

# Waring Library Society Newsletter

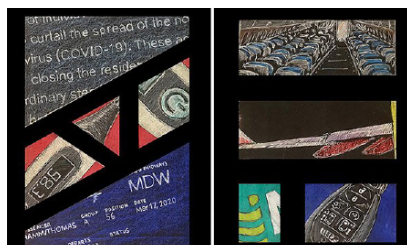
No. 58  
Spring 2020

THE WARING  
HISTORICAL LIBRARY  
MUSC  
Medical University  
of South Carolina



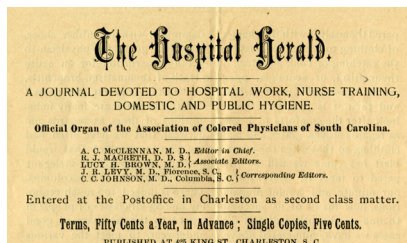
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## The President's Corner

In serving as the new President of the Waring Library Society, I look forward to supporting the mission of the Waring Historical Library even at a time of considerable disruption in our lives.

As we all are remanded to our homes, our own lazaretto or quarantine station, we can reflect on how history tends to repeat itself. The history lover in us can draw the parallel of the early efforts of immunization against small pox by the Egyptians; by Cotton Mather and his enslaved African, Onesimus, in colonial America; and later by Edward Jenner to the current international efforts of developing a vaccine. We see today's self-quarantine efforts as similar to the approximate two weeks required at the 18th century Pest House on Sullivan's Island—except our conditions are luxurious by comparison. Presently we can look back and appreciate what has come before us. If we desire, after the present pandemic abates, we may utilize the collections of the Waring Library to dig deeper into historical documents for further personal insight.

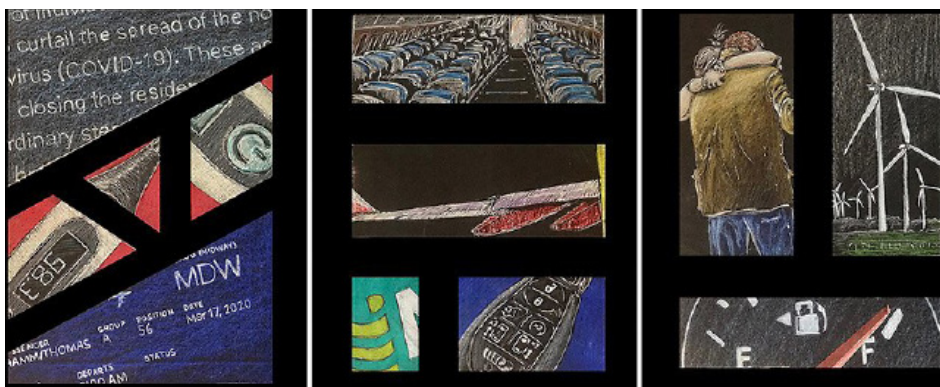


Today we are living through an historical time that future generations may find the need to examine when their challenge occurs. The documentation of our institutional efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic is being undertaken by our Curator, Dr. Brian Fors, assisted by Ms. Anna Schuldt, University Archivist Brooke Fox, and Digital Archivist Tabitha Samuel. Learn more about the Waring's [COVID-19 Archive Project](#). They are adding this task to that of preserving the collections that are presently under their stewardship. I hope that they receive the cooperation of all those individuals they approach, as well as all who are reading this article. Check out the site and begin to tell your story.

The treasure of the Waring Library is not as well known in the Charleston or MUSC community as it deserves, and we all should endeavor to spread the word. A recent article in the Charleston City Paper highlights the kind of perspective and context history can provide in even our more trying times: ["For Charleston, outbreaks and epidemics are a key part of history."](#) As we are Covid-19 isolated, please share the Waring Historical Library website with friends and colleagues and invite them to visit our jewel, attend our events, and become involved when conditions are more normalized.

In the meantime, BE SAFE.

