

Mary Amanda Dixon Jones Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



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

2013

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<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

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<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms010115>

LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lcn.loc.gov/mm2006085319>

Prepared by Connie L. Cartledge

Collection Summary

Title: Mary Amanda Dixon Jones Papers

Span Dates: 1839-1925

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1874-1907)

ID No.: MSS85319

Creator: Dixon Jones, Mary Amanda, b. 1828

Extent: 2,000 items ; 8 containers ; 3.0 linear feet

Language: Collection material in English

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

Summary: Physician. Family papers, correspondence, legal papers, financial papers, lectures, notes, writings, medical illustrations, newspaper clippings, photographs, and printed matter relating primarily to Dixon Jones's medical career.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Dixon family.

Dixon Jones, Mary Amanda--Trials, litigation, etc.

Dixon Jones, Mary Amanda.

Jones, Charles N. Dixon--Correspondence.

Jones, Charles N. Dixon.

Jones, Henry D.

Jones, Henry D.--Correspondence.

Jones, Mary D.

Jones, Mary D. -1893--Correspondence.

Organizations

Woman's Hospital of Brooklyn.

Subjects

Generative organs, Female--Diseases.

Gynecology--New York (State)--New York.

Hospitals--New York (State)--New York.

Libel and slander--United States.

Medicine--New York (State)--New York.

Music--Instruction and study--Europe.

Physicians--Malpractice--United States.

Surgery--New York (State)--New York.

Places

Europe--Description and travel.

Titles

Brooklyn daily eagle.

Occupations

Physicians.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Mary Amanda Dixon Jones, physician, were given to the Library of Congress by Virginia Triplett Linthicum in 2005-2006.

Processing History

The papers of Mary Amanda Dixon Jones were processed in 2007. The finding aid and container list were revised in 2013 to reflect the removal of an access restriction.

Transfers

Four books have been transferred to the Library's Rare Book and Special Collections Division where they are identified as part of these papers.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Mary Amanda Dixon Jones is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Mary Amanda Dixon Jones 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, Mary Amanda Dixon Jones Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1828, Feb. 17	Born, Dorchester County, Md.
1845	Graduated, Wesleyan Female College, Wilmington, Del.
1846-1850	Professor, Wesleyan Female College; taught physiology and literature
1850-1852	Taught, Baltimore Female College, and continued studies with Dr. Thomas Bond, Jr., founder of the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery, Baltimore, Md.
1854	Married John Quincy Adams Jones
1862	Studied medicine, Hygeio-Therapeutic Medical College, New York, N.Y.
1865-1875	Practiced medicine, Brooklyn, N.Y.
1872	Enrolled, Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.
1873	Passed three-month preceptorship with Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi in New York, N.Y.

1875	Graduated, Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa., specializing in the treatment of diseases of the female reproductive system
1876	Began studying pathology with Dr. Charles Heitzman
1882-1884	Chief medical officer, Woman's Hospital of Brooklyn, New York, N.Y.
1884-1891	Gynecologist, Woman's Hospital of Brooklyn, New York, N.Y.
1886	Studied in Europe, touring European surgical theater
1888	Performed the first successful total hysterectomy for treatment of fibroid tumors while caring for a patient suffering from a seventeen-pound uterine tumor
1890	Tried and exonerated in the manslaughter case of Ida Hunt
1892	Lost libel suit against the Brooklyn <i>Daily Eagle</i>
1893	Only daughter murdered by her daughter's husband
1895	Retired from her medical practice
1895-circa 1908	Researched and wrote articles on the clinical pathology of the female reproductive system
1910, Apr.	Listed on the 1910 census as living in the Bronx, New York, N.Y.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Mary Amanda Dixon Jones (b. 1828), span the years 1839-1925, with the bulk dating from 1874 to 1907, and consist of family papers, general correspondence, legal papers, financial papers, lectures, notes, writings, medical illustrations, newspaper clippings, photographs, and printed matter. Dixon Jones was the first person in America to perform a total hysterectomy for a tumor of the uterus. In 1889 the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle* ran a series of articles critical of Dixon Jones's surgical skills and her management of the Woman's Hospital of Brooklyn in New York. These articles led to criminal lawsuits against Dixon Jones for the deaths of two patients, Ida Hunt and Sarah T. Bates. After being exonerated in the Hunt case and having the other case dropped, Dixon Jones sued the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle* for libel. The trial, which began in February 1892, became a public debate through the newspapers about women doctors and Dixon Jones's medical and financial practices at the hospital. The bulk of the collection relates to Dixon Jones's career as a physician and surgeon, her legal difficulties, and her research and writings about diseases of the reproductive system. The collection is arranged in three groups: family papers, general correspondence, and subject file.

The family papers consist chiefly of correspondence between Dixon Jones and her children, Charles N. D. Jones, Henry D. Jones, and Mary D. Jones (sometimes spelled Marie). Much of the correspondence relates to local and family news; many of the early letters contain details of the children's studies and education, particularly those of Henry and Mary. Henry was a graduate of Harvard University and became an Episcopal clergyman. Mary graduated from several women's schools and studied music in the United States and Europe. Charles became a physician and worked at the Woman's Hospital of Brooklyn with his mother. The letters include brief mentions of Dixon Jones's work as a physician and her medical writings; only a few by Dixon Jones refer to the libel case. Family letters in 1893 contain details of the daughter's romance and marriage to S. C. Shortlidge. Dixon Jones strongly opposed this marriage. In December 1893, Shortlidge murdered Mary D. Jones and pled insanity as his defense. Letters from Dixon Jones to Henry Jones in early 1894 and files about the murder convey her distress and anguish about her daughter's death. In 1906 Dixon Jones experienced another family tragedy, the unexpected death of Henry Jones. The family papers document Dixon Jones's efforts to write sketches in tribute to her deceased children. They include drafts of her recollections, copied excerpts of letters from Mary and Henry,

letters from friends and colleagues about her children, and other material. Also in the family papers are a patient logbook of Charles N. D. Jones, a travel journal of Mary D. Jones when she studied music in Europe in 1884, and a notebook including genealogical material about the Dixon family.

