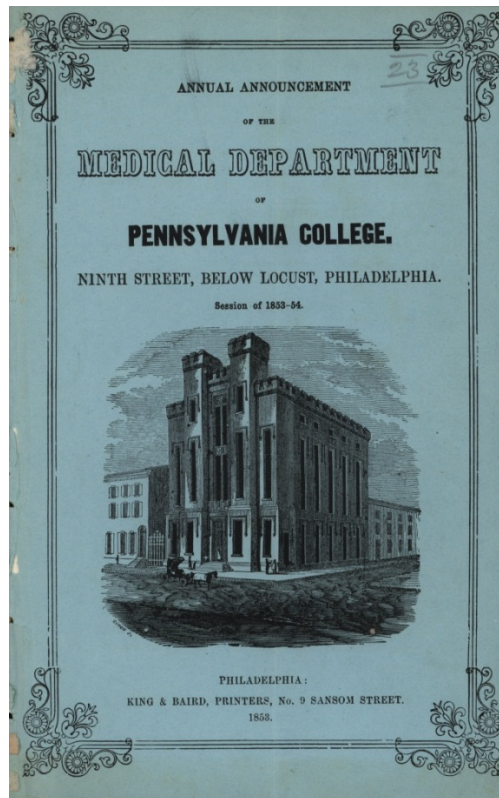


**Guide to the  
Medical Department of Pennsylvania College  
at Philadelphia Collection**



**Gettysburg College, Musselman Library  
Special Collections & College Archives**

**Karen Dupell Drickamer  
September 2018**

## **MS – 137: Medical Department of Pennsylvania College at Philadelphia**

(1 box, .28 cu. ft.)

**Date Range:** 1840-1862

*Processed by Karen Dupell Drickamer, 2013 (revised with accretion, 2018)*

### **Agency History:**

The Medical Department of Pennsylvania College was created in September 1839 by the Board of Trustees in response to a request from Drs. George McClellan, Samuel Calhoun, William Rush and Samuel G. Morton, all Philadelphia physicians. (The credit for the establishment and success of the Department was attributed to the hard work of Dr. David Gilbert, Secretary of the Board of Trustees from 1835 to 1852.) The Trustees appointed the four petitioners to the Faculty of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College at Philadelphia and Pennsylvania College was the degree granting institution. However, the school was, for the most part, autonomous, and paid one half of the matriculation fee to Pennsylvania College's treasury. The State Legislature passed an Act on March 29, 1849, which created a fifteen-man body of Trustees of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College and granted its faculty greater independence.

Requisites for graduation were three years of study with a reputable doctor, attendance for two full courses of lectures, and a thesis written in English, German, French or Latin, on some medical or surgical subject. At the beginning of the Civil War, the enrollment and income dropped leaving bills and unpaid taxes causing the school to close at the end of the 1860-61 sessions.

For a complete history of the Medical Department, lists of faculty and graduates, and a description of the curriculum, see Harold J. Abrahams' *Extinct Medical Schools of Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966 and Hefelbower, Samuel G. *The History of Gettysburg College, 1832-1932*. Gettysburg: Gettysburg College, 1932. pp. 120-131.

### **Scope and Content Note:**

This is an artificial collection of correspondence, Medical Department catalogs, and announcements obtained over time, as well as lists of faculty and alumni created by Samuel G. Hefelbower during his research for his 1932 history of the College. Folder 7 contains Dr. David Gilbert letters in 1862 describing his continued attempts to re-organize a Faculty of the Medical Department and continue its educational mission. Folder 8 contains Dr. William H. Gobrecht's account of the history of the institution up to 1859. (This address can also be found in pamphlet form in our 19<sup>th</sup> Century Pamphlets Collection.)

Folders 23 and 24 were added from a donation by William Wright '61 in 2013. They are copies of PDFs that he purchased and they are numbers two and three in a series of exchanges between faculty and former faculty of the Medical Department. The exchanges were over the dismissal of the majority of the faculty which resulted in a lawsuit by Drs. Darrach and Wiltbank.

