SOPHIA SMITH COLLECTION
SMITH COLLEGE

Inventory to the
Florence Rena Sabin Papers
1872-1985
12.25 linear ft. (33 boxes)

Susan Boone

Northampton, Massachusetts
2002
Florence Rena Sabin (1871-1953)
Papers, 1872-1985
12.25 linear ft. (33 boxes)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Florence Rena Sabin was born November 9, 1871, in Central City, Colorado, the youngest of two daughters of Serena Miner and George K. Sabin. Her father was a mining engineer and she spent her early years in mining communities. Serena Sabin died when Florence was seven and she and her sister, Mary, lived with relatives in Chicago and Vermont. Sabin graduated from Smith College in 1893. In order to earn money for medical school, she taught mathematics in Denver for two years and was an assistant in the Zoology Department at Smith College from 1895 to 1896. She entered Johns Hopkins Medical School in 1896 as a member of the fourth class to admit women. Upon graduation she was awarded an internship with renowned teacher and physician Sir William Osler at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Under the direction of embryologist and head of the Department of Anatomy, Franklin P. Mall, she undertook a project which led to the construction of a three-dimensional model of the mid and lower brain. It was adapted for publication in 1901.

After completing her internship in 1901, Sabin continued her anatomical and histological research with the help of a fellowship from a group of Baltimore women who aided women’s education. In 1902, she became assistant in the department of anatomy, the first woman on the Hopkins medical faculty. She rose to full professor in 1917, the first woman at the university to achieve that rank. Sabin spent twenty-five years at Hopkins and during her early years there she concentrated her research mainly upon the origins of blood cells and the lymphatic system. She wrote a number of widely cited papers based upon her work. Sabin had many devoted students, many of whom followed scientific careers, and a number of them became leaders in the fields of anatomy, immunology, and hematology. In 1925, she became the first woman elected to membership in the National Academy of Sciences. She also was the first woman to receive full membership at the Rockefeller Institute in New York. At the institute she worked for thirteen years as head of a section that studied the cellular aspects of immunity.

Sabin retired to Colorado in 1938 to live with her sister Mary. She remained professionally active and carried on an extensive correspondence with her former students and colleagues. In 1944, she was asked by Colorado governor John Vivian to serve on his post-war planning committee which was organized to assess public health needs in the state. She did research, traveled, spoke, and wrote extensively. She lobbied colleagues, legislators and state officials to support a reorganized and better-financed public health program and worked for successful passage of a series of health laws drafted by her committee and known as the Sabin program. In 1947 she was appointed chair of the Interim Board of Health and Hospitals of Denver, a post she held until 1951. Sabin received many honors and awards. Buildings were named for her at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and at Smith College. She is one of two Coloradoans and one of a handful of women represented by statues in the United States Capitol. Sabin died October 3, 1953, in Denver of a heart attack.
SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Florence Rena Sabin Papers consists of correspondence, notes, printed material, photographs, and memorabilia and consist of both professional and personal material. The bulk of the papers date from 1925 with very little material from her Johns Hopkins years. The papers include correspondence with family and friends, especially colleagues in medicine, research, and education, and a voluminous file of letters with her sister. The material represents Sabin’s wide interests and activities, especially after 1938 when she moved to Colorado. The Papers include awards and citations, photographs, memorabilia and publications. They also contain manuscript notes from scientific studies, many published articles, reports on her work with various organizations (notably the Rockefeller Institute, the National Tuberculosis Association), and organizations related to Colorado public health.

The papers are divided into six series.

I. BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIALS
II. CORRESPONDENCE
III. SPEECHES AND WRITINGS
IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES
V. SUBJECTS
VI. PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORABILIA

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

SERIES I. BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIALS (1872-1985), 1.5 linear ft.

This series contains three subseries: Genealogical notes and correspondence, Florence Sabin, and Mary Sabin. Genealogical notes and correspondence consists of material collected by Florence and Mary Sabin (1872-1953) and a publication about the history of the Sabin name.

