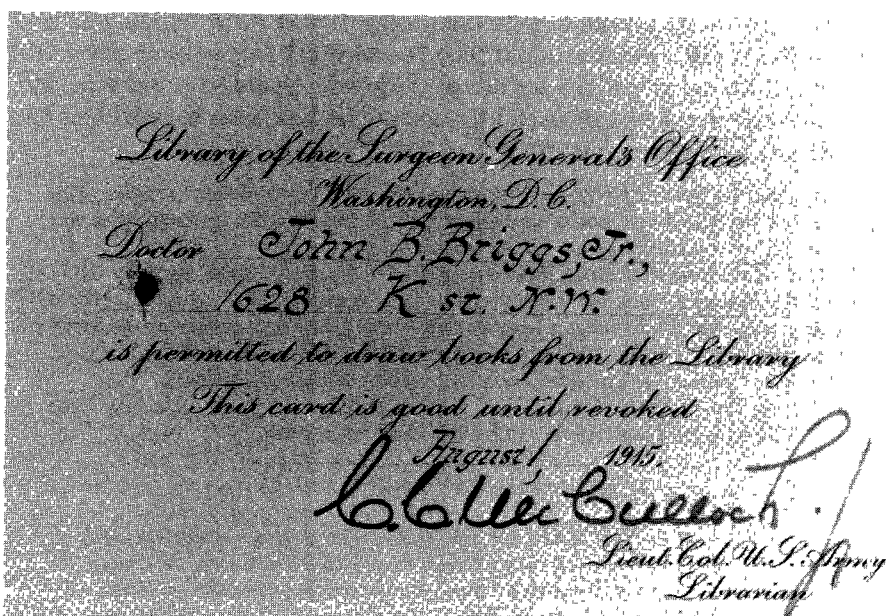
Garrison counseled persons writing lengthy pieces to come during the summer since it was "the most favorable period for study and work at the Library, because there is better light and because at that time, most of us have more

leisure to devote to visitors. In fact, most physicians who are doing historical work come here to work in our cubicles at that time."⁴

The routine went along as it had since the early 1880's, but the steadily increasing quantity of medical publications required that more and more of the Library's resources be spent producing the *Index-Catalogue*. Finally 9 months of the staff's time were needed to turn out the annual volumes. Whenever the work fell behind, clerks were shifted from their regular jobs to help somewhere along the assembly line. As a result other work in the Library lagged; for example the carding and handling of public documents was generally in arrears because the clerks in charge were frequently switched to the *Catalogue*.

The number of interlibrary and personal loans became quite large; there seems to have been no other medical library in the country at that time that sent books out on loan. In 1911, 7,500 volumes were sent by express to college, university, public, government, and medical libraries and to individuals who did not live in the neighborhood of a library.⁵

The Library became unbelievably liberal in lending rare and valuable books. Among the works it sent to borrowers through interlibrary or personal loan was an incunabulum (Bartolomeo Montagnana, *Consilia Medica*, Venice 1497),



At first local physicians had to come to the Library to consult publications. About 1913 the Librarian relaxed the rules and permitted patrons to borrow books to read at home. The Library continued to lend locally for more than 40 years.

John of Gaddesden's *Praxis Medica* (1595), John Jones' *Briefe, Excellent, and Profitable Discourse* (1572-74), *Opuscules de Dwers Autheurs Medecins* (1552), Galen's *Opera* (1585), *Philadelphia Medical Museum* (1804-05), *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* (1700), and other 16th, 17th and 18th, and 19th century publications⁶ On occasion it permitted borrowers to retain books for long periods—one patron kept John Hall's *Select Observations on English Bodies of Eminent Persons in Desperate Diseases* (1683), from 1913 to 1915 before returning it⁷ It began to give local physicians the privilege of borrowing books upon presentation of a library card. It stopped requiring individuals living at a distance to deposit a sum of money before borrowing books.⁸

Books were shipped, often in wooden boxes in which the department received bottles of whiskey for medicinal purposes, to every state, to Canada, Germany, and perhaps other countries.⁹ Books were loaned to libraries for exhibition purposes.¹⁰

Librarians did not begrudge the time and expense in lending volumes, the chief concern was the damage done to publications by the jostling of packages in transit.¹¹ Some popular books were requested many times, exposed to much wear and tear, and gradually became unfit for lending. Hundreds, at time thousands, of volumes lay waiting to be rebound. Librarians were always conscious of the expense of binding, requisitions for which had to be approved by the Surgeon General. Some volumes remained unbound for years because of lack of funds. The Library hoped that by stimulating the growth of other medical libraries, these libraries would fill requests for local patrons and thus diminish the number of interlibrary loans sought from Washington.¹²

The providing of information for the Surgeon General's office, for Army surgeons, and for patrons living outside of Washington became systematized. Topics to be researched and questions to be answered were divided among members of the staff thus: Garrison, general questions on medical research, physiology, history, and bibliography, Albert Allemann, general medical research requiring knowledge of various languages, and medical numismatics, Frank J. Stockman, general research in current medical literature, and preparation of select bibliographies of medical subjects for out-of-town physicians, Beruch Israeli, Russian and Polish medicine, and foreign medical legislation relating to army medical service, Felix Neumann, older medical literature, incunabula, and reference work from older bibliographical compilations, and Cary R. Sage, portraits, engravings, letters, autographs, and checklists of incunabula. Allemann, Israeli, and other clerks with medical training compiled bibliographies for researchers.¹³

Queries came from physicians and laymen about topics listed in and not in the *Index-Catalogue*. Were rays from colored lightbulbs harmful? Was there a connection between dandruff and hay fever? Were germs transmitted by postage stamps? What was known about the morbid fear of thunderstorms?

