



Collection Name: J. Marion Sims Letters
Collection #: MSS 52
Size: 0.125 cf (4 items)
Dates: 1858-1859; 1880-1881
Processed: October 2007/SDH
Restrictions: None

Biography:

James Marion Sims was born January 25, 1813 in Hanging Rock near Lancaster, South Carolina. After attending Lancaster schools he graduated from the South Carolina College in 1832. He attended the Medical College of South Carolina for one semester before leaving to complete his medical education at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, from which he graduated in 1855. He briefly returned to Lancaster after graduation but moved to Alabama in October 1855, finally settling in Montgomery. He practiced general medicine for several years before becoming interested in the vesico-vaginal fistulae caused by the act of childbirth. He made his name as a surgeon by practicing techniques and inventing instruments, including silver wire sutures, aimed at repairing this damage. He moved to New York City, in part for health reasons, and soon established his practice there. He was instrumental in the establishment of the nation's first hospital for women in 1853. In addition to diseases of women, Sims was interested in cancer and worked to establish the New York Cancer Hospital (now the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Hospital). Sims died in New York on November 13, 1883.

Scope and Content Note:

The J. Marion Sims Letters, 1858-59 and 1880-1881, consist of four original letters from J. Marion Sims to Gen. Waddy Thompson of Greenville, South Carolina (1858-1859); to O.B. Mayer (1880); and Tom Taylor (1881). His letters refer to patients suffering with fibrous tumors of the uterus and ovarian cysts or tumors. He also inquires of a physician who treated a patient with rectal alimentionation. The letters provide detailed accounts of his techniques in attempting to treat the patients.

Citation form J. Marion Sims Letters, MSS 52, Waring Historical Library, MUSC (Charleston).

Merged Collections:

The following collection has been merged with MSS 52: MSS 136, Letters, 1858-1859 to Waddy Thompson.

Subject Headings:

Sims, J. Marion (James Marion), 1813-1883.

Thompson, Waddy, 1798-1868.

Mayer, O. B. (Orlando Benedict), 1818-1891.

Taylor, Tom

Gynecology -- history -- 19th century.

Gynecologic Surgical Procedures—history.

Ovarian cysts—therapy—19th century.

Ovarian diseases—therapy-- 19th century.

Uterine diseases—therapy—19th century.

Women's Health—history

Genital Diseases, Female--history