The Florence Sabin subseries contains four sections. The first consists of clippings and articles (1900-85), obituaries and tributes (1953-54), miscellaneous biographical material (1903-60, n.d.), condolence letters to Mary Sabin (1953), and several undated speeches about Sabin. The second section contains material related to biographies by Mary Kay Phelan and Elinor...
Bluemel. Phelan published a biography of Sabin for young adults, *Probing the Unknown*, in 1959. There are two copies of the published book. Bluemel published *Florence Sabin, Colorado Woman of the Century* also in 1959. This section contains a published copy, reviews (1959), correspondence related to her research (1954-60), and miscellaneous notes (n.d.). Also included is an undated typescript by Bluemel entitled “The Genius of Florence Sabin”.

The third section contains Sabin’s financial records (1910-53), which include receipts, an account book, and investment records.

The fourth section consists of correspondence, printed material, memorabilia, and certificates related to awards and citations received by Sabin between 1910 and 1959. These are arranged alphabetically by the group or institution making the awards.

The final subseries is related to Florence Sabin’s sister Mary and consists of miscellaneous clippings (1931-61); five small diaries and address books (1904-39); correspondence and printed material related to her involvement in the Hernando deSoto Celebration sponsored by the Mississippi Discovery Association (1937-41); her membership in Delta Gamma Kappa Society, a national honor society in education, (1937-40); and undated writings on Colorado history.

SERIES II. CORRESPONDENCE (1881-1958), 4.5 linear ft.

This series is organized into three subseries: Family, Friends and associates and Business. All of the subseries include both incoming and outgoing correspondence filed together chronologically and include items that were enclosed with correspondence, such as clippings and memorabilia.

The Family subseries contains letters to Florence and her sister Mary from various family members. However the bulk of the family letters consist of letters between Florence and Mary. There is approximately one linear foot of these letters dating from 1900 to 1951. They reflect the long and close bond between the sisters. Florence wrote regularly to her sister and these letters provide a detailed narrative of her life. Of particular interest are the early letters from Germany (1900-02) and those written during the thirteen years she worked at the Rockefeller Institute under the direction of Simon Flexner. Although they are mostly personal in nature, she also writes of her work.

The largest subseries contains correspondence with Friends and associates. The letters are both professional and personal letters and provide valuable insights into Sabin’s life. They reveal a socially active woman of wide interests, who maintained close ties to colleagues and friends throughout her life. Long after Sabin left the Rockefeller Institute, she stayed in close contact with her former employees and the doctors there. Of note from her Rockefeller days is correspondence with physician Alfred Einstein Cohn (1938-51), Simon Flexner, pathologist...
and head of the Institute, and his wife (1924-43); Margaret Thuis Stein (1936-53), whose early letters to Sabin provide a detailed account of the activities at the Institute; Sabin's technician, Dorothea Fuller (1937-53); and Dr. Kenneth Smithburn and his wife, artist Florence Smithburn (1935-53). Dr. Smithburn spent 1938-40 in Central Africa and his letters to Sabin from his posting are of particular interest. In addition there are letters from Henry Allen Moe (1938-50), Secretary General of the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation; embryologist George Linus Streeter (1938-48); and Dr. Rodney Sidney Cunningham (1920-53). The Cunningham letters are particularly interesting because unlike other groups of letters, Sabin's replies are included. They were copied from originals at the Denison Memorial Library at the University of Colorado Medical School. Also of interest, because they date from Sabin's early years at Johns Hopkins, are a series of letters from Ella Strong Dennison (1915-32). Another side of Sabin's life is represented by letters from poets Axton D.B. Clark (1914-41) and Lola Ridge (1941), actress Katharine Hepburn (n.d.) and her mother Katherine Houghton Hepburn (1928-39), foundation executive Abraham Flexner (1943-46), lawyer and philanthropist Bernard Flexner (1940-46), archeologist Zelia Nuttall (1928-33), fellow Johns Hopkins University student Dorothy Reed Mendenhall (1952-53), and a long series of letters from playwright Edward Sheldon (1932-47). There is a series of letters from the Hooker family in this subseries. Although they are addressed to “Aunt Florence” it is not clear how or if they are related to Florence Sabin.

The final subseries consists of Business correspondence, 1925-53. This consists primarily of material related to her investments.

