Records on Homeopathic Physicians in American Archives: A Preliminary Directory

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In recent years surveys of primary documentation available for the historical studies of medicine have become quite common. However, most of these have concentrated on historical material documenting the development of regular medicine. The Institute for the History of Medicine of the Robert Bosch Foundation in Stuttgart, since 1980, has been engaged on researching and writing the social history of homeopathy. An initial aim of the Institute was to establish an archive for homeopathy. This consists of the invaluable bequest by the founder of homeopathy, Samuel Hahnemann, his second wife Melanie, née d'Hervilly and of his pupils and direct successors Clemens and Friedrich von Boenninghausen. This important collection comprises mostly medical case books, manuscripts and incoming correspondence of which more than 5,000 letters to Hahnemann from his patients merit particular mention. Supplementary material was acquired from an early stage so that it has been possible to collect some parts of Hahnemann's outgoing correspondence, further writings on the history of homeopathy and some smaller doctors' bequests. A collection of pictures serves to supplement the written material. Since 1991 it has been possible to acquire the archive of the Central Association for Homeopathic Physicians in Germany (1970s onwards) and material from some non-professional homeopathic groups. Consequently the archive is developing its collections to become a centre of documentation for the current development of
homeopathy, including non-professionals and public discussion about this type of therapy. However, before any decisions were made to take in new material it was desirable to identify the extent and scope of primary documentation for the history of homeopathy in Germany. See, for example, Joseph Schneider, 'Hahnemannia in Köthen' Medizin, Gesellschaft und Geschichte 9 (1990), 181–194; and Martin Dinges, 'Verzeichnis des Bestandes "Varia" des Institut für Geschichte der Medizin der Robert Bosch Stiftung' Medizin, Gesellschaft und Geschichte 12 (1993), 221–230. A further aim was to encourage an awareness of the importance of record-keeping also outside Germany. This decision was reinforced by the fact that the Institute was contacted by researchers who reported about the need to safeguard some important collections in the United States. These instances served to confirm an initial feeling that the records most at risk are those of private hospitals for which there is no existing archival safety net.

When the Institute and the Department of the History of Health Sciences at the University of California in San Francisco organised a conference on historical perspectives of homeopathic medicine in Europe and North America in 1994, it became clear to all the participants that much more work in the archives is needed before a full picture of homeopathy as an 'alternative' system will emerge. The conference also highlighted the necessity for existing repositories to include bequests by homeopathic physicians and documents on the work of lay and professional organisations in this sector in their collecting policies. Additionally, there is a perceived need for a preliminary survey of existing agencies which assume archival responsibility in this field.

A start was made with a checklist of about 123 American institutions which previous research suggested should be contacted. Further details for most of them were gleaned from the following sources of information: National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC) (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1959 to present); Archivum, edited by the International Council on Archives, 1988; World Guide to Libraries Handbook of International Documentation, Volume 17; Polk's Medical and Surgical Register of the United States; Directory of Archives and Manuscript Repertories in the United States, Second Edition, 1988; Guide to the National Archives of the United States, Washington, DC 1987. Further names were added to the original list by recommendation and eventually contact was made also with them. However, not all of these institutions participated finally in the survey on records of homeopathic physicians in American archival collections because of shortage of time or because they claimed not to keep pertinent records.
The entries are arranged in accordance with a questionnaire sent to all correspondents. The absence of information on any of the points indicates that the answers were negative or that no answer was given. The result of this survey is a small sample of existing collections of homeopathy-related archive material or information. A full list, in alphabetical order according to States, appears at the end. Despite some lacunae and the unevenness caused by incomplete information, this survey, nevertheless, will be a great help to researchers and historians, not only those from abroad but also within the United States. Far too many debts have been incurred in the preparation of this directory for me to attempt to list all of them here. I am certain they will understand that adequate personal acknowledgement is not possible in this case.

Southwest Museum
P.O. Box 41558
Los Angeles, California 90041-0558

Munk collection.
J.A. Munk was a homeopathic physician. The collection contains the correspondence by J.A. Munk to Dr. Harvey Wickes Felter, 1905–1914; Dr. G.W. Boskowitz, 1912–1913; A.J. Howe, 1875–1880; John Uri Lloyd, 1901–1923; Dr. Herbert J. Webster, 1894–1923.

