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[Hattie E. Alexander Papers](#)

ALEXANDER, HATTIE ELIZABETH, 1901-1968.

Papers, 1939-1981.

2.2 cu. ft. (6 document boxes and 1 card file box)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Hattie Alexander was born in Baltimore, Maryland on April 5, 1901. She attended Goucher College in Baltimore (A.B., 1923), worked as a bacteriologist for the United States and Maryland Public Health Services for three years, and then attended Johns Hopkins Medical School (M.D., 1930). After interning at the Harriet Lane Home of the Johns Hopkins Hospital for a year, Alexander continued her internship at Babies Hospital at the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in 1931. She remained there for the rest of her career, and rose through a succession of academic appointments at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons (Holt Fellowship in Diseases of Children, 1932-34; Assistant in Diseases of Children, 1933-35; Instructor in Diseases of Children, 1935-36; Associate in Pediatrics, 1936-43; Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, 1943-48; Associate Professor of Pediatrics, 1948-58; Professor of Pediatrics, 1958-66; Emeritus Professor of Pediatrics, 1966-68) and clinical appointments at Babies Hospital and Vanderbilt Clinic (Assistant Attending Physician, 1933-39; Assistant Attending Pediatrician, 1939-42; Associate Attending Pediatrician, 1942-51; Attending Pediatrician, 1951-66; Consultant, 1966-68).

At Babies Hospital, Alexander headed the microbiological laboratory and became a leading authority on bacterial infections. In 1939, she gained international recognition by developing a rabbit anti-serum that was the first effective treatment of influenzal meningitis in infants, a previously fatal disease. She also conducted research on the mechanisms of bacterial resistance to antibiotics, and was an early researcher in microbiological genetics. In both her research and teaching, Alexander was known for her vigorous scholarly skepticism.

She belonged to many professional organizations, and in 1964 she became the first woman President of the American Pediatric Society. She was also a consultant to the Secretary of War's Influenza Commission from 1941 to 1945. She received numerous awards, including the E. Mead Johnson Award for Research in Pediatrics (1942), the Stevens Triennial Prize of the College of Physicians and Surgeons (1954), the Elizabeth Blackwell Award for Women in Medicine (1956), the Oscar B. Hunter Memorial Award of the American Therapeutic Society (1961), the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center Distinguished Service medal (1963), the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia medal (1965), the Heart Award of the Variety Club of Philadelphia (1966), and an honorary doctorate from Wheaton College (1967).

With Dr. Elizabeth Ufford, Alexander lived in Port Washington, New York, and enjoyed cultivating orchids, listening to music, and riding in her speedboat. Alexander died from cancer on June 24, 1968.

ORGANIZATION: Organized in six series: I. Personal and Professional Papers; II. Grants; III. Lectures; IV. Publications; V. Awards and Honors; VI. Glass Plate Negatives.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: The Alexander papers document Hattie Alexander's professional career. This collection consists of four separate accessions received by the Archives over several years.

The first series, Personal and Professional Papers, mainly consists of materials documenting Alexander's career, including bibliographies and curricula vitae, correspondence and grant applications, printed matter and clippings, and a small number of reprints. These materials were in the possession of Dr. Edward Curnen, a friend of Alexander's and the Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics, 1960-1970. Much of the correspondence is administrative in nature, and may have been kept by the office of the Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics. This series also contains obituaries of Alexander, correspondence between Curnen and others after Alexander's death, and remarks Curnen wrote in tribute to her. Lastly, this series contains photographs, including portraits and a series taken by Elizabeth Wilcox, the longtime photographer of the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, whose photographic collection is also held by Archives and Special Collections.

The second series, Grants, consists of correspondence and grant applications between Alexander and three granting organizations, and is arranged alphabetically by name of organization.

The third series, Lectures, documents some of Alexander's many lectures both in the United States and around the world. This series includes drafts and typescripts of speeches, programs and ephemera, and correspondence, and is arranged chronologically. Most of the lectures reflect Alexander's research interests in antibiotics and bacterial infections. Some lectures were co-authored by Alexander's research associates Katherine Sprunt and Grace Leidy, among others.