**Dr. James Tolley**



## COVID-19 Archive Project

By Dr. Brian Fors

The headlines have been disturbing for quite some time now. Daily public statements, reports, and statistics of those ill from COVID-19. The number of deaths across the world, the astonishing numbers in Italy and in New York, government officials acknowledging the data is underreported. The staggering impact on the healthcare infrastructure in the United States as even the best funded and supplied medical organizations in the country have become overwhelmed. These are the messages we face as our normal routines have been disrupted.

It can be difficult to reflect on events that are historical in nature when it is being lived, and even more difficult to determine what to do about documenting this history. For historians, in order to fully understand the present, one must study the past. For archivists, securing the record of the past must happen before study and analysis can occur. For the average citizen, recording experiences can be a productive way to process stress and fear or a way to express complex emotions. We all play important roles in developing, securing, and utilizing the historical record.

The Waring Historical Library has created the [COVID-19 Archives Project](#) as a response to the pandemic and to guide, support, and preserve the stories of those living through these extraordinary times. In years to come, we will be trying to shape a new landscape defined by the pandemic. In order to understand the new landscape, we will need to also understand and examine historical sources.

In order for us to go beyond the official proclamations and statements, to document how people have been impacted, we need you to participate. Take a look at the [COVID-19 Archive Project](#) and begin telling your story.

## The Newsletter Looks A Little Different... ...Doesn't It?

It's no secret the abundant MUSC Blue in the newsletter is different than the maroon typically used in the past WLS communication. As awareness of the Waring grows inside and outside the MUSC community, ensuring that we are aligned with the MUSC Brand Policy and Standards will be imperative. We hope you enjoy our new look!

## Dear Members

As we approach the end of the membership cycle, we wanted to thank you for being a loyal supporter of the Waring Library Society. From welcoming new faces in the WLS and the staff to attending the annual lectures, you have played an important role as a member of the Society. We hope you look over the highlights from this past year fondly and decide to [renew your membership](#).



# Life of A Digital Archivist During COVID-19

By Ms. Tabitha Y. Samuel, MLIS, Digital Archivist

Just two years ago, in one of our departmental meetings, we were lightly discussing the possibility of, and the historical projections for, a viral pandemic such as the 1918 influenza outbreak. Possibly in 2018, 2019, or 2020. Even at that time, I'm not sure if any of us comprehended or envisioned the reality and gravity of what this catastrophic health crisis would mean and exactly how we all would be impacted in our work and daily lives. Then, it was simple banter in a routine monthly meeting, as the four of us huddled together around a six-foot long office table in the Archives before dispersing for lunch.

But, here we are now, one month into working remotely. Time in the office has abruptly shifted. Work and life are melded together from the comfort of our makeshift offices. I've adopted a few new coworkers—somehow all are devoted sun-bathers. Still haven't quite earned the coveted green thumb, yet. The drone of the HVAC system in the archives and the smell of aging books, papers, and artifacts have been replaced with light music and incense throughout the day. Occasional lunch dates on Hangouts to catch up with friends have taken the place of camaraderie-filled lunches with

fellow library staff in the 3rd floor lounge. And walks between meetings have been replaced with breaks for fresh air and pacing around the "office" as new ideas emerge or as I carefully bridge together words to the flurry of emails that have taken the place of being able to just pop into a colleague's office to ask



a quick question or to chat. Oh, and work and life seem to meld together quite easily as I start my day early, rushing to the "office," feet away in the living room, when I need to jump on an idea as it's fresh when I wake up.

The last several weeks still seem to be temporary on the surface in terms of change—i.e. social distancing, wearing protective coverings for the face, and gloves—but deeply,

we realize our new normal to come will be its derivative. Everything has changed. Some things have changed for the worse, and some things, hopefully, will fundamentally change in a permanent way for the better. Initially, it was difficult imagining the world changing to what it has become now, but I can't imagine it going back to the way it was without risking a breach of the mitigation we will hopefully achieve.

I'm not sure what to expect whenever we do return back to working from the office, back to the norm, but certainly not the norm we had for so long. Because we are located within an arm's reach of the hospital, naturally, I will be more aware of my personal safety practices when it comes to the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases, such as COVID-19. However, I'm not sure if I imagine us not having to practice some measure of social distancing or being further protected by wearing gloves and masks. I wonder how this new work culture will take shape and how will working at more of a distance in a public setting affect and change the service we provide. Either way, I know two things: 1) it'll take time for all of us to adjust back to our morning routines, and 2) everything will be alright.





