

**The Osler Library of the History of Medicine
McGill University, Montreal Canada**

Osler Library Archive Collections

P141

HERBERT STANLEY BIRKETT COLLECTION

FINDING AID AND INVENTORY LIST

This is a guide to one of the collections held by the [Osler Library of the History of Medicine](#),
McGill University.

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P141

P141: Herbert Stanley Birkett Collection

DATES: 1889-1971

EXTENT: 9 m. textual records. – ca. 100 photographs. – ca. 30 artifacts.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH: Herbert Stanley Birkett (1864-1942), C.B., V.D., M.D., LL.D., F.R.S.C. (C.), F.A.C.S., received his M.D. from McGill University in 1886. He specialized in otology and laryngology and was associated in practice with Dr. Frank Buller. In 1893, he became Lecturer in Laryngology at McGill and in 1895 he was appointed as Chair in the subject. Birkett was instrumental in developing the departments of Oto-Laryngology at the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) and at McGill University. During World War I, Birkett helped organize and command the No. 3 Canadian General Hospital (McGill) in France, and became assistant director-general of the Canadian Army Medical Corps earning the rank of Brigadier-General in 1918. From 1914-1921, Birkett was Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at McGill and received an honorary degree of LL.D in 1921. Mr. and Mrs. Margaret Birkett had one daughter together, named Winifred L. Birkett.

SCOPE AND CONTENT: The collection consists of documents pertaining to Dr. H. S. Birkett's medical activities, including 117 bound volumes of patient records (1889-1942), medical notebooks (1893-1896), bound RVH reports (1894-1938), RVH charts (1901-1920) and registers (1899-1917). There are also various letters addressed to Mr. and Mrs. Birkett, a manuscript, newspaper clippings, various degrees and medical association certificates, as well as photographs of H. S. Birkett's personal life and professional life at McGill and elsewhere. The collection also includes various artifacts collected by H. S. B, including military and medical memorabilia collected by H. S. Birkett.

CUSTODIAL HISTORY: Accession 903. Old accession number 861/66-72 is also associated with material found in this collection (as written on folder 11). The collection was accumulated by Dr. H. S. Birkett, then passed to his daughter Winifred L. Birkett, and bequeathed to the Osler Library and McGill Faculty of Medicine upon her death in 1993. The collection arrived at the Osler Library in two parts: (1) upon the death of Winifred L. Birkett, and (2) during renovations at RVH when a storage room full of the late Dr. H. S. Birkett's "medical books, medical photos and medical memorabilia" was discovered and transferred to the Osler Library in 1995. The second lot included items of furniture that were sold to antiques dealer Francis Lord (of Milord Inc., 1810 Notre Dame Ouest, Montreal QC H3J 1MS) ca. 1995-96 due to lack of library space at the time. Francis Lord had purchased other items from the estate in 1993-94. Detailed correspondence about the acquisitions from the Estate of Winifred L. Birkett can be found in the Osler Library accession records.

SOURCE OF SUPPLIED TITLE PROPER: Title based on content of the fonds.

LANGUAGE: The documents are in English.

FINDING AIDS: Inventory is available.

SERIES:

1. Miscellaneous Ephemera, Photographs, Letters, & Manuscript
2. Oversized Degrees, Photographs & Medical Faculty Miscellany
3. Medical Records, Reports, & Registers
4. Artifacts

RETRIEVAL NUMBER: P141

GENERAL NOTE: Series 3 contains some patient records which are restricted under privacy legislation (100 years since date of document). Artifacts associated with Birkett can be found in the Osler Library artifacts room using the location list.

SUBJECTS:

Birkett, Herbert Stanley
McGill University Doctors
McGill University History
Royal Victoria Hospital

Series 1: Miscellaneous Ephemera, Photographs, Letters, & Manuscript

Box 1

Folder 1: Medical Faculty and Associations Programmes, 1905-1936

- Includes a 1926 McGill Faculty of Medicine Reunion Songsheet and Programme booklet with pin, and a red ribbon

Folder 2: Studio portrait (Dupras & Colas Montreal) of Birkett wearing McGill Faculty of Medicine robes, n.d.

Folder 3: Photographs, various, ca. 1930s

- Various medical association's group photographs
- Oto-Rhino-Laryngologen-Kongress, Berlin, 1936
- Collegium O.R.L.A.S. Groningen, 1938 (with names of each member)
- Newspaper clippings, 1939
- Studio portraits
- Several medical images: "Dermoid Cyst of the nose"; "Untitled" (skin disease); "Fig.151, Ins. 1606 – Wright"

Folder 4: Photographs, mostly personal family photos

- Notable: WWI postcard from Thomas Archibald Malloch to Mrs. Birkett, 16th April, 1915. Sent from La Panne, Belgium to Montreal.