The reference service was international, staff members answered queries from Cuba, Germany, Chile, Greece, Canada, and other countries.¹⁴ And staff

A HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE

WAR DEPARTMENT
SURGEON GENERAL'S OFFICE
U. S. ARMY MEDICAL MUSEUM AND LIBRARY

Corner Art and B Streets S.W.

Washington, D. C. May 2, 1890.

No persons, except the employes of the Library, will be permitted to take down books from, or replace them on, the shelves.

Whenever a book is taken from a shelf, and is not to be immediately returned, a card must be put in its place showing where it has gone.

All persons other than Library employes wishing to examine books on the shelves must apply to Dr. Wise for permission, and will be accompanied either by Dr. Wise or by one of the employes of the Library Hall while they are in the alcoves. Such permission will be granted only in special cases and for good reasons. Experience has shown that the allowing persons other than the Library employes to enter the alcoves, gives rise to disarrangement of the books and to possible loss.

By order of the Surgeon General,

(Signed) John S. Billings,

Surgeon, U. S. Army, Director of the Library.

Earlier, patrons had been allowed to browse freely among the books and journals. By 1890 the Library had grown so large and served so many readers that Billings was forced to restrict access to the stacks.

members went to considerable length to assist inquirers. On one occasion McCaw, endeavoring to aid a physician in Berlin, Germany, wrote to the health officials of several states to obtain copies of medical certificates required before marriage.¹⁵ But if an inquiry demanded an unreasonable length of time, the Librarian suggested that a researcher be hired.¹⁶

The Library became the unofficial translating service for the Medical De-

partment Garrison translated French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Latin, Allemann all of the above plus Greek and Portuguese, Stockman, German French, Swedish, Dutch, and Danish, Israeli, Russian, Polish, Hungarian, Bohemian, German, and French, Neumann, Latin, German, and French. The Library provided short abstracts or translations to civilian physicians, but if the amount requested was unreasonably long, the Librarian sent the patron a list of names of persons who would do the task for pay.

During this period the Library received an appropriation of \$10,000 almost every year for the purchase of books and journals. Approximately half of this was spent on subscriptions for periodicals (for example, more than 1,300 journals in 1911), \$4,000 for books from Europe, and \$1,000 for books published in the United States. Ten thousand dollars was a fairly satisfactory, though not ideal, sum for this purpose when it was first granted in 1896, but as time passed inflation slowly decreased the purchasing value of the dollar, the number of medical publications increased, and \$10,000 bought less and less. Since the policy of the Library was to obtain all the medical periodicals published throughout the world, the funds for buying books kept shrinking. The Library had to become very choosy in selecting new monographs.¹⁷ This circumstance of shrinking funds was to continue for many years, and as a result the rate of growth of the Library, which had been the highest in the country during Billings' time, would slow down and be surpassed by other research libraries.

Starting in 1911, through the cooperation of Herbert Putnam, the Library began to receive duplicates of books on medicine that the Library of Congress obtained under the copyright law and other duplicates that it accumulated.¹⁸ Later Putnam offered duplicates of foreign medical books sent to the congressional library for copyright in the United States, and duplicates of foreign journals.¹⁹ He also sent McCaw proof sheets of monthly accessions lists in related fields (as pharmacy, dentistry, psychology) so that the Library could select other works.²⁰ The Librarian's delivery wagon brought the first lot of books from the Library of Congress on February 28, 1911.²¹ The Library of Congress not only helped build the Library's collection but permitted it to save money which it could spend for other works.

After the United States took the Philippines under its wing, the Army chief surgeon in Manila sent a circular to his officers asking them to obtain medical works that had been published in the islands and in Spain. As their predecessors had done at home for Billings a generation earlier, the officers scouted around and acquired items that were welcomed in Washington.²²

The Library also obtained publications in exchange for the *Index-Catalogue*, and it received many gifts—about 5 percent of its new arrivals were donated by authors, publishers, and friends. Old and new friends continued to donate books, among them William W. Keen, William Disbrow, William Osler, the Georgia Medical Society and other organizations, Daniel Davis, who presented papers of Frank Hamilton, a physician who attended President Garfield, Abraham Jacobi, who donated autograph letters, Mortimer Frank, who gave pho-

tographs, Sir Thomas Lauder Brunton, who sent 200 bound volumes containing 7,000 articles on pharmacology and therapeutics, and Thomas Windsor, who died in 1910 and remembered the Library in his will²³ Gifts would continue to enhance the collections in the future, although it would become more and more difficult for friends to present a volume that the Library did not already possess William Beer, of the Howard Memorial Library, New Orleans, indicated this later when he sent an item, saying, "You have arrived at such perfection that it is a pleasure to contribute anything"²⁴

The Library became more liberal with its duplicates It no longer demanded exchanges (except for rare books), instead it donated duplicates to libraries that requested them, provided the recipient send a representative to select the books and journals from the accumulation and pay shipping costs Indeed the Library came to regard its duplicate collection as a "seed bed" for young libraries and its aid to those libraries as an important service²⁵

EXPANSION OF THE LIBRARY WITHIN THE BUILDING

The Library-Museum Building at the time of its completion in 1887 was thought to have sufficient unused shelf space to accommodate incoming books for a long, long time Yet within a decade librarians could see that all empty shelves would soon be filled In 1896 Librarian Huntington requested \$6,000 for six new iron stacks with iron stairways, perforated iron flooring, and wooden shelves He did not receive it Later librarians repeated the request By 1904 inflation in the cost of materials and wages had more than doubled the estimated cost to \$13,000 Finally in March 1905 Congress appropriated \$8,000 for the work When completed by contractors, under the eye of Army engineers, in May 1906, the shelves provided space, it was hoped, for the next 10 years²⁶

The Library—and museum—also suffered through lack of room Librarian Merrill noted that the duplicates were so crowded in the "duplicate room in the basement" as to be practically inaccessible²⁷ Storage space for duplicates became so scarce that Librarian McCaw turned potential donors away and finally had to sell several wagon loads of publications for waste paper²⁸