SERIES III. SPEECHES AND WRITINGS (1897-1955), 1 linear ft.

This series is divided in two subseries: Speeches and Writings.

The Speeches are divided into two sections, the first related to her work in public health in Colorado (1945-47) and the second on miscellaneous topics (1933-55).

The writings consist of her biography Franklin Paine Mall, The Story of Mind (1934), with related correspondence and reviews; a manuscript copy with notes of “Studies on the Cells of the blood and connective tissues with especial reference to their reactions in tuberculosis” (1925-38); reprints from Contributions to Embryology (1915-25); and miscellaneous reprints and writings (1897-1953).

SERIES IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (1911-1952), 3 linear ft.

This series contains correspondence, reports, printed material, minutes, and agenda related to Sabin's many professional and club activities. It is arranged alphabetically with two folders of miscellaneous organizations at the end. Following her retirement to Denver in 1938, Sabin became a major force in the crusade for public health reform in Colorado. The bulk of this material relates to public health.
issues and either directly or indirectly reflects her service on Governor John Vivian's Post War Planning Committee. Because she served on so many committees and consulted with so many organizations while serving in this capacity, much of this material is interrelated. The boundaries between the Colorado, Denver, and National Tuberculosis Associations are not always clear. There is unidentified statistical data throughout, which presumably was gathered by and for various organizations. Subjects covered include tuberculosis, hospitals and nursing services, stream pollution, dairy products, polio, health care for the indigent, and civil service.

SERIES V. SUBJECTS (1929-58) .5 linear ft.

This series contains printed material and correspondence related to a number of subjects, miscellaneous items, organizations, and people which were of interest to Sabin. Legislation and bills, which include those passed by the Colorado legislature as a result of Sabin's public health work, are of particular interest.

SERIES VI. PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORABILIA (1893-1954) 1.75 linear ft.

This series contains two subseries: Photographs and Memorabilia. The first subseries contains approximately 200 photographs. It is divided into five sections: Florence Rena Sabin, the Sabin Family, Mary Sabin, Friends and associates, and Miscellaneous. Because the photos are mostly undated, many may possibly date prior to 1872. The images of Sabin include early photographs of her as a child and young woman; Smith College; informal portraits and snapshots; formal portraits; photographs of her with her sister Mary; statues and a bust, paintings and drawings; and group photographs.

The Memorabilia subseries contains travel items (1929-41), poetry (1928-29), miscellaneous material (1893-1954), a publication on women at work in which Sabin was included (1939), her Rockefeller Institute retirement scrapbook (1938), a portfolio of famous American women's portraits, n.d., twenty-two date books (1938-52), seven address books (1915, n.d.), and three line-a-day diaries (1902-42).
PROVENANCE AND ACCESS

The bulk of the Florence Rena Sabin Papers were given by Dr. Henry Swan in 1959. Biographical sketches were donated by Marjorie L. Craig in 1955 and material related to Sabin's work in Colorado was donated by Elinor Bluemel in 1960. Additional papers are located at American Philosophical Society Library in Philadelphia. There are scattered items in the Smith College Archives; the University of Colorado Medical School; and the Colorado State Historical Society, Division of Museums. The copyright owner is unknown. Permission is required beyond fair use. Copyright to material authored by persons other than Florence Sabin is owned by those individuals or their heirs or assigns. The papers should be cited as follows: Florence Rena Sabin Papers, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, MA 01060.
SUBJECT HEADINGS

Flexner, Abraham, 1866-1959--Correspondence
Flexner, Bernard, 1865- --Correspondence
Flexner, Simon, 1863-1946--Correspondence
Hepburn, Katharine Houghton, 1909- --Correspondence
Hepburn, Katharine Houghton, 1878-1951--Correspondence
Mall, Franklin P. (Franklin Paine), 1862-1917
Mendenhall, Dorothy Reed, 1874-1964--Correspondence
Moe, Henry Allen, 1894-1975--Correspondence
Nuttall, Zelia, 1858-1933--Correspondence
Sabin, Florence Rena, 1871-1953
Sabin, Mary
Sheldon, Edward, 1886-1946--Correspondence
Streeter, George Linius, 1873-1948
American Public Health Association--History--Sources
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine--History--Sources
National Tuberculosis Association--History--Sources
Rockefeller Institute--History--Sources
Hospitals--Colorado--History--Sources
Human anatomy--Study and teaching--History--20th century--Sources
Medicine--Research--United States--History--20th century--Sources
Medicine--Study and teaching--United States--History--20th century