## Volunteer Voices: Ms. Rebekah Seymour

I began working with the Waring Historical Library on their cataloging project in December 2019. When I began this experience, I was unaware how much I would gain from it. Most of my job included cataloging the books individually. I would pick a book and use the National Library of Medicine and Library of Congress catalogs to determine which subject group to which it belonged. I then used the NLM Cutter Sanborn Classification System to categorize the books by author. In addition to recording the new cataloging information for the books, I also got to help conserve them. Often times in large collections of books, bugs may infect the collection and eat away at the paper inside the books. They leave trails in the books that show the paths they took while

eating through them. Seeing these signs in a book, I would wrap it in plastic and set it aside to be put in a freezer. This would kill any life inside the book. As I continued to perform this process through the collection, it was rewarding to see shelves begin to empty and stacks of finished books grow.

Once the COVID-19 Pandemic required me to return to my hometown, I was unable to continue working with these books in person. Being unable to catalog the books, I began to assign MeSH descriptors to them. These descriptors are single-word topics that researchers may look up in the Waring's catalog in order to find books on specific topics. I once again used the National Library of Medicine and the Library of Congress catalogs to do this. While this new task was not what I was expecting to do, it will help create a new catalog for the library that will greatly help future researchers.

I was surprised how much I enjoyed this project. As a historic preservation major, I had little interest in the medical field and was mostly looking forward to working with and conserving historic books. However, the collection has a wide variety of subjects that I found interesting despite my lack of knowledge in the medical field. First-hand accounts on nursing during the Civil War, guides with medical advice for the average person in the 1800s, and a book about a nurse who also worked as a spy are only a few topics that I found enticing within the collection. In addition to enjoying the work, I greatly appreciated the staff that aided me through it. Dr. Fors and Anna Schuldt both taught me a great deal about how to conserve these pieces of history, and how the way we do it is greatly impactful to future generations. The kind and welcoming staff along with the surprisingly vast and fascinating collection have made me an advocate of the Waring Historical Library. I cannot wait to see what the Waring will accomplish in the future.

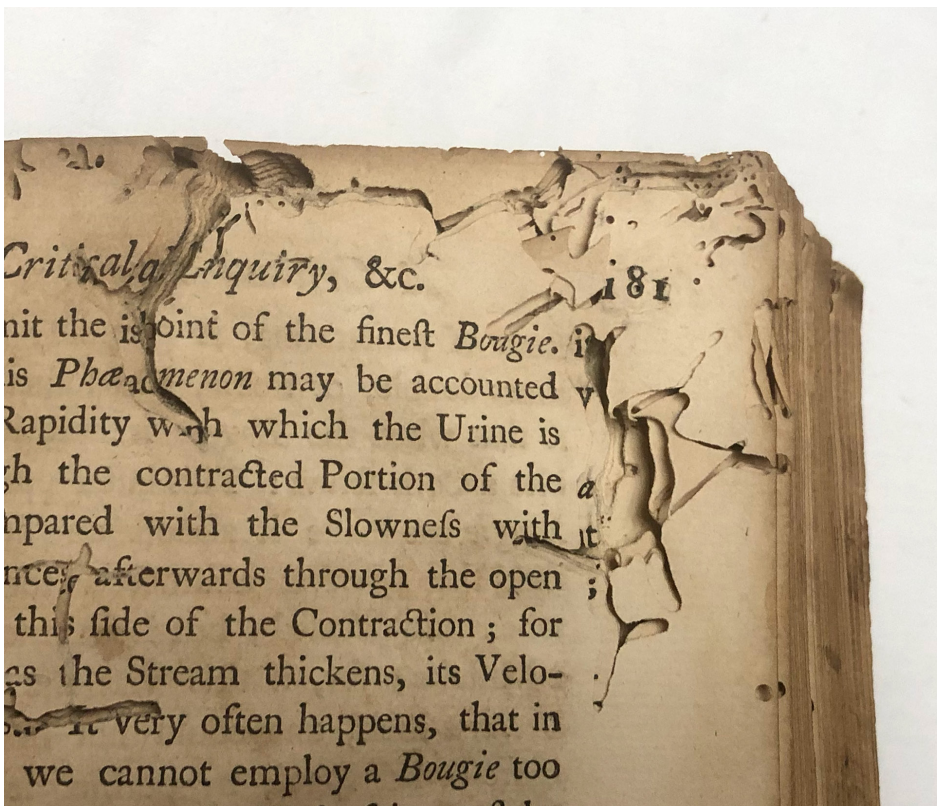
*Seymour is finishing her sophomore year at the College of Charleston, majoring in Historic Preservation and Community Planning. She is from North Augusta, South Carolina.*