The War Department's Record and Pension Division still filed hundreds of thousands of records of Civil War veterans in the large room under Library Hall, and its officers and clerks occupied offices on the first floor front of the building Librarians and Curators repeatedly asked that the record-pension group be moved out so that the Library could expand into the lower room and the museum into the rooms along the front²⁹

The Record and Pension Division remained for a time, but fortunately the Army Medical School departed The school, housed in the building since its founding in 1893, had been so successful that it had expanded Eventually it had become cramped Officers on the faculty protested to the Surgeon General that the laboratories were makeshift, inadequate, crowded, and unsuitable, and that the school was encroaching on space "desperately needed" by the Library and museum³⁰



The chemistry laboratory which, with a bacteriological laboratory, was installed in the center section of the building for use of students of the Army Medical School. The arrangement was satisfactory for a while, but later the laboratories and classrooms occupied space needed by the growing Library.

The Surgeon General finally obtained quarters for the school in a rented building at 462 Louisiana Avenue. The school moved during the spring of 1910. However, the Library and museum did not inherit all the vacated areas. The Surgeon General transferred the Medical Department's architect and chemist to the building and set aside two rooms for use of examining boards.³¹

Still, the Library and museum received space into which they immediately expanded. The Library shifted its unbound recent journals and some of its documents and pamphlets into a large room freeing space in the stacks in Library Hall for acquisitions. Librarian McCaw said that the move came just in time to save the Library "from being so choked with its own material that it was becoming impossible to keep track of or to find a paper wanted when it was a pamphlet or document or number of any unbound periodical."³²

FIRST RENOVATION OF THE BUILDING

By 1910 the building was almost a quarter of a century old and was beginning to show signs of wear and tear. The roof leaked. The drain pipes within the

walls flooded at some point every year, ruining the adjacent interior wall area and threatening books and specimens. The inside plaster walls had been calcimined originally to save money, but the calcimine surface became dirty and had to be recalculated frequently so that the total cost was greater than if the walls had been painted. The lavatories, toilets, and plumbing were becoming antiquated and in need of replacement. The exterior was begrimed by Washington smoke and needed to be cleaned.

The building was wired for electricity, but inadequately by later standards. Only four droplights, consisting of incandescent bulbs with green metal shades over them, were installed in Library Hall. Flashlights had to be used in the stacks. Around this time the first pay telephone was installed for the use of users of the Library and museum.

Routine repairs to the heating system, electrical system, plumbing, and woodwork were made by the mechanic, engineer or assistant engineer, but major renovations called for outside contractors. McCaw estimated that necessary repairs, done in the most economical manner, would cost \$25,000.³³ Congress appropriated \$10,000 for the work. With this sum not everything could be fixed, but starting on July 1, 1911, the Library was closed temporarily until the most essential repairs were made to the roof and heating system, the interior painted, and new plumbing installed.

BOTANY BAY

Along with more space the Library could have used more and younger employees at higher salaries. The workers hired by Billings when they were relatively young men had grown into middle age by the turn of the century. In 1906 there was one youngster of 25 on the staff, but next in age were three men in their forties, five in their fifties, seven in their sixties, two in their seventies, and one, Edward Shaw, who was 81.³⁴ The average age of the 19 clerks was approximately 59 years. Fletcher, the principal assistant librarian, was 83. In comparison his assistant, Fielding Garrison, was a boy of 36.

The assistant messenger (who did not count as a clerk) was an "old soldier with failing eyesight and infirmities of age" named John Fogarty, who had joined the United States Dragoons back in 1855 and been wounded during the Civil War. After the conflict he had tried civilian life for a few years, rejoined the Army in 1871 and been assigned to the Surgeon General's office. He left the Army in 1874 but remained in the Medical Department as a civilian employee. On January 4, 1908, he tottered on the second floor near the main stairway, lost his balance, fell over the banister, fractured his skull and died January 7.³⁵

The Library not only had its own veterans, it became the final haven for elderly clerks from the Surgeon General's office. The Surgeon General and his assistants were considerate of their long-time employees and assigned those who had slowed down physically to the easiest jobs. They believed that Library clerkships were the least demanding in the Medical Department, and when a

Library clerk died or resigned his place was liable to be filled by an old-timer sent from the SGO. Finally in 1911 Librarian McCaw had to protest against the proposed transfer of a clerk, telling his superiors: "The Museum and Library Division is now much crippled from the fact that many of its old and faithful employees are practically disabled by age and the physical infirmities attendant thereto, and places as they fall vacant must of necessity be filled by young men in order to keep up the work. I sincerely hope this transfer will not be made."³⁶

In the event that the organization was able to find a promising young recruit to fill a vacancy, it was not always able to hold him. The work was often repetitious, tedious, and dull. The copying of titles of books and articles, typing copy, translating, proofreading, day after day, drove many recent employees away. McCaw lamented in 1910 that new men quit the Library for "better places" just "about as soon as they learn their business."³⁷

Salaries were relatively low for the intelligent, competent, hardworking people that the Library sought. In 1905 the total salaries for the 21 persons working there amounted to \$29,280.³⁸ In 1911 Robert Fletcher, M.D., the second in command, who had a worldwide reputation, received \$2,080 as principal assistant librarian. Fielding Garrison, B.A. Johns Hopkins, M.D. Georgetown, third in command, received \$1,800 as assistant librarian. Beruch Israeli, B.A. Yale, M.D. Georgetown, able to translate Russian, Polish, and Scandinavian languages, received \$1,400 a year as a clerk, class 2.³⁹ Albert Allemann, A.B. Gymnasium of Soleure, Switzerland, M.D. George Washington, who indexed foreign journals and helped with the *Index-Catalogue*, also received \$1,400 as a clerk.⁴⁰ In 1908 McCaw offered a clerkship at \$900 a year to a Dr. Frank Disney.⁴¹ In 1913 the Librarian offered a clerkship, \$1,000 a year, to Arthur Eisenberg, M.D., who was earning \$1,100 a year as physician

