



Waring Library Society Newsletter

No. 66 Fall 2022

THE WARING
HISTORICAL LIBRARY

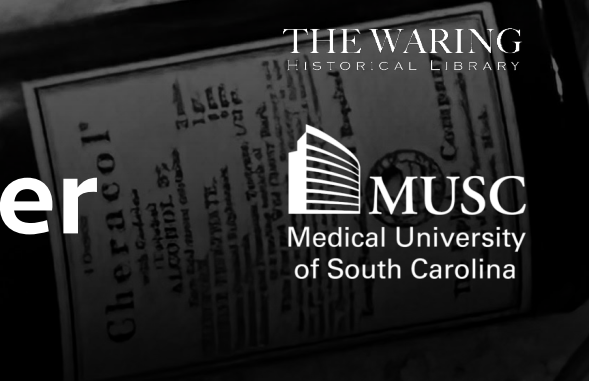




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Detail shot of pharmaceutical materials disposed in the ongoing project at the Pharmacy Museum.



Aerial view of Charleston, SC from 1861.
Charleston, South Carolina. United States South Carolina Charleston, None. [Photographed between 1861 and 1865, printed between 1880 and 1889] Photograph.

President's Corner

By Dr. Jacob Steere-Williams, WLS President

In a wide-ranging scientific tour of North America, late eighteenth century German physician and naturalist Johann David Schoepff, noted that in the spring the Lowcountry of the Carolinas was a "paradise," in the summer a "hell," and in the autumn a "hospital." Historically the cooler weather of the fall, the end of the malarial and hurricane seasons in Charleston meant the return to the vibrancy of the city. These days the fall temperatures and bright skies of the Lowcountry mark the return of oyster roasts, football

games, and schooling redfish, but we might also reflect on the past notions of health and disease in our area. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century Charleston was one of the largest and important port cities of the Atlantic World, and it garnered a worldwide reputation much in line with Schoepff's assessment: stunningly beautiful and dangerously unhealthy. This historical dichotomy lines the shelves of the Waring Historical Library, one of the hidden gems of the Holy City. As the falls have always brought change,

this year is no different. The Waring Library and the Waring Library Society are busier than ever, preparing for the Bicentennial celebrations, launching the new online search platform, MEDICA, and hosting a series of interesting and innovative invited speakers. No effort is bigger, however, than the plans in motion for renovating the Waring Historical Library. On behalf of everyone involved in this effort, I call on all of you to help support this endeavor and our world-class collection.



Image of the Medical College's building on Queen Street from 1832.

Curator's Comments

By Dr. Brian Fors

The first step toward the creation of a Medical College in Charleston occurred with the formation of the Medical Society of South Carolina, established on Christmas Eve 1789 to "improve the Science of Medicine, promoting liberality in the Profession, and Harmony amongst the Practitioners in this City." Members were to meet monthly and "in rotation furnish a Dissertation on some Medical, or Philosophical subject; or propose some Medical Case or Question for the discussion of the Society." The members, starting small, all meeting in each other's home on a rotational basis, constituted a professional circle of male, White physicians with social and economic standing in the medical community. It took two consecutive meeting votes for new members to be added.

No widely accepted standards existed for those calling themselves "physician," but like other emerging groups in the country, the Medical Society defined the characteristics and training of a professional medical practitioner as some formal education combined with an apprenticeship under an established physician. Healers among the indigenous and

enslaved populations and women provided medical care that did not meet the Medical Society professional criteria yet still resulted in exchanges in medical knowledge.

The Medical Society continued to promote the need for setting standards and in 1817, the South Carolina state legislature granted the authority to approve licenses for practicing medicine to the organization. By that time, the City of Charleston had also looked to the Society to take the lead in the arena of public health, long before the establishment of a city Board of Health. The organization assumed a position of authority in medical circles in the city and the state.

The Society also promoted the idea of a medical college. They occasionally sponsored public lectures on medical topics, and advocated the need to educate the next generation of physicians. This advocacy continued for decades as the South continued to grow in population and the medical colleges being founded in the region still required traveling quite a distance, the closest being in Kentucky and in Maryland.