Folder 5: Typed copy of "Speech & Song"

Folder 6: Material on Laryngo-tissue and Contact Ulcer

- Various notes, handwritten and typed, 1894-1940

Folder 7: Various Association Certificates

- Ornate invitation to the American Laryngological Association, 1939
- CMA, Senior Membership, 1936
- The American Board of Otolaryngology, 1925
- Societa Italiana di Laringologia, Roma, 1907

Folder 8: Poster, invitations, conference menus,

- Canadian Pacific passenger information (1922)
- McGill Re-Union Class Dinners Programme 1821-1921
- British Medical Association, 1832-1932 Meeting
- International Ontological Congress, London, 1899

Folder 9: Correspondence, Circulars, Invitations, McGill Faculty of Medicine Dinner

- Letter from E. A. [indeterminable], 1939
- Letter from C. F. Martin, 1896
- Letter from Dr. E. Wodak received posthumously, 1945, from Tel-Aviv, Palestine.

Folder 10: Misc. Correspondence and medical conference dinners and invitations

- Letter addressed to Winifred Birkett, 1971
- Letter to Birkett from British Empire Cancer Campaign, 1928.
- Copy of the poem “Ode to the Tonsils” by William Boyman Howell
- H. S. Birkett Bookplates (3) “Knowledge is a Treasure”

Folder 11: Misc. ephemera, annual meeting programmes, notes, addresses, and correspondence

- Typed “Diseases of the Ear”, with hand-drawn diagram, n.d.
- Sketch drawing “Mother” of Birkett’s mother sitting by a window, by C. Jackson

Box 2

Folder 12: Two folders containing items found in books donated by H. S. Birkett

- Folder 1: Field WWI Medical Card, two Montreal church service programmes honouring “Colonel Birkett” (1915) and “Lt.-Col. H. S. Birkett” (1915), letter from Bob Fetherstonhaugh to Mrs. Birkett (1946), newspaper memorial clippings for Sir. L Knuthsen
 - Found in Fetherstonhaugh, R. C. *No. 3 Canadian General Hospital (McGill) 1914-1919*. Montreal, 1928.
- Folder 2: Newspaper clippings, and a letter addressed to Mrs. Birkett from E. A. Topham, 1934.
(Edward Arthur Topham was an Air Gunner for the Royal Airforce Volunteer Reserve who died in 1943, buried in Hanover, Germany)
 - Found in Turner, A. Logan. *Story of a Great Hospital. The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh 1729-1929*. Edinburgh, London: Oliver and Boyd, 1937. Autographed by H. S. Birkett

Folder 13: Letters and Postcard

- Postcard to Mrs. Birkett from Plymouth, England, 1914. Signed “F.G.F”
- Letter addressed to Doctor Birkett from unknown, 1906
- Letter to H. S. Birkett from John Stapleton, Geological Survey Ontario, 1937.

Folder 14: Copied Manuscript (incomplete)

- Acc. 9126
- H. S. Birkett’s notes/copied manuscript of “Remarks on the distemper generally known by the name of the Molbay disease : including a description of its symptoms and method of cure chiefly intended for the use of the clerical and other gentlemen residing in the country” by Robert Jones, published 1786

Folder 15: Programs, & Constitutions and By-Laws from various medical societies and associations

- Constitution and By-Laws of the American Otological Society, 1916
- Program of the 75th Annual Meeting of the American Otological Society, Inc., 1942
- Program of the 55th Annual Meeting of the American Otological Society, 1922

- A typed address by Birkett is inside, along with penciled notes, etc.
- The Canadian Medical Protective Association Constitution and By-Laws, 1939
- The American Laryngological Association Constitution and By-Laws, 1938
- The Scottish Otological and Laryngological Society, 1935
 - Signed “H.S.Birkett”
- The Scottish Otological and Laryngological Society, 1939
- American Laryngological Rhinological and Otological Society, Inc., 48th Annual Meeting, 1942

Folder 16: Programs, & Constitutions and By-Laws from various medical societies and associations

- Constitution and By-Laws of The American Bronchoscopic Society, n.d.
- American Laryngological, Rhinological, and Otological Society, 1918
- Constitution and By-Laws of the American Broncho-Esophagological Association, n.d.
- American Broncho-Esophagological Association Program, 1942
- American Laryngological, Rhinological, and Otological Society, Inc., n.d.