University of California, San Francisco
Library, Special Collections
530 Parnassus Avenue
San Francisco, California 94143-0840

Manuscript collection (20 cartons of unprocessed records).
The library has some letters by two San Francisco homeopaths, James William Ward (1862–?) and Willis Alonzo Dewey (1858–?), and the papers of Otto Guttentag, late Hahnemann Professor of Medical Philosophy at UCSF, who had a long association with the homeopathic community in San Francisco.
Illinois State Historical Library
A Division of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
Old State Capitol
Springfield, Illinois 62701

1. Comstock collection. Papers, 1883–1942 (1.27 linear feet. 2 manuscript boxes and 5 oversize volumes).

Davis, Oliver Comstock (1857–1942).
Open for research, Acc. No. 71–77.

Davis, Oliver Comstock, Joliet, Illinois, homeopathic physician. Born in Channahon (Will County), Illinois. Son of farmer George B. Davis and Oliver Comstock, daughter of physician Alexander McGregor Comstock. Graduated from Northwestern University and Chicago Homeopathic Medical College (1882). Worked at hospital at Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet (1878–1881). Practiced homeopathic medicine and surgery in Lockport, Illinois (1882–1885) and Joliet (1885–1942). In 1882 married Carrie L. Sandiford – parents of two children, Olive Caroline and Mildred Jane. This collection consists almost entirely of a complete set of daybooks concerning the doctor’s medical practice. These daybooks primarily contain names of patients and fees charged. Also included are descriptions of summer vacations, names and addresses of nurses, lists of rent received, and notes regarding automobile maintenance. The volumes are in poor condition.

2. Bacmeister collection. Papers, 1848–1910 (Family, 1880–1909); (7.5 linear feet. 18 manuscript boxes).

Theodore Bacmeister (1830–1911) and Family
Open for research, Acc. No. 73–59.

The papers by a physician specializing in homeopathic medicine from Toulon, Illinois, contains primarily correspondence (1848–1910). Bacmeister and his wife Laura exchanged letters concerning family matters with their children Pauline, Louise, Theodore, and Otto while each was at college. William and Charles wrote letters home during their travels. Also included are business and medical correspondence (1883–1901), undated school papers of the Bacmeister children, and a few financial records documenting household expenses (1894–1904).
Kentucky Historical Society
Manuscript Collections
Old State Capitol, P.O. Box H
Frankfort, Kentucky 40602-2108

This collection contains five letters of the Meek family and a scrapbook
donated by Sallie Ziegler Meek.

Among the letters is one written by D. Edward A. Miller of Baltimore
to [presumably] Mary M. Baltzell in January, 1852. In addition to discussing
family news, Miller mentioned the severe winter then underway and the
increased sickness he attributed to the weather. He describes his difficulties
in conducting a medical practice without a horse and carriage. This hardship
forced him to attend patients on foot and limited his practice to ‘the humbler
share’, primarily Germans whose language he spoke. He also wrote that he
might send a medicinal powder with his letter to his mother but that he was
afraid ‘its power will be destroyed owing to the smell & dampness of the
mail.’ Ultimately, he did not enclose the medicine. Miller’s letter also
referred fleetingly to family investments in Caracas [Venezuela], South
America.

This notebook was kept by an unidentified physician, presumably in
Hopkinsville, to record his appointments to visit patients. The book was
found in Hopkinsville in 1940. The appointments were recorded in a volume
published for the purpose, The Homeopathic Physicians’ Visiting List and Pocket
Repertory, by Robert Faulkner, M.D. The volume also contains calendars for
the years 1881, 1882, 1883, and 1884, and an obstetric calendar. A section
on poisons and their antidotes is in the front of the volume, followed by a
repertory of medical conditions and suggested drug treatments. The patient
appointments are recorded from January 1883 to February 1884.