**Box/Folder**

1/1 Inventory

1/2 Letters: 1846

Dr. John Wiltbank, Philadelphia, Pa., March 7, 1846, to Dr. David Gilbert, Gettysburg. Listing the gentlemen who attended their first course, reporting the amount of fee due to Pennsylvania College, and operating expenses. ALS, 2 pp.

Dr. W. Darrach, Dean, Medical Department, Philadelphia, April 2, 1844, to the Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College. Report of the Registrar on the smaller class and payment of half the matriculation fee. ALS, 2 pp.

Dr. Henry L. Patterson, Registrar, Medical Department, April 8, 1846, to the Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College. Report of the current class, discussion of the annual commencement and conferring of degrees, and the importance of medical education and the Department. ALS, 3 pp.

Dr. Henry L. Patterson, Philadelphia, April 10, 1846, to Dr. David Gilbert, Gettysburg, Pa. Expressing concern about Franklin College luring away students as there has been some dissatisfaction amongst the students. ALS, 1 p.

1/3 Letters, 1854

Dr. John J. Reese, Philadelphia, April 18, 1854, to the Board of Trustees of the Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, Pa. A statement of the present constitution following reorganization, list of faculty who resigned, a list of new faculty, and a statement that actual conditions and future prospects will be reported later. ALS, 3 pp.

Dr. John J. Reese, Philadelphia, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1854 to the President of the Board of the Trustees of Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, Pa. Informing that at a meeting of the Faculty of the Medical Department held on April 10<sup>th</sup>, Doctors David Gilbert and Francis Smith were appointed as a Committee to proceed to Gettysburg to lay out the conditions of the Medical Department before the Board of Trustees at the approaching Semiannual meeting. ALS, 1 p.

Report of a meeting of the Medical Faculty of Pennsylvania College, held April 19, 1854, listing the new medical faculty and stating that they do not recognize the right

of any Board or body of men to interfere with their appointments made in accordance with the grant of powers granted by the Legislature. MS 2, pp.

Notice of Suit of Medical Department, Philadelphia, July 19, 1854. Court of Common Pleas. ALS, 3 pp.

Dr. John J. Reese, Registrar, Medical Department, Philadelphia, September 18, 1854, to the Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg. Annual statement of the condition of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College: number of matriculates; portion of fee transmitted to Pennsylvania College; vacant chairs filled; the “tedious and vexatious litigation” has been satisfactorily resolved by the Court. ALS, 3pp.

1/4 Letters, 1855-1858

Dr. John J. Reese, Registrar, Medical Department, Philadelphia, April 14, 1855, to the Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg. Transmitting the report of the condition of your Medical Department: a year of continued annoyance and opposition on the part of former faculty; controversy now terminated; in spite of can report larger matriculation than in the past – 136; encouraged about the future; remitting your fee for past session; sending current printed catalog. ALS, 3 pp.

Dr. John Reese, Registrar, Medical Department, Philadelphia, April 12, 1856, to the Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College Gettysburg. Transmitting annual report; matriculation for past session was 139; whole number of first course is 54, sending your fee; number of graduates at last commencement was 37. ALS, 2 pp.

Dr. Francis G. Smith, Registrar, Medical Department of Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg, September 2, 1856, to David A. Buehler, Esq., Sec., Board of Trustees, Pennsylvania College. The resignation of Dr. J. M. Allen, Professor of Anatomy, was presented and accepted on August 1<sup>st</sup>, and Dr. T. G. Richardson of Louisville, Kentucky was elected to fill the vacancy on August 11<sup>th</sup>. Would the Board please confirm. ALS 1 p.

Dr. Francis G. Smith, Registrar, Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, April 12, 1857, to A. D. Buehler, Esq., Secy. of Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College. Number of matriculates is up from the previous year; your fee of \$162 was delivered to Pres. Baugher; the appointment of Dr. Richardson gives universal satisfaction. ALS, 2 pp.

Dr. Francis G. Smith, Registrar, Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, September 9, 1858, to the Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College. Reporting that the whole number of matriculates for the past session was 103 and the number of graduates was 94. Prof. Richardson was called to another school and the vacancy was filled by Dr. John H. B. McClellan. Your fee share is \$122.50. ALS, 2 pp.