ADDED ENTRIES

Sabin, Mary
SERIES I. BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIALS

Genealogy notes and correspondence

1 1 Florence Sabin, 1905-51

2 Mary Sabin, 1872-53

*Sabin(e): the history of an ancient English surname...* edited by W.A.W. Sabin, 1953

Florence Sabin

3-5 Clippings and articles, 1900-85, n.d. [see also Awards and citations]

6 Obituaries and tributes, 1953-54, n.d.

7 Miscellaneous, 1903-60, n.d.

8 Condolence letters and cards to Mary Sabin, 1953

9 Speeches about Florence Sabin, n.d.

Biographies

2 1 Mary Kay Phelan, *Probing the Unknown* (Thomas Crowell: New York, 1959) (2 copies)

Elinor Bluemel


Published copy, 1959

2 Reviews, 1959
SERIES I. BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIALS

Florence Sabin

Biographies

Elinor Bluemel

Florence Sabin, Colorado Woman of The Century (University of Colorado Press: Boulder, Colorado), 1959

(continued)

2 3-5 Correspondence, 1954-60, n.d.

6 Miscellaneous notes, n.d.


Financial records

3 1 Receipts and account book, 1910-53

2 Investment records, 1922-52

Awards and citations
[see also Clippings and articles]

4 1 List of honorary degrees, 1910-50

2 American Brotherhood, 1947

3 A , 1932-52

4 B-C, 1935-54

5 D-I, 1931-53

6 M-N, 1929-53

7 Rockford College, 1947
Florence Rena Sabin Papers

Box    Folder
No.    No.

SERIES I. BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL

Florence Sabin

Awards and citations (continued)

4   8    Statuary Hall, U.S. Capitol, 1955-59
9    O-T, 1923-50
10   University of Colorado, 1935-51
11   U-W, 1926-50

Mary Sabin

5   1    Clippings and miscellaneous printed material, 1931-61, n.d.
2    Diaries and address books, 1904-39

Hernando deSoto Celebration

3    Correspondence, 1937-40
4    Meetings, membership lists, and miscellaneous, 1939-41
5    Delta Gamma Kappa Society, 1937-40
6    Writings on Colorado history, n.d.

SERIES II. CORRESPONDENCE

Family

6   1    Miner, Sabin, 1949
2    Proescholdt, Laura Lee, 1933-49
3    Sabin, Albert, 1901-12, n.d.
SERIES II. CORRESPONDENCE

Family (continued)

6 4 Sabin, Allen H. and Carrie, 1927, 1935
5 Sabin, Charlotte, 1947-48
6 Sabin, Ellen, 1934-46
7 Sabin, George K., 1881
8 Sabin, Helen, 1932-47

Sabin, Mary,

9-15 1900-30
7 1-10 1931-36
8 1-12 1937-51, n.d.
13 Sabin, Walter, 1948

Friends and associates

9 1 A, 1936-53
2-3 Anthony, Irvin, 1929-53
4 B, 1934-55
5 Bass, Elizabeth, 1939-53, n.d.
6 Baxter, Josephine, 1936-42
7 Beals, Rose, 1931-49
8 C, 1934-53
**SERIES II. CORRESPONDENCE**

Friends and associates (continued)

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<td>Campbell, Harriet and John, 1934-36</td>
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<td>Clark, Axton D.B., 1914-41</td>
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<td>Dennison, Ella Strong, 1915-33, n.d.</td>
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<td>Doan, Dr. Charles, 1939-56</td>
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<td>E, 1915-49</td>
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<td>Flexner, Abraham, 1943-46</td>
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<td>Flexner, Bernard, 1940-46</td>
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<td>Fuller, Dorothea, 1937-53</td>
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<td>[see also Kubie, Lawrence]</td>
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<td>Heidelberger, Dr. Michael, 1938-49</td>
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<td>Hepburn, Katharine, n.d.</td>
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<td>Hepburn, Katharine Houghton, 1928-39</td>
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Friends and associates (continued)