Folder 17: Black Leather Envelope Case with initials “H. S. B. Montreal”

- Contains typed lectures and hand-written notes

Series 2: Oversized Degrees, Photographs, & Medical Faculty Miscellany

Box 3 (*Large Oversized box*)

- Photograph of Bishop’s Medical Faculty ca.1892
 - Accompanying sheet with names of faculty members (including the faces in the framed portraits in the photograph) as identified by Dr. George H--?, June 4, 1955.
 - Photograph by “Walford Photo”
- Photograph of McGill Medicine Class, 1920
- Various photographs: University College Dinner (June, 1927); American Academy of Ophthalmology (Boston, 1933); McGill University Contingent Mess Dinner (1934); CMA (Halifax, 1925), etc.
- McGill Medical Faculty Calendar, 1921 (with photographs, quotes, etc.)
- Miscellaneous diplomas
- Rolled-up group portrait, “Boston, MA”, n.d.
- Collegium O.R.L.A.’s Groningen 14-17 July 1938.
- 3 Envelopes sent to Birkett from UK hospitals “Photographers By Appointment to Their Excellencies the Lord and Lady Byng of VIMY”
 - Contains large photographic X-rays of a patient’s sinuses
 - Post dated April 16, 1942

Series 3: Medical Records, Reports, & Registers

***Restricted Access under Privacy Legislation (100 years since date of document)**

- Patient Records (117 bound volumes, nos. 1-33401), 1889-1942
 - Includes letters, notes, sketches
 - ***Restricted Access under Privacy Legislation***
- Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) Reports, 1894-1938
 - 7 bound volumes, created by H. S. Birkett
- RVH Nose, Throat, & Ear Case Charts
 - Case no. 200-13399, 1901-1920
 - ***Restricted Access under Privacy Legislation***
- Birkett's medical notebooks, 1893-1896
 - #2130-4232, 18 bound volumes (relatively small in size)
- RVH Surgical Case Book
 - January 10th, 1902 – July 7th, 1902
 - Patient records
- RVH Laryngological Register, 1899-1917
 - Includes case nos. patient names, admittance date
 - Over 8000 patients
- Large Address Book, n.d.
- British Golf Link, edited by Horace Hutchinson (cover)
 - loose blank forms inside

Series 4: Artifacts (see *Artifacts Location List*)

- Metal Travelling Case with key and inscription “Dr. Birkett”
 - Travel stickers adorn the case including a Canadian Pacific sticker with name “Miss W. Birkett”, and a sticker “Liverpool LMS”
 - Inside: cap and gown
- Envelope of four small cases containing Birkett medals
- Military medals, several
- Box of medical instruments

- Paperweight (dog on wood)
- Box of miscellaneous items: rolled up photos, and an inventory of the Estate of Winifred Birkett
- Framed lantern slide, Record of books loaned from Birkett's office, Birkett desk nameplate
- Dr. Birkett prescription pads & payment slips (1509 Sherbrooke West, the Linton)
- Canvas with foam. Colonel H. S. Birkett, No 3 Canadian General Hospital.
- Silver bowl filigree presented to H. S. Birkett on 25th anniversary as Chief of Otolaryngology, RVH 16.2.1924
- Plaque. University of London Lecturer in Laryngology Felix Semon 1911. Presented to H. S. Birkett in 1922.
- Gold Medal. American Academy of Ophthalmology & Otolaryngology. HSB, 1927
- Gold Medal. Andreae F. Holmes In Memoriam. Facultas Medicinae Donavit, with fitted mantel, two wrapped pieces
- Bronze Medal. Andreae F. Holmes In Memoriam. Facultas Medicinae Donavit
- Framed photograph of Birkett
- Swords (2)
- Sheaths (3)
- Bust of Dr. Birkett by Doris M. Judah, 1933 (*located in Osler Library Pre-1840 room*)
- Pewter mug from 80th annual convention Alpha Psi Chapter 1927, containing boxes from war medals and microscopic slides. Envelope containing notices to recipients of medals.
- Framed portrait of Sir Felix Semon (1849-1921), pioneer in neurolaryngology
 - Inscription reads: "To his dear friends Herbert and Margaret Birkett with sincerest gratitude for their charming hospitality. Montreal. October 1904, Felix Semon"
- Framed photograph of "Visit of Princess Marie Louise to the Royal Society of Medicine, May 3rd, 1919" with Brigadier General H. S. Birkett and others (names are printed in the frame)
 - Photograph by Sydney S. Walbridge
- Framed commemorative artwork "1886-1936 Golden Jubilee in Medicine of Dr. H. S. Birkett"
 - Hand-drawn in gold leaf. April 3rd, 1936
 - Includes Christian dedication S.S. John Colombini CND and S.S Peter of Jesus CND
- Office door/window sign "Dr. Birkett"
 - Black and gold lettering on oak wood