1/5 Letters, 1859

Dr. Alfred Stille, Philadelphia, March 7, 1859, to David Gilbert, President of the Faculty. Dr. Stille resigns as the Chair of Theory and Practice of medicine. ALS, 1 p.

To the Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, Pa., April 23, 1859, from the Undersigned. Offering themselves as candidates to fill the vacancies left by the recent resignations of the current faculty of the Medical Department: B. Howard Rand, Henry Hartshorne, Lewis D. Harlow, William S. Halsey, William Hembel Taggart, James Aitkin Meigs. ALS, 1 p.

Dr. John B. Biddle, Philadelphia, April 25, 1859, to Rev. Dr. Baugher, President, Pennsylvania College. Resigning his position with the Medical Department. ALS, 1 p.

To the Board of Trustees, of Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg, April 25, 1859, from the Undersigned. Resigning their respective professorships in the Medical Department: David Gilbert, John J. Reese, Francis G. Smith, and John Neill. ALS 1 p.

Document, Philadelphia, April 30, 1859. Accepting election of the Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College to their respective chairs in the Medical Department: B. Howard Rand, Henry Hartshorne, Lewis D. Harlow, William S. Halsey, William Hembel Taggart, James Aitkin Meigs. DS 1 p.

Dr. B. Howard Rand, Philadelphia April 30, 1859, to D. a. Buehler, Esq., Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Pennsylvania College at Gettysburg. Has taken the liberty of signing Prof. Henry Hartshorne's acceptance of his Chair as he is currently in Europe. ALS, 1 p.

Charles Hartshorne, Philadelphia, Pa., May 3, 1859, to D. a. Buehler, Esq., Secy., Trustees, Pa. College. Information of the election of Henry Hartshorne to his Chair has been forwarded to him in Europe. He is expected to return next month. ALS, 1 p.

Dr. Lewis D. Harlow, Philadelphia, September 5, 1859, to D. A. Buehler, Secretary of Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College. Reporting the resignation of Dr. J. H. B. McClellan was accepted and faculty voted that Dr. William H. Gobrecht be appointed in his place. ALS 2 pp.

1/6 Letters, 1861

Dr. William S. Halsey, Philadelphia, July 15, 1861, to the President and the Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, Pa. Resigns position as Professor of Surgery in the Medical Department. ALS, 1 p.

Dr. B. Howard Rand, Philadelphia, July 15, 1861, to the Board of Trustees of the Pennsylvania College, Gettysburg, Pa. Resigns as Chair of Chemistry in the Medical Department. ALS, 1 p.

Dr. Henry Hartshorne, Philadelphia, July 16, 1861, to the President and Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College. Resigns the Professorship of Theory and Practice of Medicine in the Medical Department. ALS 1 p.

Dr. William H. Gobrecht, Philadelphia, July 16, 1861, to the President and Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College. Resigns position of Professorship of Anatomy in the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College. ALS, 1 p.

Dr. Lewis D. Harlow, Lately Dean of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, July 16, 1861, to Rev. H. L. Baugher. Giving a “clear and candid account” of the reasons for the resignations: the rebellion, loss of southern students, the depression of business; unexpected bill for taxes due to educational exception being rejected. ALS, 6 pp.

Dr. William Hembel Taggart, Philadelphia, September 6, 1861, to the President and Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania College. Resigns from Chair in the Medical Department. “Absence from the city in the service of my country prevented me from forwarding it in connection with those of my colleagues.” ALS 1 p.

Dr. David Gilbert, Philadelphia, September 16, 1861, to Drs. B. H. Rand, J. A. Meigs, R. I. Lewis, R. P. Thomas, Louis Bauer, D. Gilbert. Trying to regenerate the faculty and fill the vacant chairs. ALS, 3 pp.