## Conservation Efforts For the Rare Book Collection

The Waring's Adopt-A-Book program will allow individuals to provide essential funding to support the conservation, acquisition, and digitization of books held in one of the most unique collections documenting the history of the health sciences. Donations will allow the Waring to continue to build the collection, preserve it for future generations, and make materials available to curious minds around the world through digitization.

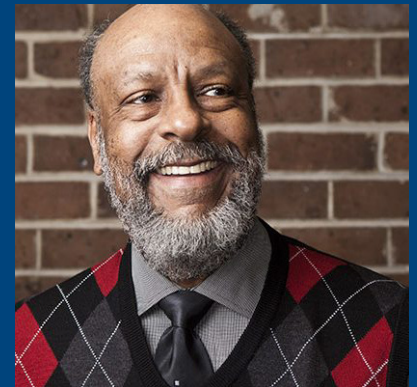
Book adoptions are an excellent way to commemorate an occasion, celebrate a milestone, or honor a great achievement, while supporting the mission of the historical library. There will be several options and levels for giving and the funds will cover the costs for historically accurate binding and repair to the books, with an additional option to cover the costs of digitizing a book, a preservation option for some editions.

Details, levels of giving, and the necessary procedures for participating in the program, as well as a list of books to adopt, will be made available in the next several months. Keep watch for news about the Adopt-A-Book program coming soon.



## Looking Back At the WLS Lectures

In the past year, the Waring Library Society has been able to host the 2019 Sawyer Lecture, the 2020 Waring Lecture, and eight Student History Club Lunch Lectures. The topics have ranged widely from the history of HIV/AIDS to the nation's first botanical garden. We had the pleasure of hosting Dr. Victoria Johnson at our Sawyer Lecture and of hosting Dr. Bernard Powers for our Waring Lecture. It would seem difficult to ever top this year's lecture series, however, with discussion of expanding the lecture series this next year, you just might be surprised.



# Significant Changes Are Afoot For the MUSC University Archives!

By Brooke Fox, MS, CA, University Archivist

The building in which the University Archives resides, the James W. Colbert Education Center and Library Building, is designated to undergo a complete renovation of all four floors. The goal of the project is to create an "innovative education space" that provides additional student study rooms and spaces, as well as move the Simulation Center from the College of Nursing to the second floor of the Colbert Building. Originally slated to begin in June 2020, the project is now delayed because of the current COVID-19 pandemic sweeping the planet.

In preparation for the renovation, I have been readying the archival collections, as well as other materials housed in the Archives, including manuscripts collections, artifacts, journals, and books, for their temporary relocation of its materials to the MUSC Records Center located in North Charleston and to one of Iron Mountain's storage facilities in the state.

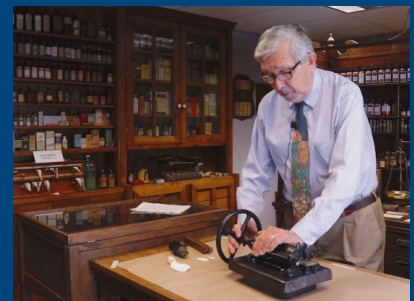


The process for preparing all of the various items has involved inventorying the contents of every box and acquiring specialty boxes to house artifacts and other odd-sized materials. In total, there are approximately 4,500 linear feet of materials to be moved offsite. During this period, these collections will be inaccessible, resulting in delays in responding to reference requests. However, I will continue to work with researchers to meet their needs during this challenging time.

