

Special Services – Epidemics

Archives of the Daughters of Charity, Province of St. Louise

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Creator: Material related to 19th and early 20th century epidemics
Title: Special Services – Epidemics
Dates: 1832-1919
Extent: 4 Boxes, 2 linear feet
Identification: APSL-SSE
Language: English
Subjects: Cholera
Cholera--New York (State)--New York
Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul
Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul - United States
History of Medicine, Modern--Louisiana
Influenza Epidemic, 1918-1919
Medicine--Religious aspects--Catholic Church
Nursing - Religious aspects--Christianity
Nursing - United States--History
Smallpox
Women in medicine--History
Yellow fever
Yellow fever--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia

Background

This is a constructed collection of various special services that the Daughters have done during epidemic crises in the 19th and early 20th centuries. These peacetime special services are mandated by the Paris Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity and done at the discretion, availability, and resources of the provinces, and they may be rendered to areas not usually among the clients of the community. Epidemics of Asiatic cholera routinely struck American urban centers throughout the 19th century, with the Daughters assisting in St. Louis, New Orleans, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Albany, Boston, New York City, and Washington D.C. in the early 1830s. Other outbreaks occurred in Buffalo, Detroit, Milwaukee, St. Louis, and Troy, NY in the late 1840s and again in Detroit and Buffalo in the 1850s. Yellow fever was common in the South, with the Daughters assisting in Mobile, Norfolk, Portsmouth, New Orleans, and Donaldsonville between the 1840s and the 1870s. Smallpox struck Detroit and Troy in the 1880s. The nationwide Spanish flu epidemic, immediately after World War I, saw massive casualties around the United States and a wide mobilization of the Daughters.

Scope and Contents

The collection contains correspondence and accounts of special services during various epidemics in 19th and 20th century United States, including cholera in the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s; yellow fever in the 1840s and the 1870s; small pox in the 1860s and 1870s, and the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918. It also contains secondary articles, newspaper clippings related to the Daughters service in the epidemics.

System of Arrangement

This collection has five series: 1) General Information, 2) Cholera, 3) Yellow Fever, 4) Small pox, 5) Spanish Influenza.

The Spanish Influenza series has an item-level inventory.

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No Access Restrictions

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Custodial History

This is a constructed collection from the Archives of the Daughters of Charity, Southeast Province. Ownership transferred to the Archives of the Province of St. Louise during the provincial merger of 2011.

Preferred Citation Format

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Folder-level Inventory

Title	Series Name	Box/Drawer	Folder
Daughters of Charity during the epidemics and natural disasters		1	1
Account of the cholera in Baltimore, MD (handwritten notes)	Cholera	1	2
Account of the cholera in Baltimore, MD (copy)	Cholera	1	3
Account of the cholera in Baltimore, MD (transcript)	Cholera	1	4
Various Notes on the services during cholera	Cholera	1	5
Copies of correspondence thanking the Daughters of Charity for their services - from Mayor William Steuart, City of Baltimore, MD	Cholera	1	6
"The History of the Hospital Work of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul" by Sr. Bernadette Armiger, D.C.	Cholera	1	7
Copies of Newspaper Clippings	Cholera	1	8
Copies of various articles	Cholera	1	9
Photos of the monument in New Cathedral Cemetery given by the City of Baltimore	Cholera	1	10
Notes from the Provincial Annals of 1878, pages 26-95, Emmitsburg, MD (copy)	Yellow Fever	2	1
Notes from the Provincial Annals of 1878, pages 26-95, Emmitsburg, MD (transcript)	Yellow Fever	2	2
Various notes on the services during Yellow Fever	Yellow Fever	2	3
Copies of telegrams and correspondence	Yellow Fever	2	4
Booklet - "Stronger Than Death - Yellow Fever Heroes" by Leo Kalmer	Yellow Fever	2	5
Copies of newspaper clippings and various articles	Yellow Fever	2	6
Notes and copies of correspondence	Small Pox	2	7

Various notes on the services during Spanish Influenza	Spanish Influenza	3	1
Copies of various articles	Spanish Influenza	3	2
Correspondence #1-97 (originals)	Spanish Influenza	3	3
Correspondence #1-97 (Copies)	Spanish Influenza	3	4
Correspondence #98-144 (originals)	Spanish Influenza	4	1
Correspondence #98-144 (copies)	Spanish Influenza	4	2