National Library of Medicine
8600 Rockville Pike
Bethesda, Maryland 20894

The archival holdings include a number of oral history interviews of recent
homeopathic physicians, and some 19th century notebooks from a
homeopathic medical student at Hahnemann Medical College in
Philadelphia.
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of The Secretary of State
Massachusetts Archives at Columbia Point
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125

Records, 1865–1910, 1917, 1927–1953. (1 folder and 1 volume in a box and 1
oversize volume and 1 reel of microfilm, 35 mm).

The Archives hold some records pertaining to the Westborough State
Hospital. This hospital was established as the Westborough Insane Hospital
to provide care and treatment using homeopathic principles of medicine.

University of Michigan
Bentley Historical Library
Michigan Historical Collection
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-2113

Royal Samuel Copeland (1868–1938).

Copeland was an ophthalmologist who became president of New York
City Board of Health, and U.S. Senator. The collection correspondence,
addresses, business papers and reports, biographical data, scrapbooks, and
other papers relating to many topics, including politics, the U.S. merchant
marine, farm relief, homeopathy, medicine, housing loans, court reform, and
crime. Correspondents include Calvin Coolidge, Royal Samuel Copeland
(1868–?), Jr., Herbert C. Hoover (1874–1964), and Franklin D. Roosevelt
(1882–1945).

Wilbert Bartlet Hinsdale (1851–1944).

Hinsdale was Professor of Homeopathy at the University of
Michigan. Among his papers are his correspondence; a diary from 1905 of a
trip through the British Isles; notes on archeology and homeopathy; a
notebook of callers at Hinsdale's home; eight scrapbooks, mostly printed
items but with some manuscripts. items on the University of Michigan
Homeopathic Hospital. Correspondents include James B. Angell,
Woodbridge N. Ferris, Fred B. Green, Warren G. Harding, Ethel F. Hussey,
Harry B. Hutchins, and William O. Thompson.
Physicians' papers, 1826–1960 (ca. 260 items and 69 volumes).

Sawyer was a homeopathic physician, a Masonic official, and served as mayor of Monroe, Michigan. The correspondence and papers of the Sawyer and Toll families includes 21 letters, press books and other correspondence relating, in part, to Sawyer's Masonic business, Monroe civic affairs, and the Homeopathic Medical College of the University of Michigan; correspondence of Sawyer's wife, Sarah G. Toll Sawyer, of his daughter, Jennie Sawyer, and other members of Sawyer's family; 34 vols. of Sawyer's diaries; 24 vols. of Jennie Toll Sawyer's diaries; miscellaneous business and legal papers; notes, speeches, and reports of Masonic affairs and homeopathy; a MS. history of homeopathy in Michigan; recipes books; and other material.

Sawyer was a physician, of Hillsdale, Michigan. He became a member of the Michigan State Board of Registration in Medicine, member of the Republican State Central Committee, and regent of the University of Michigan. The records include correspondence, notes, reports, addresses,


Wilcox was a homeopathic physician, of Louisiana and Detroit, Michigan. His letters relate to personal matters, women’s rights, and Wilcox’s treatment at women and children. There is also some promotional material concerning her practice and her application of the ‘Electro Thermal Bath’.


Brackley Shaw of Adrian, Michigan, was a Republican state representative from Lenawee County, Michigan, 1869–1870, later became state senator, 1881–1884. The collection includes personal letters by Shaw, his son Horatio W., and his brother Horatio W., regarding missionary activities, family affairs, and Michigan politics, including legislative activities regarding railroads, prisons and reformatories, dentistry regulation, homeopathic medicine, temperance and prohibition, and the painting career of the younger Horatio W. Shaw.


Carrow was a physician in China and professor at the University of Michigan Medical School. The papers contain addresses and lectures on diseases of the eye, ear, nose and throat; of special interest is a lecture attacking homeopathy.
Minnesota Historical Society Collections
Division of Archives & Manuscripts
1500 Mississippi Street
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Records, 1867–1913 (2 volumes and 1 box).
The relevant records include minutes of meetings; constitution, by-laws, membership lists, programs of meetings, convention proceedings, questionnaires, and applications for membership.