In 1821, president of the South Carolina College (later the University of South Carolina), Thomas Cooper, proposed to the state Medical Board organizing a medical school to be divided between Columbia, at South Carolina College, and in Charleston. Cooper knew he needed support from Charleston and



Portrait of Dr. Thomas Cooper.

the Medical Society if he hoped to obtain authorization by the state legislature. He even suggested the size of faculty, a proposed pay scale, and an amount for building construction and equipment. The curriculum would be eight months each year, with three courses of lectures—one course for each eight-month term. The usual course at medical colleges during the time lasted only four to five months.

Social and cultural changes in the country also made it less desirable to send students to the medical college in Philadelphia, the school often identified as the ideal institution for students in South Carolina. In particular, by the 1820s activists revived the abolitionist movement in Philadelphia and Boston with a focus on immediate emancipation, rather than gradual emancipation, a much more aggressive approach to ending slavery. Also, in light of the Denmark Vesey slave revolt in 1822 in the Charleston area, it became even more urgent to avoid sending young men to Philadelphia and Boston where they might be influenced by abolitionism and to establish a medical college in the Deep South.

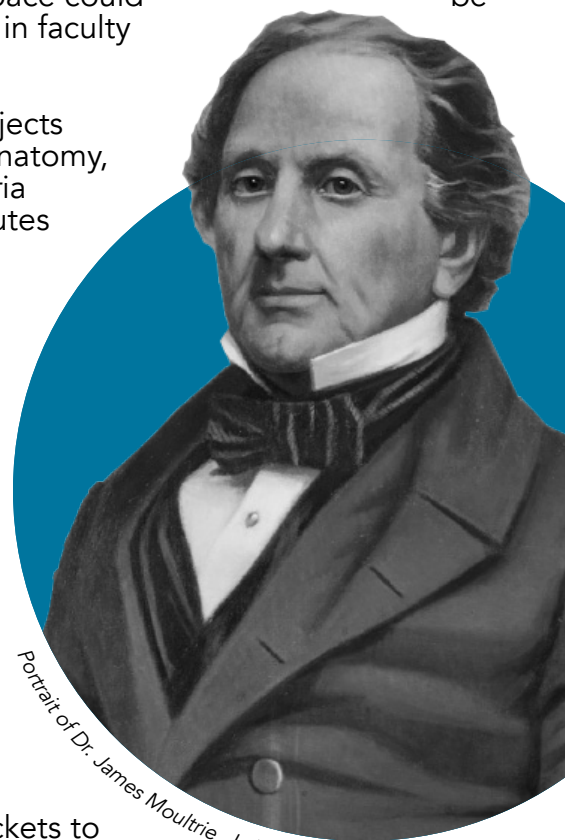
In 1822, Dr. James Moultrie, Jr, representing the Medical Society, suggested it made sense to have the institution in Charleston, especially because of the teaching facilities in its hospitals and the unquestioned abundance of anatomical material available for study—referring to the

enslaved population in the area. Almost half the total enslaved population in North America entered slavery through Charleston, and as the most disease-infested place along the Atlantic coast, the location seemed a perfect place to start a medical college.

The state legislature finally approved a plan for a college in Charleston in December 1823 but did not include any funding. The competition and debate over where such a college should be established, though, ended. Over subsequent months, Charleston physicians came together to form the first faculty, organizing themselves into seven subject areas providing instruction for five months for students. Students had to complete each course twice, with each term series of lectures starting in November and ending in March. Those who completed the course material continued their education by serving a three-year apprenticeship.

Classes began for the first time at the Medical College of South Carolina in November 1824, in whatever space could be found, mostly in faculty houses.

The initial subjects taught were anatomy, surgery, materia medica, institutes and practices of medicine, obstetrics and diseases of women and infants,



Portrait of Dr. James Moultrie, Jr. by Ray Goodbred.

pharmaceutical chemistry and pharmacy, and natural history and botany. The faculty sold tickets to lectures as their salary, and connected the students to the local hospitals for interactions with real patients. While the curriculum and instruction started simply, a Medical College had been established in South Carolina.