Hooker, Beatrice Houghton, 1938-45
Hooker, Donald Houghton, 1933-53, n.d.
Hooker, Donald R., 1938-45
Hooker, Edith Houghton, 1930-41
Hooker, Edith Houghton, Jr. 1932-53
Hooker, Elizabeth Houghton, 1939-46
I-J, 1932-51, n.d.
Kubie, Lawrence, 1933-53, n.d.
Lee, Laura, 1934-38
M, 1926-50, n.d.
Mc, 1938-52, n.d.
Mall, Mabel, 1910-45, n.d.
Mendenhall, Dorothy Reed, 1952-53
Moe, Henry Allen, 1938-50
Morgan, Anne, 1926-33, 1946
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<td>Nuttall, Zelia, 1928-33</td>
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<td>Pearce, Louise, 1938-53</td>
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<td>Pritchett, Ida W., 1932-45</td>
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<td>R, 1940-53, n.d.</td>
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<td>Rockefeller, John D. Jr. n.d.</td>
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<td>Sheldon, Theodore, 1947-19</td>
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<td>Smithburn, Kenneth and Florence, 1935-53</td>
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<td>Stein, Marguerite Theiss, 1936-53</td>
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<td>Streeter, George, 1938-48</td>
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<td>Tompkins, Edna H., 1939-51, n.d.</td>
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<td>Vignoles, Margaret (Mall) and Mary Lou (Mall) Pearse, 1933-53, n.d.</td>
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SERIES II. CORRESPONDENCE

Friends and associates (continued)

5 Weed, Lewis H., 1934-50
6 Wheelock, John Hall, 1946-47
7 White, William Charles, 1938-48
8 Wintcnitz, M. C., 1940
9 Third party and unidentified, 1918-58

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15 1-7 1925-44
16 1-3 1945-53

SERIES III. SPEECHES AND WRITINGS

Speeches

17 1 Public health, 1945-47, n.d.
2 Miscellaneous, 1933-55, n.d.

Writings

3 Bibliographies, n.d.
4 Franklin Paine Mall, The Story of a Mind, 1934
18 1 “Studies on the Cells of the blood and connective tissues with especial reference to their reactions in tuberculosis,” 1925-38
2 Contributions to Embryology, 1915-25
SERIES III. SPEECHES AND WRITINGS

Writings (continued)

Miscellaneous writings and reprints

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SERIES IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

American Public Health Association

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<td>Miscellaneous correspondence, reports, and printed material, 1944-48, n.d.</td>
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Clubs

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<td>Colonial Dames, 1931-44, n.d.</td>
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<td>Colorado State Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, 1945, n.d.</td>
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<td>Cosmopolitan Club, 1926-51, n.d.</td>
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SERIES IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)


2  Colorado Public Health Association, 1941-48

Colorado State Department of Public Health

Hospital survey

3  Miscellaneous correspondence, reports, and printed material, 1942-47, n.d.

4  Tabulation of Hospital Inventory Data, 1947

5  Polio report, 1946-51, n.d.

6  Dairy products, 1944-47, n.d.

7  Miscellaneous, 1932-47, n.d.

8  Colorado State Civil Service Commission, 1945-46

9  Colorado State Medical Society, 1944-47, n.d.

10  Colorado State Planning Commission, 1945

Colorado Tuberculosis Association

22  1  Committee minutes and agenda, 1946-47

2  Correspondence and reports, 1937-52, n.d.

3  Denver Department of Health and Hospitals, 1951-54, n.d.

4  Denver Tuberculosis Association, 1945-52, n.d.

5  Finney Howell Research Foundation, 1938-50, n.d.

6  Governor’s Legislative Committee on Stream Pollution, 1951-52, n.d.
SERIES IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)

Governor’s Post War Planning Committee
[see also SERIES VI. PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORABILIA - Photographs]

22 7 Buck Reports, 1945-50
8 Correspondence, 1944-47

Reports, minutes, notes, statistics

23 1 Contents of Sabin’s notebook, 1946, n.d.
2 1944-49
3 n.d.
4 State Health Committee, 1947

John Simon Guggenheim Foundation
[see SERIES II. CORRESPONDENCE - Friends and associates- Henry Allen Moe]

6 Johns Hopkins Women Medical Alumnae Association, 1922-44, n.d.
7 Joint Committee for the Study of Medical Care for the Indigent, 1952-53
8 National Committee on Improvement of Nursing Services, 1945-51, n.d.