Item-Level Inventory of Spanish Influenza Correspondence

- #1-11 Boston, MA, 1918 – notes on district
- #12-14 Berg, Sr. M. Claire to Mother Margaret O’Keefe, Boston, MA 1918 re: letters of sisters visiting homes
- #15-16 Albany, NY St. John’s School, 1918
- #17-17a Albany, NY St. Vincent’s Female Orphan Asylum, Nov 1, 1918 re: temporary care of children left without parents
- #18 Albany, NY St. Joseph’s School, Nov 8, 1918
- #19 Telegram from James Cardinal Gibbons, Balt., MD Oct 2, 1918 re: nurses needed at Camp Meade
- #20 Boston, MA (1918) re: news clipping – William Cardinal O’Connell offers St. John’s Seminary as hospital; mobilizes 112 sisters to care for sick
- #21 Balt., MD St. Vincent’s Infant Asylum, Oct 3, 1918 re: group of sisters left for Camp Meade
- #22-24 Camp Meade, MD 1918 re: work of sisters & chaplains among stricken soldiers at camp
- #25-26 Balt., MD Immaculate Conception School, Oct 14, 1918 re: home visiting; sisters helping at St. Agnes H.
- #27 Balt., MD St. Agnes Hosp., Oct 8, 1918 re: Sr. Clarisse Bresnan, SS. Of St. Martin’s School is at St. Agnes Hosp.; conditions at St. Martin’s
- #28 Balt., MD St. Agnes Hosp., Oct 14, 1918 re: sick sisters, nurses & employees
- #29-30 Balt., MD St. Agnes Hosp., Oct 20, 1918 re: sick sisters; reopening on St. Martin’s School
- #31 Balt., MD St. Agnes Hosp., Oct 21, 1918 re: conditions of sisters & others
- #32 Balt., MD St. Agnes Hosp., Oct 24, 1918 re: Dr. Harvey will go to St. Joseph’s, Emmitsurg for a week
- #33 Balt., MD St. John’s Academy Oct 16, 1918 re: situation at academy
- #34 Balt., MD St. Joseph’s Lee St., Oct 12, 1918
- #35-39 Balt., MD Sr. Mary’s Female Orphan Asylum Oct 14, 1918 re: sick children

- #40-42 Boston, MA Home for Destitute Children, 1918 re: care of sick children & sisters
- #43 Boston, MA St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, Oct 11, 1918 re: conditions in asylum & in the city
- #44-45 Buffalo, NY Oct 1918 re: 2 telegrams from Ft. Niagara asking for sisters
- #46-48 Buffalo, NY St. Vincent's Orphan Asylum, Oct 1918 re: conditions in St. Vincent's
- #49 New Castle, DE St. Peter's Convent, n.d. re: influenza still raging in Wilmington, DE
- #50-51 Buffalo, NY St. Vincent's Asylum, Oct 16, 1918 re: condition of children & sisters in asylum
- #52 Buffalo, NY Buffalo Hospital of the Sisters of Charity, Oct 20, 1918 re: critically ill patients; home visiting; street car strike
- #53 Buffalo, NY Emergency Hospital, Oct 6, 1918 re: now out of quarantine; poor people dying; sister nurse needed
- #54-55 Buffalo, NY Hospital of the Sisters of Charity, Oct 6, 1918 re: officer from Ft. Niagara called for sister nurses to help at fort; condition in the hospital
- #56 Buffalo, NY St. Vincent's Infant Asylum & Maternity Hosp., Oct 14, 1918 re: general conditions
- #57 Bridgeport, CT St. Vincent's Hospital, Oct 30, 1918 re: sick sisters, patients; home nursing
- #58 Bridgeport, CT, 1918 re: news clipping K of C home to become hospital
- #59 Cumberland, MD Allegany Hospital, Oct 18, 1918 re: violence of epidemic; Ursulines & Sisters of Notre Dame have been helping
- #60 Detroit, MI St. Mary's Hospital re: Govt asked for nurses for Camp Grant; doctors say epidemic is virulent form of diphtheria which effects lungs
- #61 Detroit, MI Providence Hospital, Oct 30, 1918 re: conditions in Detroit
- #62 Detroit, MI St. Vincent's Asylum, Oct 30, 1918 re: St. Vincent de Paul Society has begged them to take in children whose parents have died
- #63-64 Germantown, PA Gonzaga Memorial, Oct 13, 1918 re: sick children & sisters
- #65-70 Gettysburg, PA St. Francis Xavier's School, Oct 1918 re: Rev. Boyle offered Xavier Hall as emergency hospital; sisters nursed soldiers
- #71-72 Greensboro, NC St. Leo's Hospital re: work of sisters; Red Cross
- #73 Littlestown, PA St. Aloysius School, Oct 10, 1918 re: postulant aiding in caring for sick
- #74-75 Lowell, MA St. John's Hospital, Nov 1918 re: death of Sr. Edith; mayor opened new isolation hospital & asked for 2 nurses
- #76-80 Martinsburg, WVA St. Joseph's School, Oct 6, 1918 re: home visiting; Kings Daughter's Hospital; school closed indefinitely
- #81-83 Norfolk, VA St. Vincent's Hospital & Sanitarium, Oct 1918 re: hospital full of boys from convoys 18-22 years of age; cots in halls
- #84 Norfolk, VA St. Mary's Asylum, Oct 20, 1928 re: St. Irene's funeral; work of each sister
- #85 Pensacola, FL Pensacola Hospital, Oct 12, 1918 re: crowded conditions & need of nurses