Albert Allemann, Principal Assistant Librarian, 1917 to 1932, coeditor of Index-Catalogue, 1912 to 1916, editor of series 3, 1918 to 1932.



in the Indian Service, Lower Brule Agency, South Dakota. Eisenberg accepted the job, apparently in order to return from the frontier to civilization, but he remained in the Library less than a year before resigning to become anatomist of the museum at a higher salary.⁴² The Librarian frequently asked for permission to pay higher salaries, but only occasionally were increases granted.⁴³ On at least two occasions McCaw would not approve a clerk's application for transfer to a better-paying job elsewhere because he felt the clerk was too valuable to the Library.⁴⁴

It was this combination of the Library being the final berth before retirement for many employees, the low salaries in comparison with salaries elsewhere in the Surgeon General's office, and the difficulty of escape for some employees to other branches of the Medical Department, that caused men in the SGO to begin referring to the Library as "Botany Bay."⁴⁵

The Library had other problems besides those associated with an aging staff, difficulty of retaining new recruits, and inequalities in salaries. Other branches of the Surgeon General's office, feeling that the Library's mission was the least important in the Medical Department, borrowed clerks and sometimes kept them for months, despite protests of the Librarian.⁴⁶

Perhaps the Library's recruitment and retention of top-notch persons would have been eased if it had begun to accept women on the staff. In 1903 Kate Levy, M.D. Northwestern, who was experienced in medical library work and "anxious to make a specialty" of it, inquired about a job.⁴⁷ But the Army Medical Library was not ready to break with tradition, and if Dr. Levy ever entered the medical library field it was elsewhere.

THE *Index-Catalogue* IS CONTINUED
BUT THE NUMBER OF COPIES IS REDUCED

When Billings planned the *Index-Catalogue* in the 1870's he did not foresee a second or third or fourth series. He told his German friend and book agent Felix Flügel, "I shall never print but one giant catalog and I want that to be as complete as possible."⁴⁸ But by the 1890's the mechanism and team for producing the *Catalogue* was running along smoothly, the medical profession had adopted it as an indispensable standard reference tool, and officers of the Medical Department were loath to see it stopped. Long before the final volume, W-Zythus, came from the GPO in 1895, the decision had been made to continue indexing literature that had accumulated and to publish the citations in a second series. Volume one of series two appeared without interruption in 1896. Without any intention on Billings' part the Library had metamorphosed into a publishing house.

As an aside it is interesting to conjecture about the future of the Library if the Surgeon General had halted the *Catalogue* in 1895. If indexing, translating, carding, proofreading, publishing, and distributing had ceased, half of the staff would have had nothing to do and would have been discharged. The *Index Medicus*, a by-product, would have stopped publication. The flow of free pe-

riodicals and books sent for mention in *Index Medicus* would have ended, forcing the Library to redistribute its funds, and perhaps forcing it to cancel subscriptions. The Library might have received less support from the medical profession, the Army, and Congress. The Library could have developed in possible ways, and it would certainly have been radically different.

While volume 1 of the second series was being prepared, Congress in January 1895 passed a law stating that no more than 1,000 copies of any government document could be printed. The legislators did this because they were concerned over the ever-increasing number and cost of Federal publications. The Library received its usual appropriation covering the printing costs of 1,500 copies of the *Catalogue*, but this was 500 more copies than the law allowed.

Librarian Huntington asked Surgeon General Sternberg to request the Secretary of War to persuade the House and Senate committees on printing to exempt the *Index-Catalogue* from the 1,000-copy rule. Sternberg tried to help but to no avail.⁴⁹ The *Catalogue* was limited officially thereafter to 1,000 copies of each volume. The Government Printing Office, however, was liberal and provided between 1,000 and 1,500 copies annually, a fortunate circumstance for libraries of the future.⁵⁰

THE FALL AND RISE OF *Index Medicus*

During this period the fortunes of *Index Medicus*, the by-product of the *Index-Catalogue*, fell and rose. After Billings left Washington in 1895 and moved to Philadelphia and later New York, the burden of publishing *Index Medicus* fell on Robert Fletcher. He received subscriptions, handled finances, made arrangements with the printer, directed the indexers, kept the work organized, read proof, and saw that copies were mailed to subscribers. Billings' name appeared on the title page as coeditor, but he was busy in New York City developing the public library system and could not assist.

Fletcher had a slightly different opinion about selecting material for citation in *Index Medicus* than had Billings. After Billings left, Fletcher tended to choose some articles for *Index Medicus* that had not been selected for the *Index-Catalogue*. He did this "on the ground that current articles of any kind are apt to be of current interest to current readers, some of whom may find in [the articles] just the stimulating or factual statement they are after." The *Index Medicus* was, therefore, a more complete bibliography, at least during part of its existence, than the *Index-Catalogue*, "which Billings aimed to make a repository of the very best and most select material, but of no other."⁵¹

Fletcher continued to oversee the production of *Index Medicus* through 1896, '97 and '98, but then he had to give up. In the spring of 1899 he wrote Billings that he was "getting on in years," the steady increase in articles to be indexed was "really appalling," and every expense had increased except the editor's stipend. "If I go on," he said, "the chances are that I should lose both time and money."⁵² He felt that there was no one else available to take over

the job. With reluctance the two editors let the journal lapse after the appearance of the April 1899 issue.⁵³

Index Medicus might have disappeared forever had not the Carnegie Institution of Washington been established in 1902, with Billings as one of the trustees. One purpose of the Institution was to assist research by granting expense money for worthy scientific undertakings. Urged by Billings, the institution agreed to allot \$10,000 for publication of *Index Medicus*, with Fletcher as editor.⁵⁴ Fletcher might still have declined the proposal had not Fielding Garrison proved himself to be an excellent assistant librarian. Fletcher agreed to resurrect *Index Medicus* if Garrison could join him as coeditor. The institute agreed and also made the editors' task easier by assuming the business management.