While the renovation will result in the loss of half of the archives' physical space, moveable shelving will be installed in the new University Archives spaces. Staff and collections will return to areas in two different buildings. Digital Archivist Tabitha Samuel and some of the materials will be located on the third floor of the Colbert Building a short distance from its current location, while the bulk of the collections, as well as my office, will be in new space in the Basic Science Building.

## Presenting: The Waring Stories Video Series

Throughout the past couple of months, the Waring staff has been busy dreaming up informational and interesting ideas for our video series, "Waring Stories." Our staff now doubles as a production company. Videos featuring topics such as discussions on poison and dramatic readings are in the process of being edited. Pictured on the right, superstar Dr. Ronald Nickel demonstrating how to make a suppository for a video. The videos will premiere on our YouTube page in the near future, so keep your eyes open!





## Collection Highlights: Staff Favorites

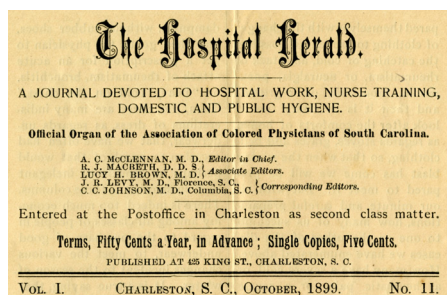
For National Library Week 2020, April 19th-25th, the Waring Historical Library and University Archives department was tasked with selecting their favorite pieces from the collection to share on social media. This project helped the public connect with the Library and Archives, introduce interesting books and artifacts, and get to know the individuals in our department. For this edition of the Waring Newsletter, we will be sharing a few of those pieces with you.



### Dr. Brian Fors' Favorite

Ogier, Thomas, and Logan Thomas. *Compendium of Operative Surgery: Intended for the Use of Students and Containing Descriptions of all Surgical Operations*. Charleston: E.J. Van Brunt, 1834. Image of incisions.

This publication is an indication of the unique items that can be found in the Waring Historical Library. This book would not have had wide circulation and cannot be found in the National Library of Medicine or the Library of Congress. The book is written by two doctors who lectured at the Medical College and had successful private practices. They also had other scientific interests that they engaged in, and the book contains descriptions of the ligation of arteries with colored drawings done by Dr. Logan. The two doctors who wrote the *Compendium* also had interesting careers as physicians.



### Ms. Tabitha Samuel's Favorite

The Hospital Herald, volume 1, number 11, October 1899

The [Hospital Herald](#) was a monthly journal produced by the Association of Colored Physicians of South Carolina and edited by Charleston surgeon, Dr. Alonzo McClennan. Dr. McClennan also served as the director of the Hospital and Training School for Nurses in Charleston at 135 Cannon Street. The Hospital Herald was "devoted to hospital work, nurse training, domestic and public hygiene."

The collection as a whole stands out to me because the publication provides careful insight into the public health issues facing African American Charlestonians, in particular, just twenty years after reconstruction and at the turn of the twentieth century. In his editorial for this issue, Dr. McClennan speaks about the issues the community has faced with the yellow fever epidemic and the precautions that they have taken to mitigate the spread of disease, such as "local hygienic precautions" and "careful

quarantine regulations." He goes on to warn about precautions that the community needs to take to prevent and control seasonal diseases with the arrival of winter. Sound familiar?



### Ms. Brooke Fox's Favorite

Bottle of Morphorm manufactured by G. D. Searle & Co., Chicago.

In the Fall of 2016, Waring Library staff traveled to Estill, SC, to document, preserve, and clean out the practice of Dr. Bertie Johnston, who died from a heart attack at the age of 47 while out fox hunting. After his untimely death on January 1, 1943, Dr. Johnston's wife Henry shut the doors to his practice and the building remained untouched for the next 73 years. As part of the project's team, I had a once in a lifetime opportunity to see the intact interior of a country doctor's office. Beneath layers of dust, mouse droppings, and insect carcasses lay treasures. My mind boggles at the existence of a medicine consisting of both morphine and chloroform. In these trying times, it sounds like a very relaxing cocktail.