- 1/7 Letters from Dr. David Gilbert, August 11 and October 9, 1862, to the Board of Trustees, to Dr. McClean and to Unknown, describing his unsuccessful attempts to re-organize a faculty to continue the Medical Department due to issues like ground rent, taxes, Sheriff’s sale, etc. 3 ALS, 8 pp.
- 1/8 Letter from S. G. Helfelbower to John H. Knickerbocker, Librarian, Gettysburg College, 25 February 1933, conveying a typed copy of William H. Gobrecht’s inaugural address dated 11 October 1859, which relates a complete historical account of the Medical Department up to that time.
- 1/9 Letter from S. G. Helfelbower to John H. Knickerbocker, Librarian, Gettysburg College, 25 February 1933, conveying typed lists of students attending Sessions, 1840-1860, and stating that it is not complete.
- 1/10 Typed list of Faculty from 1840 to 1861.
- 1/11 Annual Announcement of Lectures, etc., for the Session 1840-1, with a catalogue

- of the graduates of the College year 1840. 7 pp. (photocopy)
- 1/12 Third Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, Philadelphia. 1 p. (photocopy)
- 1/13 Fifth Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, For the session of 1844-45. 12 pp.
- 1/14 Sixth Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, For the Session of 1845-46. 12 pp.
- 1/15 Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, Session of 1846-47. 16 pp.
- 1/16 Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, Session of 1847-48. 16 pp. (2 copies)
- 1/17 Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, Ninth Street Below Locust, Philadelphia, Session of 1851-52. 16 pp.
- 1/18 Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, Ninth Street Below Locust, Philadelphia, Session of 1853-54. 16 pp. (2 copies)
- 1/19 Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, Ninth Street Below Locust, Philadelphia, Session of 1854-55. 16 pp.
- 1/20 Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, Ninth Street Below Locust, Philadelphia, Session of 1855-56. 16 pp.
- 1/21 Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, Ninth Street Below Locust, Philadelphia. 16 pp. (2 copies).
- 1/22 Annual Announcement of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College, Ninth Street Below Locust, Philadelphia, Session of 1860-61. 8 pp. (photocopy).
- 1/23 “A Refutation of the Misstatements Contained in a Pamphlet Recently Issued by W. Darrach, M.D., and John Wiltbank, M.D. in Reference to the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College,” 1855. By David Gilbert, M.D.; John J. Reese, M.D.; Francis G. Smith, M.D.; J.M. Allen, M.D.; John B. Biddle, M.D. 65 pp. (print out from online).
- 1/24 “Reply to a Pamphlet Entitled ‘A Statement of Facts Connected with the Late Reorganization of the Faculty of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College.’” By W. Darrach, M.D., and John Wiltbank, M.D. 68 pp. (print out from online version).

Oversize 1860 Diploma of Samuel B. Goodwin, M. D. (located in Oversize Manuscript Collections drawer in flat files in processing room)

**See also:**

Abrahams, Harold J. *Extinct Medical Schools of Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1966. pp. 29-110.

Breidenbaugh, E. S. *The Pennsylvania College Book, 1832-1882*. Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Soc., 1882. pp. 80-86.

Darrach, M.D., W. and John Wiltbank, M.D. "A Statement of Facts Connected with the Late Re-Organization of the Faculty of the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College together with a Documentary History of Said Department from Its Origin to the Present Time," 1854.  
Hefelbower, Samuel G. *The History of Gettysburg College, 1832-1932*. Gettysburg: Gettysburg College, 1932. pp. 120-131.

Glatfelter, Charles H. *A Salutary Influence: Gettysburg College, 1832-1985*. Gettysburg: Gettysburg College, 1985. pp. 143-145

*MS-135: George Currier's Notes on the Lectures Delivered at the Medical Department of Pennsylvania College at Philadelphia, 1849-1850.*

*19<sup>th</sup> Century Pamphlet Collection*. Keyword search in **MUSCAT** for published lecture and address by Medical Department faculty in pamphlet form: **Pennsylvania College Medical Department**.

## Subjects

Medical Colleges – Pennsylvania – Philadelphia  
Medical Colleges – Pennsylvania – History  
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Pennsylvania College. Medical Department  
Pennsylvania College – History  
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