The State Historical Society of Missouri
Western Historical Manuscript Division
1020 Lowry Street
Columbia, Missouri 65201

The archives houses papers, letters, diaries, and other handwritten and unpublished material. Some of these records are pertinent to the history of homeopathy.

Montana Historical Society
225 North Roberts
Helena, Montana 59620-1201

The society houses the collection of a Canadian [homeopathic] physician who studied for a year in Berlin (1895–1896) before settling in Great Falls, Montana. This collection has not yet been fully processed.

State University of New York at Binghamton
Glenn G. Bartle Library
Special Collections, Vestal Parway East
Binghamton, New York 13901

Broome County Medical Society (N.Y.). Records, 1806–1965 (5 current feet).
The society was founded in 1806 to license physicians and establish and enforce a code of ethics. The collection includes correspondence, minutes, registers, ledgers, speeches, files on physicians, clippings, slides, and photos; together with records of the society's milk commission, Binghampton Academy of Medicine (1854–1957), and Binghampton Homeopathic
Society (1903–1922). Persons represented include Nathan Smith Davis (1817–1904).

The New York Public Library
Rare Books and Manuscripts Division
Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street
New York, New York 10018

Barlow collection. Correspondence, 1830–1850 (2 linear feet).
Samuel Bancroft Barlow (1798–1876).
The use of this collection requires advance notice.
Barlow was a homeopathic physician of East Granville, Mass., and
New York City. The correspondence consists of letters by his family, friends,
and colleagues. It includes letters from Nathaniel Jones, a United States
Representative from New York, commenting on the political scene in
Washington, D.C.

University of North Carolina
Southern Historical Collection
CB# 3926, Wilson Library
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599–3926

William Henry Holcombe, Diary and Notes, 1855–1857. Entry for March 3,
1855 and April 4, 1855. William H. Holcombe, How I Became a Homeopath

Duke University Library
William R. Perkins Library
Manuscript Department
Durham, North Carolina 27706

Moore was a homeopathic physician, of Saco, York Co., Me. The collection
contains the correspondence exchanged between Moore and his wife, Mary
Elizabeth (Ross) Moore, during his service in the Civil War with the 22nd
Regt., U.S. Colored Troops, the 3d Division Hospital, Petersburg, Va., and
with his regiment in Texas in 1865; together with poetry and genealogical
data. Subjects include the Civil War in Virginia, contrabands, medical aspects of the war, Negro troops, and troop movements.

2. Trent Collection.
Abraham Howard Okie, Papers.

The Lloyd Library and Museum
917 Plum Street
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Lloyd collection
John Uri Lloyd

Although this museum has many books on homeopathy in its historical collection there is only little source material pertaining to individual physicians. Its major holdings pertain to the Lloyd brothers. There is however, some letters by Dr. J.A. Munk to John Uri Lloyd. The archives contain one box of a hundred to two hundred pieces of correspondence from Munk dating 1903–1927. Other items in the box include several miscellaneous photographs and clippings.

The Cleveland Medical Library Association
Historical Division
Dittrick Museum of Medical History
The Archives, The Rare Book Collection
11000 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44106-1714

There are documents referring to Jakob Schneider and Jakob Homer Schneider. Both father and son were homeopathic physicians, and got their degrees from the Cleveland Homeopathic Hospital College. Jacob, the father, received his degree in 1871, Jakob Homer, the son, in 1898 (the school had changed its name to Cleveland University of Medicine and Surgery by then!). According to the 1897/98 announcement of the school, Dr. Jakob Schneider was Jakob Homer Schneider's preceptor. A manuscript list of graduates in the archives contains the father's name for 1871. The son's name, Jakob Homer Schneider, appears in the list of graduates in the 1899–1900 Catalog of the Cleveland Homeopathic Medical College as a graduate of the class of 1898.
Western Reserve Historical Society Collections

History Library
10825 East Boulevard
Cleveland, Ohio 44106

Weisheimmer family. Papers, 1874–1929 (ca. 1 foot).