The general correspondence consists mostly of incoming letters to Dixon Jones from other doctors, a few patients, and acquaintances. Letters in 1881 and 1884 relate to Dixon Jones's inquiries about her admission to the Kings County Medical Society. Other correspondence includes a letter of 13 May 1889 to Dixon Jones from a gentleman indicating that statements attributed to him in the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle* were false, a letter of 27 May 1892 from Dixon Jones discussing her poor financial status and why she lost the libel case, and a letter of 3 December 1892 from Dixon Jones to Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi regarding Dixon Jones's career and the Woman's Hospital of Brooklyn. Other correspondence relates to her writings, including an 1895 letter from a doctor about "criminal abortion."

The subject file consists mainly of legal papers, files about the Woman's Hospital of Brooklyn, and writings by Dixon Jones. Files on the Ida Hunt case include the closing argument by Dixon Jones's lawyer, George G. Reynolds, press clippings, notes, and other material. The bulk of the legal papers relates to the libel suit of Dixon Jones and her son Charles against the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle* and include a few pleadings, correspondence, a court order, partial transcripts of the trial, notes, lists of witnesses, and patient statements. The papers also reflect Dixon Jones's affiliation with two hospitals known as the Woman's Hospital of Brooklyn. Dixon Jones served as chief medical officer for the first hospital from 1882 to 1884. A dispute in 1884 led to the disbanding of the hospital, leading Dixon Jones to organize another Woman's Hospital in which she held the title of gynecologist. Files pertaining to the hospitals consist of reports, a draft history of the institutions probably written by Dixon Jones, notes of minutes of meetings, a constitution for the hospital organized in 1884, lists of patients, notes, and printed matter.

The writings in the collection document Dixon Jones's activities as a prolific writer. Most of the writings relate to her articles for medical journals and autobiographical material. Some of the autobiographical drafts contain information about Dixon Jones's ancestors.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged alphabetically by type of material.

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1	Family papers
BOX 1	Correspondence
BOX 1	Dixon, Noah (father), 1840-1844
BOX 1	Jones, Charles N. D. (son), circa 1873-1892, 1907, undated (3 folders)
BOX 1	Jones, Henry D. (son), 1874-1906, undated (12 folders)
BOX 1	Jones, John Quincy Adams (husband), 1876-1881, undated
BOX 1	Jones, Mary D. ("Sissie") (daughter), 1874-1893, undated (8 folders)
BOX 1	Other relatives, 1849, 1869, 1882, 1893-1894, 1903, undated (3 folders)
BOX 1	Other papers
BOX 1	Jones, Charles N. D. (son)
BOX 1	General, 1884-1893, 1903-1906, undated
BOX 2	Patient logbook, 1883-1884
BOX 3	Jones, Henry D. (son)
BOX 3	General, 1881-1885, 1895, 1902-1908, undated (2 folders)
BOX 3	Recollections by Dixon Jones and related material, 1870-1893, 1902-1907, undated (3 folders)
BOX 3	Jones, Mary D. ("Sissie") (daughter)
BOX 3	General, 1873-1891, undated
BOX 3	Murder, 1893-1894, undated (3 folders)
BOX 3	Recollections by Dixon Jones and related material, 1876, 1882-1894, undated (7 folders)
BOX 4	Travel journal, 1884
BOX 4	Miscellaneous, 1839-1849, undated
BOX 4	Notebook, 1913, undated
BOX 4	General correspondence, 1850, 1866, 1881-1911, undated (10 folders)
BOX 4	Subject file
	Biographical material, 1896, undated
BOX 4	Financial papers
BOX 4	General, 1871-1872, 1881-1892, 1901-1904, undated (3 folders)
BOX 4	Notebook, 1867-1876
BOX 4	Fragments, undated
BOX 4	Lectures and related material, 1876-1877, 1885-1888, 1904-1907, undated (3 folders)
BOX 4	Legal papers

Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 4	Hunt, Ida, manslaughter case, 1890, undated (2 folders)
BOX 5	Libel case, 1889-1892, undated (12 folders)
BOX 5	Miscellaneous, 1891-1896, 1904
BOX 5	Medical illustrations, 1901, undated (2 folders)
BOX 6	Miscellany, 1859, 1875, 1881-1887, 1896, 1905-1907, undated (2 folders)
BOX 6	New York Academy of Medicine, New York, N.Y., 1896
BOX 6	Newspaper clippings, 1889, undated
BOX 6	Notes, 1885-1888, 1895, 1902-1907, undated (4 folders)
BOX 6	Photographs, undated
BOX 6	Woman's Hospital of Brooklyn, New York, N.Y., 1882-1893, undated (9 folders)
BOX 7	Writings
BOX 7	By Dixon Jones
BOX 7	Autobiographical file
BOX 7	Drafts, undated (3 folders)
BOX 7	Notes, undated (2 folders)
	Medical
	Drafts, 1901, undated (7 folders)
BOX 7	Published copies
BOX 7	1890-1896 (4 folders)
BOX 8	1897-1901, undated (3 folders)
BOX 8	Religious, undated
BOX 8	Van Lew, Elizabeth L., undated
BOX 8	By others, 1865, 1886-1900, 1925, undated (3 folders)