The fourth series, Publications, consists of correspondence, drafts, and miscellaneous materials related to articles and book chapters written by Alexander. This series is not comprehensive; a bibliography of Alexander's writings through 1966 may be found in Series I. This series also includes correspondence and reprints related to the 1960 commemorative volume *The McIntosh Era at Babies Hospital, 1931-60*, which Alexander co-edited. This book honored Dr. Rustin McIntosh's long chairmanship of the Department of Pediatrics. The McIntosh papers are also held by Archives and Special Collections.

The fifth series, Awards and Honors, consists of plaques, medals, certificates, documents, and photographs of awards and award presentations. This series is arranged chronologically, and concludes with records related to the founding of the Hattie Alexander Lectureship at Babies Hospital in the 1970s.

The sixth series, Glass plate negatives, consists of 82 glass plate lantern slides of patients with celiac disease, dated 1932 to 1938, and arranged alphabetically by patient name. Unlike her colleague Dorothy Andersen, Alexander was not an expert on celiac disease. However, the box containing the glass-plate negatives was addressed from J.W. Winter of Beth Israel Hospital to Alexander. This series is subject to the department's policy for Access to Records Containing Protected Health Information.

PROVENANCE: Series I (Acc. 2004.06.01) was donated by the McCune Curnen family. Series II through IV (Acc. 2004.06.30) were received through the office of Dr. John Truman of Children's Hospital of New York-Presbyterian Hospital. Series V and VI (respectively, Acc. 1999.11.09 and 2002.01.17) were received from the office of Dr. John Driscoll, Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics of the College of Physicians and Surgeons.

RESTRICTIONS: Series VI is subject to the department's policy for Access to Records Containing Protected Health Information.

SUBJECTS:

Alexander, Hattie.

McIntosh, Rustin.

Babies Hospital (New York, N.Y.) .

Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center.

Columbia University. College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Cystic fibrosis.

Haemophilus influenzae.

Meningitis.

Women physicians.

Women in medicine.

Physicians, women.

Papers processed and finding aid written by Bob Vietrogoski, February 2005.

HATTIE ELIZABETH ALEXANDER, 1901-1968.
Papers, 1939-1981.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST

Box Folder Contents

SERIES I: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL PAPERS

- | | | |
|----------|-----|---|
| 1 | 1 | Bibliographies and curriculum vitae, ca. 1962-66 |
| | 2-4 | Correspondence and grant applications, 1938-67, n.d. |
| | 5 | Correspondence and tribute re: Alexander, 1968 |
| | 6 | Obituaries, 1968 |
| | 7 | Photographs, general, 1960s |
| | 8 | Photographs taken by Elizabeth Wilcox, 1963 |
| | 9 | Printed matter and clippings, 1941, 1944, 1960-65, n.d. |
| | 10 | Reprints, 1950-60 |

SERIES II GRANTS

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| | 11 | American Cancer Society, 1963-64 |
| | 12 | Health Research Council, 1963-64 |
| | 13-16 | National Foundation, 1959-64 |

SERIES III: LECTURES

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|----------|---|---|
| 2 | 1 | “Modern Trends in the Treatment of Bacterial Infections,”
Goucher College, Baltimore MD, February 18, 1947. |
| | 2 | “Origin and Nature of Streptomycin Resistant H. influenzae and Their
Clinical Significance,” Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Society,
March 4, 1947. |
| | 3 | “Recent Advances in the Treatment of Influenzal Meningitis,”
Medical Society of New Jersey, Atlantic City, NJ, April 23, 1947. |
| | 4 | “Mode of Action of Streptomycin on Type b H. influenzae,”
American Pediatric Society, Stockbridge, MA, May 13, 1947. |
| | 5 | “Laboratory Technics for Penicillin & Streptomycin Sensitivity
Determinations and Concentrations in Biological Fluids,” (reviewed with
Gladys L. Hobby), 5 th International Congress of Pediatrics, July 1947. |
| | 6 | “The Present Status of Treatment for H. Influenzae Infections,”
Syracuse University, November 1947. |