The collection contains letters from Germany to William Weisheimer, of Cleveland, Ohio, school notebooks, diaries (1900–1905 passim) of trips to Detroit and other Michigan cities, the West, and a cruise on the St. Lawrence River, and autograph albums, of Marie (Weisheimer) Spencer, including letters from John G. Eberhard, stationed with Company H, 20th U.S. infantry, in Manila during the Spanish American War; and letters of Marie’s husband, Henry A. Spencer, primarily from his father, Dr. George Spencer, professor of dermatology at Cleveland Homeopathic Medical College, and Dr. Spencer’s notes and articles (ca. 1910) on chemistry.

Ohio Historical Society

Archives/Library Division
1982 Velma Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43211-2497

Some information on homeopathic physicians will be found in the following records:

1. ‘Physicians – Ohio, 1700–1824’ (eleven Mss. collections)
2. ‘Physicians – Ohio, 1825–1849’ (37 Mss. collections)
3. ‘Physicians – Ohio, 1850–1874’ (43 Mss. collections)
4. ‘Physicians – Ohio, 1875–1899’ (28 Mss. collections)

Hahnemann University

Library, M.S. 449
245 N. 15th Street
Philadelphia, Philadelphia 19102-1192

The historical collections includes correspondence by homeopathic physicians (filed but not classified). There are many unprocessed and untranslated letters by Constantine Hering (1800–1880), from various periods. Thomas Lindsley Bradford (1847–?), scrapbooks (35 large volumes, arranged alphabetically but not indexed). Occasional letters will be found in Thomas Bradford’s biographical scrapbooks. Three letters of August Korndoefer, including one about a visit to Hahnemann’s houses in Leipzig.
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and Köthen. The scrapbooks are very fragile, often overlapping. Two other personal collections contain relevant correspondence, e.g., those of Adolphus Lippe's letters relating to the quarrel in the Medical college about the importance of science courses (1865–1867); and an interesting collection, in English, of Henry Newell Guernsey, which consists of personal accounts of homeopathic history and biography in Pennsylvania, submitted in preparation for the World History of Homeopathy published in 1876. This material refers to the very early history of homeopathic Allentown institutions and to the biographies of some of the founders (George Henry Bute (1792–1876), Henry Detwiller (1795–1887), etc.). The archives also contain a few letters from British homeopaths (e.g. Swan and Skinner, ca. 1882), a letter from Freifrau Sophie von Boeninghausen confirming the offer of Hahnemann's manuscripts and the marble bust made by David d'Angers for $20,000; and correspondence relating to the college rift, ca. 1867.

William Wesselhoeft (1794–1858) papers include a draft for a letter probably from the year 1836, in which he reports to an unidentified person addressed as "Hofrath", the last 13 years of his medical practice in Pennsylvania, and a biographical sketch of William Wesselhoeft in two letters, written by his son, William P., in January 20, 1876, and February 15, 1876.

College of Physicians of Philadelphia
Historical Collections of the Library
19 South 22nd Street
Philadelphia, Philadelphia 19103
Manuscript collection
The records include nine collections pertaining:


2. J. W. Porter collection.
Collection of bills, receipts, and account statements from homeopathic physicians, 1877–1897.

Lectures in Materia Medica by Prof. C.J. Hemple, 1857–1858.
4. Mary C. Cash.
   Autograph letter signed: January 12, 1845.

5. Lisabeth M. Holloway Collection. Collection of biographical information and physicians, 1663–1997. (15 boxes. 6.5 linear feet)
   Organized into five series:
   II. Lists of Local Practitioners and Medical Society Members, 1663–1977.
   IV. Lists of Military Physicians and Surgeons, 1775–1928.
   V. Miscellaneous Lists, 1847–1969. Arranged chronologically. There are various series:

   Series 1 arranged by state, then numerically according to American medical directory designation.
   Collection contains assembled biographical and educational data on physicians and surgeons, 1663–1977; bulk of information concerns regular, homeopathic and eclectic American 19th-century practitioners. Collection includes photocopies of published alumni catalogues and directories, course announcements, membership directories, and miscellaneous sources.


   Series 1.2 contains lists of alumni physicians of non-medical schools, 1749–1924.