Meet the Newest Team Member!

By Dr. Gabriella Angeloni

My name is Gabbi Angeloni, and I'm thrilled to join the Waring as the Historian for MUSC's upcoming Bicentennial. Before moving to South Carolina to pursue a doctorate, I completed my undergraduate studies in History at the George Washington University and began my Masters at George Mason University. I received my PhD from the University of South Carolina in 2018. My dissertation, "Reading Material: Personal Libraries and the Cultivation of Identity in Revolutionary South Carolina," explored Charleston's bustling book trade—from bookbinders and booksellers to the secondhand book market and cabinetmakers who built monumental, fashionable bookcases for display—and the rich culture of reading and book ownership throughout South Carolina. My research spanned local museums, archives, and libraries (including the Waring) and private collections here in Charleston, as well as archives in London. A chapter, "The Revolutionary Library of Sarah Izard Campbell," received a prize from the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies.

Prior to my position at the Waring, I spent three and a half years as the personal curator and property manager of the Miles Brewton House, a National Historic Landmark here in Charleston. I've also spent a number of years working in public history on the East Coast, including the Office of the Historian at the U.S. House of Representatives, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, and the Newport Historical Society. Most recently, I worked in appraisals, valuing antique

and rare books, historic manuscripts, as well as eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British and American furnishings. In my new role as Historian, I am most looking forward to sharing the Waring's rich collection in new ways and creating a space for thoughtful reflection and conversation as the institution looks to the future. Outside of work, I enjoy antiques, gardening, and spending time exploring the Lowcountry with my husband, Brandon, our six-month-old, Benjamin, and our miniature Australian Shepherd, Banastre "Banny" Tarleton.



Waring Staff Puts their Lives On the Line for History

By Ms. Brooke Fox, University Archivist

Whoever said working in a museum, library, or archives was dull? Not this archivist!

For over fifteen months, I have been inventorying the College of Pharmacy Alumni Pharmacy Museum artifacts, and during that time, I have run across many hazardous materials: Mercury. Arsenic. Opium. Strychnine. Picric Acid. The first four poisonous materials are familiar to those interested in Victorian-era England and its many stories of murder by poison. And, like me, you might have never heard of picric acid.

You are probably wondering about its medicinal properties, particularly after reading the Warning label on the bottle: "It may explode when heated rapidly or when subjected to percussion. Keep well closed to prevent evaporation of the water." The Encyclopedia Britannica defines picric acid as a "pale yellow, odourless crystalline solid that has been used as a military explosive, as a yellow dye, and as an antiseptic." Not appreciating the potential danger I was in, I looked at the bottle and just put it back on the shelf after inventorying it. (Hey, I'm an archivist, not a chemist!)

While I was intrigued by the warning, I didn't think much about the bottle of picric acid until I read the Summer 2022 issue of *The Watermark*, the newsletter of the Librarians, Archivists, and Museum Professionals in the History of the Health Sciences (LAMPHHS). At the May 2022 annual meeting of LAMPHHS, Anna Schuldt and I delivered a presentation about the pharmacy inventory project titled "Mercury, Strychnine, Picric Acid, Oh My!" Our talk was part of the

panel session "Livin' on the Edge! Handling Hazardous Materials in Archival Environments." During our talk, we discussed the history of the museum and the collection, as well as the origins of the project and lessons learned.

To my surprise, a short article mentioning our panel session was written by the Clendening Library & Museum curator at the University of Kansas School of Medicine. Because of our presentation, the curator searched her collection database for picric acid and discovered she had a full bottle dating circa 1880. The curator shared her story of contacting her institution's Environmental Health & Safety office, which was quite concerned about the 140-year-old find. They advised her to vacate her office immediately, and a specialist from Chicago was brought in to re-hydrate the contents so they could be disposed of safely.

After reading the article, I sent a link to it to Dean Philip Hall and notified him of the bottle of picric acid. Like any good dean, Dr. Hall immediately contacted MUSC's Hazardous Waste Program, which unfortunately directed him to shut the museum down immediately. As a result, I could not access the museum for almost two weeks until the highly explosive material was removed by Hazardous Waste staff who transported the bottle to Columbia for safe disposal.