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- 7 “Origin and Recognition of Resistant Organisms,” Dallas, TX, December 8, 1947.
- 8 “The Problem of Microbial Resistance to Chemotherapeutic Agents,” New York Academy of Medicine, New York, NY, March 25, 1948.
- 9 Untitled lecture, Interurban Clinical Club, Babies Hospital Amphitheater, April 2, 1948.
- 10 “Advances in Knowledge of the Control of Function and Structure of Cells,” Journal Club, April 4, 1950.
- 11 “Transformation of Type Specificity of H. influenzae,” (with Grace Leidy), American Pediatric Society, French Lick, IN, May 10, 1950.
- 12 “Comparison of Efficacy of Therapeutic Agents in Whooping Cough,” 6th International Congress of Pediatrics, Zurich, Switzerland, July 1950.
- 13 “Mechanisms and Influence of Bacterial Variability on Severity of Infections and Their Response to Specific Therapy,” (with Grace Leidy), American Academy of Pediatrics, Chicago, IL, October 14, 1950.
- 14 Discussion of Dr. R. James McKay’s paper, “Collections of Subdural Fluid Complicating Acute Bacterial Meningitis,” New York Academy of Medicine, New York, NY, November 9, 1950.
- 15 “Pertussis,” “Uses and Misuses of the Antibiotics,” “Pyogenic Meningitis,” “Control of Inherited Traits of H. influenzae by Desoxyribonucleic Acid Fractions Isolated From Type Specific Cells,” Pediatric Postgraduate Course, Denver, CO, December 14-16, 1950.
- 16 Untitled lecture fragments, New York Academy of Medicine, New York, NY, February 1, 1951.
- 17 “The Mechanism of Emergence of Resistance to Antibacterial Agents and how it can be Prevented,” International Seminar on Antibiotic Therapy in Pediatrics, Centre International de L’Enfance, Paris, France, September 1952.
- 18 “Guides to Optimal Therapy in Bacterial Meningitis,” American Academy of Pediatrics, Chicago, IL, October 1952.
- 19 Untitled lecture (with Grace Leidy), American Society of Bacteriology, January 1953.

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- 20 Untitled lecture, New York – Cornell Medical Center, New York, NY, March 27, 1953.
- 21 “Control of Inheritance of Microorganisms,” Goucher College, Baltimore, MD, April 3, 1953.
- 22 Untitled lecture, Cancer Conference, Concord, NH, September 1953.
- 23 Untitled lecture, Academy of General Practice, Charlotte, NC, November 1954.
- 3** 1 “Induced Heritable Change in Poliomyelitis Viruses,” (with Drs. Katherine Sprunt, Isabel Morgan Mountain, and Winifred R. Redman), Quebec, Canada, June 1955.
- 2 “Principles of Antibiotic Therapy,” Postgraduate Course in Pediatrics, University of Kansas Medical Center, March 10-12, 1958.
- 3 “Infectivity of Ribonucleic Acid of Poliovirus on HeLa Cell Monolayers,” Symposium on Viral Infection in Infancy and Childhood, New York Academy of Medicine, New York, NY, March 13, 1958.
- 4 Moderator’s remarks, Panel on Staphylococcal Infections, American Academy of Pediatrics, April 22, 1958.
- 5 “Effect on whole serum and antibody on infectivity of ribonucleic acid from poliovirus,” (with Isabel Morgan Mountain, Gebhard Koch, Katherine Sprunt, and Olga Van Damme), Society of American Bacteriologists, Chicago, IL, April 27 – May 1, 1958.
- 6 “Properties of Infectious Ribonucleic Acid from Highly Purified Poliovirus Tested in Human Cell Monolayers,” (with Gebhard Koch, Susan Koenig, and Olga Van Damme), and “Infectious Ribonucleic Acid Derived From Enteroviruses,” (with Katherine Sprunt and Winifred M. Redman), Society for Pediatric Research, Buck Hill Falls, PA, May 8-9, 1959.
- 7 “Validity of the Designation ‘Epidemic Strain of Staphylococcus’” (by Katherine Sprunt, with Alexander?), IX International Conference of Pediatrics, Montreal, Canada, July 19-25, 1959.
- 8 “Biochemical Aspects of Virulence of Hemophilus Influenzae”, (with Grace Leidy, Eros Hahn, and Stephen Zamenhof), Conference on Biochemical Aspects of Microbial Pathogenicity, April 29, 1960.