   Series 2 contains local lists of medical practitioners and members of professional associations, 1663–1977, including lists of state board licentiates, membership lists, local directories, and necrologies and obituary lists. Series includes lists of officers and members of county medical societies of Pennsylvania and returns of census of Pennsylvania practitioners in the 1880s.

   Series 3 contains lists of homeopathic practitioners, necrologies, biographical indexes, and historical information, 1844–1906.

   A list of military physicians and surgeons, 1775–1928, will be found in Series 4; bulk of data concerns Civil War medical personnel.
Series 5 contains miscellaneous lists and indexes to biographical compilations, 1847–1969, this includes list of obituaries in *Transactions of the American Medical Association*, 1850–1881.


7. *John Michael Weick (1803–1880). Papers. 1 volume (loose-leaf. 35.5 cm).*

Weick came to Philadelphia ca. 1846 to study homeopathy, first settling in Clinton County, Iowa, and returning to Philadelphia where he practiced most of his remaining life. Gift of Clara Ethel Potts.


9. *Hahnemannian Medical Institute. Minutes, 1863–1893 (2 volumes).*

**Utah State Historical Society, Library**

300 Rio Grande
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101


**State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Archives Division**

816 State Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

*Homeopathic Medical Society of Wisconsin. Records, 1865–1953 (4 volumes).*

Of special interest are the minutes of annual meetings (1865–1910, 1927–53), a cashbook, and a ledger (1906–52). Minutes include summaries of papers presented at the meeting and information on the Society's efforts to obtain legislation regulating the practice of medicine in Wisconsin.
Archives which did not reply for reasons mentioned above:
Stanford University, Lane Medical Archives (Stanford, California); Connecticut State Library (Hartford, Connecticut); National Center for Homeopathy (Washington, DC); American Medical Association Library and Archives (Chicago, Illinois); The Newberry Library (Chicago, Illinois); University of Kansas Medical Center, Clendenning History of Medicine Library (Kansas City, Kansas); Manuscripts Division, Kentucky Library, Western Kentucky University (Bowling Green, Kentucky); Baltimore City Archives (Baltimore, Maryland); Archives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, State House (Boston, Massachusetts); Michigan Municipal League Library (Ann Arbor, Michigan); St. Louis Medical Library (St. Louis, Missouri); St. Louis Mercantile Library Association, John N. Hoover, Special Collection (St. Louis, Missouri); St. Louis Society for Medical and Scientific Education Archives (St. Louis, Missouri); Washington University School of Medicine, Archives (St. Louis, Missouri); Nevada Historical Society (Reno, Nevada); New York Hospital–Cornell Medical Center, Medical Archives (New York, New York); New York Medical College; Medical Sciences Library (Valhalla, New York); State Archives and Historical Research Library Division, State Historical Society of North Dakota (Bismarck, North Dakota); Medical College of Ohio, Raymon H. Mulford Library (Toledo, Ohio); Oklahoma Department of Libraries, State Archives Division (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma); Pennsylvania German Society (Birdsboro, Pennsylvania); Chemical Heritage Foundation (Philadelphia, Philadelphia); Rhode Island State Archives (Providence, Rhode Island); South Carolina Library, University of South Carolina (Columbia, South Carolina); National Archives, Fort Worth Branch (Fort Worth, Texas); University of Vermont, Special Collections, Bailey/Howe Library (Burlington, Vermont); Vermont Historical Society (Montpelier, Vermont); Virginia State Library and Archives (Richmond, Virginia); West Virginia and Regional History Collections, West Virginia University (Morgantown, West Virginia); Medical College of Wisconsin, Libraries (Milwaukee, Wisconsin).

Archives which could not be contacted because inquiries were misdirected:
Los Angeles City Archives, 316 Commercial Street (Los Angeles, California 90012); Cincinnati Historical Society, Library, Eden Park (Cincinnati, Ohio 45202); National Center for Homeopathy, 801 North Fairfax Street (Alexandria, Virginia 22314); Washington Division of Archives and Records Management, Office of Secretary of State, Archives and Records Center, 12th and Washington, P.O. Box 9000 (Olympia, Washington 98504-9000).