National Health Assembly, 1948

24 1 Correspondence
2 Section on State and Community Planning For Health
3 Miscellaneous
SERIES IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)

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24  5  Bulletins, 1939-53
6  Correspondence, 1938-47

Committee on Medical Research: reports, minutes, agenda

7-9  1939-44

25  1-5  1945-48

6  Trudeau Medal Committee, 1945-48
7  Miscellaneous reports and printed material, 1939-52

26  1  New York Academy of Sciences, Section on Biology, Conference on "LYMPH," 1945

New York University Hall of Fame

2  Correspondence and notes, 1935-45, n.d.
3  Printed material, 1939-45
4  Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, 1938-49
5  United China Relief, 1941, n.d.

27  1  U.S. Department of State, 1944-45

U.S. Public Health Service

2  Correspondence, 1945-49
3  Division of Hospital Facilities, Conference, 1947
4  University of Denver, Social Science Foundation, Conference on Atomic Energy, 1945
SERIES IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)

27 5 World Center for Women’s Archives, 1936-38, n.d.
6-7 Miscellaneous, 1911-52, n.d.

SERIES V. SUBJECTS

28 1 American Institute of Biology, n.d.
2 Bang’s Disease, 1946-47
   [see also SERIES IV. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES - Governor’s Post War Planning Committee - State Health Committee]
3 Epidemics, 1939-41, n.d.
4 Foreign Policy Association, 1933-38
5 Gates, Frederick Taylor, 1929
6 Gaub, W.H., 1945-46
7 Gibbs, Edna Leonhardt, 1958
8 Hospitals, 1942-47, n.d.
9 Kauver, C.E. H., 1952
11 Smith College, 1927-55
12 Vermont Academy, 1939-51
13 Women in Medicine, 1939
SERIES VI. PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORABILIA

Photographs

Florence Rena Sabin

29 1 Early photos, n.d.
2 Smith College, mid-1890s
3 Informal portraits and snapshots, 1924-38, n.d.
4 Formal portraits, 1924-38, n.d.
5 With Mary Sabin, 1939-40, n.d.
6 Statue, bust, paintings, and drawings, n.d.
   [see also Memorabilia - Famous American Women From Portraits by Leon Gordon]

Group photographs

7 Awards and honors, 1933-51, n.d.
8 Signing Colorado Health Bill, 1947
9 Miscellaneous, 1900-59, n.d.

30 1 Sabin Family, 1944, n.d.
2 Mary Sabin, 1891-1949
3 Friends and associate, 1925-51, n.d.
4 Miscellaneous, 1922-50, n.d.
SERIES VI. PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEMORABILIA (continued)

Memorabilia

31 1 Travel, 1929-41, n.d.

2 Poetry, 1928-29, n.d.

3 Miscellaneous, 1893-1954

Women at Work, A Tour Among Careers, New York, 1939

Retirement scrapbook, 1938

Famous American Women from portraits by Leon Gordon, n.d.

32 Datebooks (22), 1938-52

Address books (7), 1915, n.d.

Line-a-day diaries, (3) 1902-42, 1932

Oversize materials

Elizabeth Blackwell Citation honoring the Work of Women in Medicine, New York University, 1953

Equal Rights (cover photo of Florence Sabin), January 4, 1930

Photograph portraits of Florence Sabin

G. Maillard Kesslere, 1936
G. Maillard Kesslere, 1938 (2 views)
Doris Jaeger, n.d.

William Henry Welch, 80th birthday, April 8, 1930, Memorial Continental Hall, Washington, D.C.