

Frank Hastings Hamilton Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2023

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm82060269>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms010118>

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2010
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Collection Summary

Title: Frank Hastings Hamilton Papers

Inclusive Dates: 1863-1887

ID No.: MSS60269

Creator: Hamilton, Frank Hastings, 1813-1886

Extent: 200 items

Extent: 1 container

Extent: .4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/mm82060269>

Summary: Physician, surgeon, educator and author. Mainly scrapbooks of correspondence, telegrams, military documents, photographs and clippings relating to Hamilton's medical career in the Union Army during the Civil War and his role in the treatment of James A. Garfield before his death by assassination in 1881.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881--Assassination.

Hamilton, Frank Hastings, 1813-1886.

Hamilton, Theodore B., approximately 1836-1893.

Organizations

Confederate States of America. Army.

United States. Army--Surgeons.

United States. Army. New York Infantry Regiment, 62nd (1861-1865)

Subjects

Medical education.

Medicine--Practice.

Places

Confederate States of America--History.

New York (State)--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Medical care.

United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.

Occupations

Authors.

Educators.

Physicians.

Surgeons.

Acquisition Information

The papers of Frank Hastings Hamilton, physician, surgeon, educator, and author, were given to the Library of Congress by George A. Kaplan in 1981.

Processing History

The papers of Frank Hastings Hamilton were arranged and described in 1985. The collection was expanded and revised in 2010. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Other Repositories

A larger collection of Hamilton's medical papers is located at the National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, Md.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Frank Hastings Hamilton is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Frank Hastings Hamilton are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Frank Hastings Hamilton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1813, Sept. 10	Born, Wilmington, Vt.
1830	Graduated, Union College, Schenectady, N.Y.
1833	Received license to practice medicine
1835	M.D., University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.
1846	Helped found medical department, University of Buffalo, Buffalo, N.Y.
1859	Appointed professor of Surgery, Long Island Hospital College, Long Island, N.Y.
1860	Published Treatise on Fractures and Dislocations. Philadelphia: Lea
1861	Volunteered for service in the Civil War and commissioned surgeon of the Thirty-first New York Regiment of Infantry
	Published Practical Treatise on Military Surgery. New York : Baillière
1861-1865	Professor of surgery, Bellevue Hospital Medical College, New York, N.Y.
1863	Became medical inspector of the U.S. Army
1863-1864	Medical inspector during Civil War, U.S. Army
1872	The Principles and Practice of Surgery. New York: William Wood & Co.
1881	Consultant to the physician attending to James A. Garfield after the shooting of the president
1886, Aug. 11	Died, New York, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Frank Hastings Hamilton (1813-1886) span the years 1863-1882 and consist of correspondence, telegrams, memoranda, a memorial resolution, military documents, clippings, photographs, and scrapbooks focusing on Hamilton's medical career in the Union Army during the Civil War and as a consultant to the physician attending to President James A. Garfield before his death from assassination in 1881.

Prominent in the collection is a scrapbook entitled "History of President Garfield's Gun Shot Wound Compiled from July 2nd to September 3rd 1881," collated for Hamilton and dedicated to him on September 5, 1881, by an associate, Faneuil D. Weisse. Included in the volume is the telegram sent from Secretary of State James Gillespie Blaine, at the request of Garfield's wife, Lucretia Rudolph Garfield, asking Hamilton to come to Washington to assist with the president's treatment. Other items documenting Garfield's condition and care include a graph of his temperature and pulse, July 2 to August 2, 1881, plus memoranda and annotated newspaper clippings on his assassination.

Prominent as well is a scrapbook of items from Hamilton's Civil War service and his postwar work as a surgeon and professor of medicine. Included are photographs of the doctors of his medical staff in the Union Army, 1864-1864, as well as military documentation relating to Colonel Theodore B. Hamilton of the Sixty-second New York Infantry. Among the memorabilia are Confederate army passes and currency, and personal notes and illustrations described as having been taken from a Confederate soldier and a Confederate guerilla. A photograph separate from the album depicts medical directors of the Army of the Cumberland taken in front of General Philip Henry Sheridan's tent at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, in 1863.

In a scrapbook reflecting Hamilton's post-Civil War life is an 1877 letter from Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894).

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged by type of material or topic

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Claim for services relating to treatment of James A. Garfield, 1882
BOX 1	Correspondence, 1881-1887
BOX 1	Clipping regarding death of James A. Garfield, 1882
BOX 1	Memorial resolution honoring Hamilton, New York County Medical Association, circa 1886
BOX 1	Photograph of medical directors of the Army of the Cumberland, Murfreesboro, Tenn., 1863
BOX 1	Scrapbooks
BOX 1	Civil War and postwar medical career, including photographs of doctors on Hamilton's staff, 1863-1864, 1876-1877
BOX 1	"History of President Garfield's Gun Shot Wound Compiled from July 2nd to September 3rd 1881," compiled by Faneuil D. Weisse, 1881, Sept. 5