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- 9 “The Nature of the Staphylococcus Problem,” “Principles of Antibiotic Therapy,” “An Insight Into Inheritance,” lectures given in Australia, New Zealand, and Sweden, Spring 1960.
- 10 “Primary Pulmonary Tuberculosis in Young Children: Microbiological, X-Ray, and Tuberculin Allergy Evaluation,” (with Saul Blatman and Donna Perez), American Pediatric Society Meeting, May 6, 1960.
- 11 “Nature of Reversible Inactivation of Infectivity of Polio Ribonucleic Acid by Salt Concentration,” (by Katherine Sprunt, with Alexander?), Society for Pediatric Research and the American Pediatric Society, May 3-6, 1960.
- 12 “Principles of Antibiotic Therapy,” “An Insight Into Inheritance,” “The Nature of the Staphylococcus Problem,” Los Angeles Pediatric Society Brennemann Memorial Lectures, Los Angeles, CA, November 9-10, 1960.
- 13 “Importance of the State of the Host Cell in Measuring Infectivity of Enterovirus Ribonucleic Acid,” (with Katherine Sprunt), Society for Pediatric Research, May 4-5, 1961.
- 14 “An Insight Into Inheritance,” Oscar B. Hunter Memorial Award, American Therapeutic Society, Essex House, New York, NY, June 24, 1961.
- 15 “Validity of Phage Type of Staphylococci as a Measure of Identity,” (with Katherine Sprunt), Society for Pediatric Research and the American Pediatric Society, Atlantic City, NJ, May 8-12, 1962.
- 16 “Control of Inheritance of Viruses,” American Medical Association Symposium on Preventative and Therapeutic Biologic Medicine, Chicago, IL, June 26, 1962.
- 17 “Invasion of Mammalian Cells by Ribonucleic Acid (RNA) Isolated From Poliovirus,” (with Katherine Sprunt) 10th International Congress of Pediatrics, Lisbon, Portugal, September 9-15, 1962.
- 18 “The Nature of the Staphylococcus Problem,” “Heritable Characteristics of Viruses,” Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, March 26-28, 1963.
- 19 “Mechanism of Uptake of RNA by Mammalian Cells in Tissue Culture,” Society for Pediatric Research and the American Pediatric Society, Atlantic City, NJ, May 1-4, 1963.

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- 20 “The Nature of the Staphylococcus Problem,” (with Katherine Sprunt), Louisiana State Pediatric Society, New Orleans, LA, May 5, 1963.
- 21 “Principles of Antibiotic Therapy,” Veterans’ Administration Hospital, New York, NY, October 3, 1963.
- 4 1 “Insight Into Human Genetic Defects Through Microbiological Tools,” dedication of Children’s Medical and Surgical Center, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD, May 15, 1964.
- 2 Printed items and ephemera from dedication of new Children’s Center and 75th anniversary of Johns Hopkins Hospital, May 1964.
 [See also Oversize MC 2-15]
- 3 “Microbiologic Guides to the Treatment of Urinary Tract Infections,” American Academy of Pediatrics, New York, NY, October 25, 1964.
- 4 “Unsolved Problems in Bacterial Meningitis,” the Bucks County, Delaware County, and Montgomery County Medical Societies, St. Davids, PA, November 18, 1964.
- 5 “Bacterial Meningitis,” Yale University Department of Microbiology, New Haven, CT, December 4, 1964.
- 6 Presidential Address, American Pediatric Society, Philadelphia, PA, May 6, 1965.
- 7 “Use of ‘Clean Catch’ versus Catheterized Urine Specimens in Diagnosis of Urinary Tract Infections,” American Medical Association, New York, NY, June 23, 1965.