Fletcher and Garrison brought out the first issue of the new series in the spring of 1903. Because of funds provided by the Carnegie Institution, the price was lowered to \$5. Still the periodical never attracted sufficient subscribers to cover the cost, and the institution continued to subsidize it for many years.⁵⁵

In the spring of 1911 Fletcher, now 88 years old, came down with a severe case of pneumonia. He recovered but never regained his vigor. At the end of the year he resigned as editor, leaving Fielding Garrison the responsibility for *Index Medicus*.⁵⁶

PROPOSALS TO REMOVE THE LIBRARY FROM THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

On a number of occasions Congressmen suggested that the Library be removed from the Medical Department, either for reasons of economy or because the writings would be more convenient to the public if they were in a different location. In early 1897 Congressman Joseph Cannon, chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, conceived or adopted a plan to move the Library (but not the museum) into the new District of Columbia public library building and give the vacated space in the Army Medical Building to one of the expanding governmental agencies, perhaps the National Museum or Geological Survey. Fletcher first heard of this from Ainsworth Spofford, Librarian of Congress, who would have gained control of the Surgeon General's Library if it were moved to the public library building. Fletcher tried to learn more about Cannon's plans, talking to Representative Henry H. Bingham, to the editor of the newspaper *Washington Post*, and to other persons, but to no avail because, as he told Billings, "Cannon keeps his plan to himself." Billings, in New York, asked George Shattuck, Horatio Wood, William Osler and other prominent physicians to influence their legislators to permit the Library to remain in the Medical Department.⁵⁷

Cannon was serious: he requested information as to the number of square feet of space that would be freed if the Library moved, and he came down from Capitol Hill accompanied by two members of his committee and went through the building. Then suddenly he dropped the idea. The reason or

combination of reasons that dissuaded him is not known. It may have been Spofford's defense of the Surgeon General's Library, or the National Museum's resistance to being given only half the Army building instead of a new building, or some other circumstance. But it was fortunate for the Library's independence that Cannon changed his mind, for he was the most powerful person in Congress and could have had his way had he desired.

In early 1905 the Medical Department began to hear rumors of a proposal to merge the Library with the Library of Congress.⁵⁸ The LC building on Capitol Hill was new and uncrowded, and the thought occurred to some legislators that operating expenses (mainly salaries) of the medical library could be reduced by moving it into the congressional library. Nothing happened at the time, but the idea recurred later.

The department's concern for its library may have been heightened in 1906 by a survey, taken by the Executive Branch, of the organization and use of all Federal libraries.⁵⁹ But other than a reduction in the appropriation from the usual \$10,000 to \$9,000, nothing untoward occurred. The reduction lasted only 1 year, the appropriation returned to \$10,000 in fiscal year 1907.

Notes

¹ During this period the librarians answered a number of questionnaires concerning the Library. These contain all manner of information. See *Organization and Use of Libraries* (questionnaire of Keep Commission) and answers, May 22, 1906, MS/C/116; Questionnaire from Library, Univ. of Paris, Nov. 1907, MS/C/116 with answers, Nov. 18, MS/IB/101; Data on the Library, S. G. O. prepared for the Bureau of Education, May 20, 1908, MS/C/116; Letter McCaw to Surgeon General, report for the President's Inquiry on Economy and Efficiency, Dec. 8, 1910, MS/C/116; Report on the Library in accordance with Circular No. 16, President's Commission on Economy and Efficiency, June 30, 1911, MS/C/116; Letter McCulloch to R. Meeker, July 7, 1915, MS/IB/101. See also McCulloch, *The Surgeon General's Library*, *Bull. Med. Lib. Assoc.* n.s. 6: 25-39 (1916-17).

² Annual reports of the Surgeon General from 1928 to 1933 noted the number of company representatives, for example, there are nine persons permanently engaged in research and abstracting, 1931, p. 323.

It was perhaps to some of these persons that Victor C. Vaughan referred when he wrote: "There are now certain organizations which for a definite price offer to supply an author with literature of reference. These organizations employ men and women to go through great libraries, such as those in Washington, Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago, and make out the

lists." (Vaughan, *A Doctor's Memories* (1926), p. 208).

³ The quotation is from Cullen's scrapbook, "Proposed New and Centrally Located Surgeon General's Library Building," copy in HMD. Cullen also wrote:

Some years ago Dr. George Gardner, then my resident and now a prominent surgeon in Chicago, and I went motoring over to Washington. He was driving rather fast and I said, "George, aren't you afraid of being arrested?" He replied, "I have never been pinched in my life." A few moments later, as we neared Washington, I noticed three motor cycle policemen and they noticed us. As we came into the suburbs of Washington there were several toots. Two motor cycle men came up beside us and one was directly in front of us. One officer in a gruff voice said to George, "Show us your card." He did so and I pulled out my visiting card and handed it to him, explaining that we were on the way to the Surgeon General's Library to do some work. All three officers started to laugh and one said, "Well, we all make mistakes some times. We thought you two fellows were bootleggers."

⁴ Letter Garrison to V. Robinson, Mar. 16, 1920, MS/C/28.

⁵ Report on the Library of the Surgeon General's Office, June 30, 1911, MS/C/116.

Loans went directly or through libraries to many persons who became famous among them.

A HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE

Harvey Cushing, William Osler, William Halsted, William A White, Howard A Kelly, Frederick L Hoffman, William Welch, F Peyton Rous, John J Abel, Graham Lusk, S Weir Mitchell, Maude E Abbott, George W Crile, Solomon Solis-Cohen, Mazyck P Ravenel, Thomas J Burrill, Christian A Herter, R Tait McKenzie, and Karl Pearson Names of many borrowers may be found in correspondence in MS/fB/101

J Tyson, visiting Washington, phoned McCaw for the loan of a book McCaw sent it to the Willard Hotel for Tyson It was returned by the Library's delivery wagon May 11 1908 MS/fB/101

Victor C Vaughan, dean of University of Michigan medical school, 1891-1921, recalled the service provided from Washington "As dean I was able to help the superior student, hungry for more than the routine course offered him I saw that he had special privileges in the library and could linger among the book shelves at his own sweet will If the books he wanted were not in our library (though it is one of the best in the country) they could be obtained from the Surgeon General's Library in a few days" (Vaughan, *A Doctor's Memories* (1926), p 248)

⁶ See letterpress book 1915 MS/fB/101

⁷ Letter, McCulloch to James J Walsh, Jan 18 1915 MS/fB/101

⁸ Letter, McCulloch to E C Ellett, Memphis, Tenn Feb 24, 1916, "Deposits are not required from reputable physicians" MS/fB/101

⁹ Lest it be thought that the use of wooden boxes to ship books seems over-protective, on Aug 15, 1912, the surgeon at Ft Apache, Arizona, reported that a book for him had arrived soaked by water on the stagecoach MS/C/116

¹⁰ Example, in December 1914 steel engravings of physicians, and books of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries were loaned to the St Louis Medical History Club for an exhibit, see correspondence under date Jan 1, 1915 MS/C/137 In 1912 books were loaned to Harvard for an exhibit during the Ninth International Otolological Congress, June 12, 1912 MS/C/137

¹¹ "Most of our losses and all of our mutilations come from the very liberal way in which we lend and send books to physicians and libraries at great distances from this city The damage from boxing and the general shaking up of express travel is considerable" letter, Garrison to C Frankenberger Librarian, Med Soc County of Kings May 6, 1919 MS/C/166

¹² Garrison stated this very well "The ideal has been to gradually build up the medical library collections in the larger cities by inter-library gifts or exchanges of duplicates and to stimulate the growth of these collections until

they are in position to relieve the pressure of this central loan service in their own localities", memo, Garrison to P F Straub, Feb 7, 1919 file Historical Information, MS/C/309

¹³ For example, queries from E R Wiese, Allegheny Co (Pa) Med Soc, Feb 23, 1915, MS/fB/101, M L Boyd, Fulton Co (Ga) Med Soc, Mar 5, 13, 1915, MS/C/137, W A Javme, Medical Society of the City and County of Denver, July 7, 1914, MS/C/137, Royal Society of Medicine, London, July 23, 1914, MS/C/137, Jasper Co (Mo) Med Assn Feb 2, 1911, MS/fB/101 C Hitchcock, Wayne Co (Mich) Med Soc, May 13 1913, MS/C/116

Copies of a number of bibliographies compiled for physicians, 1922-1926, are in MS/C/151

¹⁴ Letters, McCaw to I Adad, Chile, Jan 10, 1913, to B Golemy, Greece, Jan 13, 1913, to J Guteras, Cuba, Mar 26, 1912, to W Schmidt, Ontario, Oct 2, 1915 MS/fB/101

¹⁵ Letters, McCaw to J Schwalbe, ed *Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift*, Aug 27, Sept 8, 1913 MS/fB/101

¹⁶ Several staff members supplemented their incomes by researching for patrons in the evening or on weekends, among them Sage, Neumann, Israel, Allemann, Charles G Toepfer, Homer J Councilor, and Eisenberg Several Washingtonians also acted as Library researchers, among them Dr Audrey G Morgan, Dr George J Lochboehler, and Dr Charles A Pfender

¹⁷ See, for example, letters, McCaw to H Kimpton, June 1, 1908, and McCaw to Kegan Paul, Trench, Tuebner & Co, July 29, 1912, MS/fB/101, in which the Librarian mentioned a shortage of money for publications

¹⁸ Letter, Putnam to McCaw, Feb 13, 1911 second indorsement by McCaw to Surgeon General, July 18, 1913 [regarding F Neumann] MS/C/116

There were suggestions, from time to time, that one volume of each copyrighted book on medicine and allied subjects be deposited in the Surgeon General's Library In the 65th Congress, 2d session, Bill S 4423, designed to accomplish this, passed the Senate but was not acted upon by the House

¹⁹ Letters, F Ashley, LC, to McCaw, June 19, 28, 1911 MS/C/116

²⁰ Letters, McCaw to Putnam, Feb 15, 24, 1911 MS/fB/101 C H Hastings, LC, to McCaw, Mar 2, 1911 MS/C/116

²¹ Letter, McCaw to Putnam, Feb 28, 1911 MS/fB/101 Record of Copyright transfers (of books) from Library of Congress to NLN

²² Letter, Huntington to Col Greenleaf, Manila, May 7, 1900 MS/C/115

²³ For Davis, see correspondence, Mar 23, 1915, MS/C/137 For Brunton see letters, Nov 21, 1908, MS/C/81, Nov 11, 1908, Jan 8, 1909, MS/C/116, and *Annual Report of the Surgeon General, 1909*, pp 155-156 Dorothy M Schulian, "Thomas Windsor, Benefactor of the Army Medical Library," *Bull Med Lib Assoc* 38, 135-144 (1950) See also *Index-Catalogue*, 2nd series, v 21, preface

Among the notable physicians who would donate in the future would be Harvey Cushing, Arnold Klebs, Howard A Kelly, William S Disbrow, and George W Crile In 1922 the Library received its largest gift, 50,000 volumes and bound papers from Prudential Life Insurance Prudential, under the direction of its top-notch statistician, Frederick L Hoffmann, had systematically collected annual reports and other publications of every state and local board of health in the United States and of health agencies in many foreign countries These reports contained a wealth of vital statistics and data on public health The Library already had some of the reports, but it had never had sufficient manpower to procure all of them year after year Stimulated by the gift the Library began to write to national and foreign health agencies periodically to obtain new reports as they were issued