Unfortunately, we could not save the bottle for the collection because the action of unscrewing the cap could lead to an explosion. However, we have photographs taken by Anna Schuldt, which document that we were, for a moment in time, putting our lives on the line for history.



The Waring Historical Library Digital Collections

The Waring Historical Library Digital Collections provide free and open access to the rare and special collections of the Waring, which documents the history of the health sciences in South Carolina, the Southeast, and the 18 and 19th century Atlantic World.

EXPLORE ▼

ADVANCED SEARCH

FEATURED IMAGE

Browse feature on the [MEDICA@MUSC](#) website.

Upgrading the Digital Archives

The Waring Historical Library Digital Archives program announces the launch of the new **Waring Historical Library Digital Collections website** and **MEDICA@MUSC**.

By Ms. Tabitha Samuel, Digital Archivist

The Waring Historical Library Digital Archives program announces the launch of the new [Waring Historical Library Digital Collections website](#) and [MEDICA@MUSC](#).

With a fresh, updated look, the site marks a new beginning for the system, formerly known as MEDICA, which was comprised of digital collections of selected items within the holdings of the Waring as well as MUSC's institutional repository, consisting of the University's contemporary research and scholarly output. Both spheres of MEDICA were managed and maintained by one content management system called CONTENTdm, which conveniently allows institutions to structure materials in the collection as digital objects, arrange and organize collections, and display visual and multimedia content. However, CONTENTdm has not been the best option for keeping up with the trends

and needs of a growing institutional repository. As a solution to this issue, the institutional repository has changed addresses, in a manner of speaking, and will be maintained in Digital Commons, which has become the industry standard for managing and providing access to institutional repositories. The digital collections of the Waring remain in CONTENTdm but with an updated look and feel.

Along with the new look and the separation of the two collections comes new names for these distinctive collections. The Waring's digital collections will now be referred to as the Waring Historical Library Digital Collections while the institutional repository has been named MEDICA@MUSC. The Waring Historical Library Digital Collections speaks directly to what users can expect to find when searching the collection, while MEDICA@MUSC signals a

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The repository is a service of the Medical University of South Carolina libraries. Research and scholarly output included here has been selected and deposited by the individual university departments and centers on campus.

At a Glance

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Paper of the Day

Interprofessional Staff Perspectives on the Adoption of OR Black Box Technology and Critical Event Simulations to Improve Patient Safety: A...
Krystle K. Campbell

743 papers to date 18,692 full-text downloads to date 14,957 downloads in the past year

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Browse feature on the MEDICA@MUSC website.

departure from the former system but retains the overall intent of the inception of MEDICA, which has been an acronym for the MUSC Electronic Documents Initiative and Collected Archives, and the familiarity that the name has gained among MUSC faculty and students.

The new Waring Historical Library Digital Collections website makes resources more readily available that provide a broader context to each collection. A robust collections list allows users to sift through the digital collections by topical category, such as South Carolina history. The collections list also provides descriptions of each collection and, where available, puts companion resources, such as finding aids, MUSC Quick Facts reference guides, and online exhibits, front and center. The website also features a list of resources within the Waring and external to the library's collections, such as the Digital Public Library of America, which will better assist users with their research needs.

Finally, the new website includes links to

MEDICA@MUSC in Digital Commons and its resources. MEDICA@MUSC provides access to MUSC's growing body of scholarly work, which includes articles, posters, theses, and dissertations produced by faculty and students of MUSC. Digital Commons gives authors, even if departing from MUSC, the opportunity to track statistics for their works including downloads, which are useful for upward mobility at academic institutions. The site includes access to these features, a step-by-step guide for submitting work to MEDICA@MUSC, and guides addressing topics like copyright. New additions to MUSC's institutional repository can be found in MEDICA@MUSC in Digital Commons while some of the existing content, currently moving over to MEDICA@MUSC, still lives in **CONTENTdm**.

For more information about the Waring Historical Library Digital Collections or MEDICA@MUSC, contact the Waring's Digital Archivist, Tabitha Samuel, at medica@musc.edu.