SERIES IV: PUBLICATIONS

- 8 “Response to Antiserums in Meningococcal Infections of Human Beings and Mice,” *American Journal of Diseases of Children*, 1939.
- 9 Article re: Influenza bacillus infections for *Holt’s Diseases of Infancy and Childhood*, Holt and McIntosh, 1946?
- 10 “Use of Streptomycin in Pediatrics,” (with Grace Leidy), *Journal of Pediatrics*, August 1946.
- 11 “Influence of Streptomycin on Type b Hemophilus Influenzae,” (with Grace Leidy), *Science*, August 1946.

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- 12 Chapters re: bacterial meningitis (with Sara Branham, Mark H. Lepper, Carolyn R. Falk, and Louis Weinstein) and haemophilus influenzae for *Diagnostic Procedures and Reagents*, 1959.
- The McIntosh Era at Babies Hospital, 1931-60*
- 13 Correspondence, A-M, 1959-60
- 14 Correspondence, R-Y, 1959-60
- 15-16 Reprints, 1931-60
- 17 “An Insight into Inheritance,” *Medical Journal of Australia*, November 1960.
- 18 “Emergence of Competence (for Transformation) of Three Hemophilus Species in a Chemically Defined Environment,” (with Grace Leidy and Iris Jaffee), *Proceedings of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine*, 1962.
- 5 1 “Treatment of Type b H. Influenzae Infections,” *Current Pediatric Therapy*, 1963.
- 2 Chapters on pertussis and Hemophilus influenzae infections for *The Biologic Basis of Pediatric Practice*, 1963.
- 3 Chapter on Hemophilus influenzae infection, *Current Pediatric Therapy*, 1963.
- 4 “Disease Caused by Hemophilus,” and sections on pertussis and Hemophilus influenzae for *Textbook of Medicine*, Cecil and Loeb, edited by P.B. Beeson and W. McDermott, 11th edition, 1963.
- 5 Paper presented at dedication of Johns Hopkins Children’s Medical and Surgical Center, published in *A Symposium on the Child*, edited by John A. Askin, Robert E. Cooke, and J. Alex Haller, 1964.
- 6 “Further Evidence of a High Degree of Genetic Homology between H. Influenzae and H. Aegyptius,” (with Grace Leidy and Iris Jaffee), *Proceedings of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine*, March 1965.
- 7 Chapter on Hemophilus influenzae infection, *Current Pediatric Therapy*, 1966?

BOX FOLDER CONTENTS

SERIES V: AWARDS AND HONORS

- 8 Columbia University, World War II service participation bronze plaque, n.d.
- 9 Goucher College, citation, 1954
Columbia University, letter re: Stevens Award, 1954
New York Infirmery, Elizabeth Blackwell Citation, 1956
- 10 American Therapeutic Society, Oscar B. Hunter Award, 1961
- 11 Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center Distinguished Service medal, 1963
- 12 Johns Hopkins Hospital 75th Anniversary medallion, 1964
- 6 Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Award
 - 1 Citation and photograph, 1965
 - 2 Medals (2, with 2 pieces: 1 silver, 1 gold), 1965
- 3 City of New York, Health Research Council Career Scientist citation, 1966
Variety Club of Philadelphia, Heart Award, photograph, 1966
- 4 Columbia University, Professor Emeritus designation, 1966
- 5 Wheaton College, honorary doctorate, 1967
- 6 Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, 200th Anniversary medal, 1967
- 7 Hattie Alexander Lectureship Fund
 - 7 Correspondence and financial records, 1975-77
 - 8 Lecture flyers, 1977-81

SERIES VI: GLASS PLATE NEGATIVES

- 7 82 glass plate negatives of children with celiac disease, 1932-38
[Restricted]