²⁴ Letter, Beer to Librarian, Jan 20, 1921 MS/C/151 Readers should not construe this to mean that the Library is complete, it lacks many books of this and earlier centuries, and gifts are welcome

²⁵ "We are a sort of seed-plant for helping other medical libraries to build themselves up", letter, Garrison to Col C L Heizmann, Oct 24, 1917 MS/C/137

Among the libraries invited to send representatives to pick duplicates were the Cleveland Medical Library, University of Illinois Medical School, New Hampshire State Library, University of Michigan, Boston Medical Library, Texas Christian University, Medical Society of the City and County of Denver, and New York State Library

²⁶ *Report of the Surgeon General 1899* p 13-14, 1904, p 133 1905, p 153 1906 p 129 Copy letter Surgeon General to Secretary of War, Apr 5, 1905 letter, Col C S Bromwell to McCaw, May 12, 1906 MS/C/116

²⁷ *Report of the Surgeon General, 1901*, p 13

²⁸ Letter, McCaw to J T Johnson, June 19, 1908 (McCaw suggested duplicates be given to Public Health Service Library), McCaw to M C Noyes, Nov 4, 1910, McCaw to G Lake, Mar 30, 1912, McCaw to R L Sutton, July 21, 1913 MS/FB/101

²⁹ *Report of the Surgeon General, 1899*, pp

13-14, 1900, p 13, 1901, p 13 The move of the School is described in Henry, *Armed Forces Institute of Pathology*, pp 147-149

³⁰ Memo, Office of the Surgeon General, Mar 31, 1909 AMM

³¹ Memo, McCaw to Surgeon General Nov 21, 1913, quoted in Lamb, "History of the United States Army Medical Museum," pp 140-142

³² The location of books in Library Hall in 1902 is given in Fielding H Garrison, "Classification and Arrangement of Books in the Library for the Surgeon General's Office," *Bull Assoc Med Librarians* 1 70-84 (1902) For a later arrangement see Champe McCulloch, "Classification and Arrangement of Books in the Library of the Surgeon General's Library," *Bull Med Lib Assoc* n s 6 60-70 (1917-18) See also, Memorandum for Colonel Owen on library classification and arrangement of books in the alcoves, Sept 11, 1917 MS/C/137

³³ Letter, McCaw to Surgeon General, July 18, 1910 MS/C/116

³⁴ Shaw resigned July 15, 1908 when he was 83, file card, July 10, 1908, MS/C/116 On the card McCaw noted "His services for many years have been exacting and responsible, and the library loses one of its most valued assistants"

³⁵ Letter, McCaw to Surgeon General, Jan 8, 1908 MS/FB/101 Memo, McCaw to Surgeon General, Feb 13, 1904 MS/C/116

³⁶ Second indorsement by McCaw, Apr 25, 1911, to 1st ind by Surgeon General Torney, Apr 24 MS/C/116

³⁷ Memo, McCaw to Surgeon General, May 3, 1910 MS/C/116

³⁸ List of salaries Sept 1905 MS/C/116 The above total does not include the Librarian who received the pay accorded his rank in the Army

List of names of employees with their duties and salaries may be found in MS/C/116 under the dates Aug 24, 1907, Sept 15, Nov 13, 1909, May 3, Nov 21, Dec 10, 1910, Sept 26, 27, 1911, n d , probably 1912 in MS/C/137 under dates n d 1914, Sept 17, 1914 See also *Index-Catalogue*, 2nd series, v 21, preface

³⁹ Israel immigrated from Russia when he was 18 and worked his way through Yale Continuing to work he supported his sister and brother through college He began to study medicine at University of Pennsylvania under a scholarship but resigned to accept a job in the Library at \$1,000 a year on Aug 26, 1890 with responsibility for translating Slavic languages He studied medicine at Georgetown in the evenings and on weekends, receiving his M D degree in 1897 He died Oct 16, 1920 Letters, Israel to Billings, Feb 20, Mar 18, 1890, C Smart to Billings MS/C/81 Copy letter, Israel to Surgeon General, June 24, 1904 MS/C/116

⁴⁰ Allemann, born in Soleure, Switzerland, Feb 28, 1860, attended the universities of Berne and Munich. He came to the United States in 1884 and taught ancient and modern languages in colleges for 16 years. He began to work at the Library on Feb 12, 1900, and concurrently attended George Washington University Medical School, receiving his M D degree in 1904. He rose through the ranks to become editor of the third series of *Index-Catalogue*. He retired on Feb 28, 1932, and died in December 1942.

Robert Austin remembered him this way: "Dr Allemann was a frail looking little man but he had unlimited energy, an alert mind, and fully aware of what was going on about him. He had two assistants, Mr Patton and Mrs Deborah Hannon, who were long time, faithful, and devoted workers for him and both of them had great respect and the highest regard of Dr Allemann's knowledge and ability in carrying out his responsibilities in publishing the *Index-Catalogue*. Dr Allemann very seldom left his office during the day. He was not a sociable person but library staff members respected him as he was always pleasant, polite, and very much the gentleman at all times." Letter, Austin to W Miles, Sept 29, 1979.

Garrison discussed Allemann occasionally in his correspondence MS/C/166. Memo, Ashburn to Chief, Division Professional Service, SGO, Aug 8, 1931, subject, rerating of Dr Allemann's position MS/C/151. Clipping, with portrait, Washington *Sunday Star*, Feb 1932.

⁴¹ Letter, McCaw to Disney, Dec 28, 1908 MS/C/101.

⁴² Memo, McCaw to Surgeon General, Jan 18, 1913 MS/C/116. Orders, Mar 17, 1913, attached to resignation, Feb 26, 1914 MS/C/137.

Eisenberg was hired to fill the vacancy that occurred after clerk Lewis H. Rose was killed by a trolley car, 10 o'clock at night, Dec 21, 1912.

⁴³ *Report of the Surgeon General, 1913*, p 195, 1914, p 180, 1915, p 177.

Some members of the staff supplemented their incomes by assisting in the preparation of *Index Medicus* in the evening or on weekends, for example, Allemann received \$120 a year for compiling and proofreading. Some carried out literature research for patrons who lived too far away from Washington to visit the Library, for instance, Israeli made abstracts for clients, Allemann provided translations from the French, Charles Toepfer furnished literature references, etc.

⁴⁴ Edgar A Tibbetts, clerk, was able to speak 10 languages and to translate German, French,

Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, Finnish, Swedish, Russian, Hungarian, Bohemian, Roumanian, Greek, Arabic, Turkish, Chinese, Japanese, and other languages. In 1904 he desired to transfer to the Bureau of Military Information, where translators were paid several hundred dollars more than his \$1,400 a year salary. McCaw wrote to the Surgeon General: "The services of Mr Tibbetts are considered indispensable to the library of the Surgeon General's Office, because of his ability to translate from certain languages. His loss would certainly cripple the work of indexing. If he were transferred his place would have to be supplied here by a man of special knowledge of these languages, and this would undoubtedly be exceedingly difficult. For this reason his transfer is disapproved." Letter, Tibbetts to Secretary of War, Feb 6, 1904, with 2nd indorsement by McCaw, Feb 15 MS/C/116. One cannot help but feel that Tibbetts was treated unfairly in having a promotion denied him on the ground that he was too valuable to the Library.

Tibbetts came to the Library in 1893. He was killed by a collision with a horse and wagon while riding his bicycle home, Jan 30, 1908 MS/FB/101.

In 1904 Albert Allemann desired to transfer to the position of anatomist in the museum. McCaw noted that Allemann was a "very valuable clerk," and would not recommend his transfer, letter, Allemann to Surgeon General, July 28, 1904, with 1st indorsement by McCaw, July 28 MS/C/116. Allemann was promoted later and therefore possibly did not lose through McCaw's refusal.

⁴⁵ The museum was jokingly called the "Picnic Factory." The expression "Botany Bay" may be found in memo, probably by Champe McCulloch, July 17, 1917 MS/C/137, in memo, William Owen to Surgeon General, Dec 10, 1918 MS/C/151, and elsewhere.

⁴⁶ Memo, McCaw to Surgeon General, May 3, 1910 MS/C/116.

⁴⁷ Letters, Levy to Billings, Dec 1903, Billings to Levy, Dec 14, 1903 MS/C/115. Kate Levy was the first woman, to my knowledge, to ask for a job in the Library. The first woman to be hired may have been Miss Harnette B. Blackwell, appointed clerk, class 1, Sept 25, 1905 (see file card, MS/C/116). Miss Blackwell later worked for the museum.

⁴⁸ Letter, Billings to Flugel, Dec 7, 1875 NLN.

⁴⁹ Copy of letter, Sternberg to Secretary of War, Feb 28, 1896, letter, Sternberg to Huntington, Feb 29 MS/C/115.

THE LIBRARY IN OPERATION, 1895-1913

⁵⁰ An interesting "Memorandum on subject of issues of Index-Catalogue," 1908?, is in MS/C/116

⁵¹ Memo, Garrison to the Surgeon General and Librarian, Aug 5, 1929 MS/C/166

⁵² Letter, Fletcher to Billings, Apr 30, 1899 NYPL

⁵³ When *Index Medicus* suspended publication, the French and Austrians carried on for a time with the *Bibliographia Medica (Index Medicus)* (Paris, 1900-1902) and *Index Medicus Novus* (Vienna, June 1889-Feb 1900)

⁵⁴ Letter, Fletcher to C Walcott, Carnegie Institution, Jan 3, 1903, gave the cost of publication of the final volume in 1898 and estimated the cost of the first volume under auspices of Carnegie MS/C/115

Correspondence regarding the *Index Medicus* is in the records of the Carnegie Institution

⁵⁵ A few letters concerning the yearly grants of \$10,000 provided by the Institution to Fletcher are in MS/C/116, as letter of Dec 21, 1904 Reports of the yearly grant were printed in the Institution's *Year Book* The amount of the grants varied from \$10,000 to \$17,500 per volume, depending upon the size of the volume

The first notification of the revival of *Index Medicus* attracted less than 300 subscribers, clippings from unidentified journal, Apr 25, 1903, MS/C/115

⁵⁶ Fletcher's resignation became effective Dec 31, 1911, according to letter, R S Woodward to Fletcher, Jan 4, 1912 MS/C/49

⁵⁷ Letters, Fletcher to Billings, Jan 26, Feb 2, 5, 9, 1897, NYPL, Billings to Fletcher, Jan 27, 1897, MS/C/115, Rep Henry H Bingham to H C Yarrow, Feb 8, Billings to Fletcher, Jan 28, 1897 MS/C/1 Memo, Objections to removing the Army Medical Library from its present location, 1897 MS/C/115

There were rumors at this time that the Army Medical Library might be removed from the Medical Department and placed in the Library of Congress In a discussion following a talk entitled "The Army Medical Library and Museum" by David Huntington before the Medical Society of the District of Columbia, Mar 17, 1897, members of the audience spoke of the importance of keeping the AML where it was, and the society adopted a motion to do everything in its power to prevent removal of the Library to Library of Congress, see *National Med Rev* 7 66-72 (1897-98)

⁵⁸ Memo for Surgeon General, "Reasons why the Library of the Surgeon General's Office should not become a part of the Library of Congress," Jan 13, 1905 MS/C/116

⁵⁹ Printed questionnaire, "Organization and Use of Libraries," and separate handwritten draft of replies, 1906 MS/C/116