- #86-91 Petersburg, VA St. Joseph's School, Oct-Nov 1918 re: epidemic
- #92-98 Point Pleasant, NJ Oct 1918 re: 28-0300 children in bed; sick sisters; 2 sisters sent from St. Joseph's
- #99 Philadelphia, PA St. Joseph's Hospital, Oct 1918 re: 8 sisters from the Gesu School helping Red Cross providing supplies; 36,000 in city have died
- #100-103 Philadelphia, PA St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum, Oct 1918 re: people coming in for medicine; sisters of all orders helping; Immaculate Heart's nursing Vincentians in Germantown; Wanemaker wanted a sister for emergency for shoppers; Seminarians from Overbrook digging graves
- #104-106 Philadelphia, PA Cathedral Day Nursery, Oct 1918 re: emergency hospitals; all denominations begging for sisters; children left without parents; bodies piled up in cemeteries
- #107 Richmond, VA St. Joseph's Asylum, Oct 11, 1918 re: emergency hospital wants sister to take full charge at night
- #108-110 Richmond, VA St. Patrick's School, Oct 1918 re: home nursing; epidemic has
- & 113 abated; need for another sister
- #111-112 Richmond, VA St. Joseph's Asylum, Oct 1918 re: strenuous work in hospital has come to an end
- #114-115 Rochester, NY St. Mary's Hospital, Oct 14, 1918 re: sisters are keeping up, not too many cases of influenza in the hospital; quarantined
- #116 Reading, PA St. Catherine's Asylum, Oct 17, 1918 re: 61 children & 1 sisters in bed; sisters at school have asked to help
- #117 Saginaw, MI St. Mary's Hospital, Oct 17, 1918 re: epidemic not bad in Saginaw; 30 nurses helping in other towns
- #118 Staunton, VA St. Francis School, Oct 17, 1918 re: 1 sister sick
- #119-121 Syracuse, NY St. Mary's Academy, Oct 18, 1918 re: home visiting; Ladies of Charity furnishing necessities; helping at Infant Home; Sr. Regis in danger
- #122 Syracuse, NY St. Mary's Hospital, Oct 24, 1918 re: sick children, Nurse, & sisters
- #123 Troy, NY Troy Hospital, Oct 19, 1918 re: death rate climbing; sisters from St. Mary's helping
- #124 Saginaw, MI St. Vincent's Orphan Home, Nov 4, 1918 re: house spared from deaths; rosary crusade
- #125 Utica, NY Utica Catholic Academy, Oct 18, 1918 re: home visiting
- #126 Utica, NY St. John's Orphan Asylum, Oct 21, 1918 re: novena to John Gabriel Perboyre; sending help to St. Joseph's Infant Home
- #127 Wilmington, DE St. Peter's Asylum, Oct 16, 1918 re: children sick, one died; difficulty in getting doctors
- #128-130 Washington, D.C. St. Rose's Technical, Oct 1918 re: sisters & girls down with flu
- #131-132 Washington, D.C. Immaculate Conception School, Oct 6, 1918 re: helping at University Hospital, day & night duty

- #133-137 Washington, D.C. Providence Hospital, Oct 6, 1918 re: hospital over crowded; sisters helping at University Hosp.,; sisters asked for at Catholic Univ. to nurse sick sister students
- #138 Washington, D.C. St. Ann's Infant Asylum, Nov 3, 1918 re: flu came about a week ago; conditions
- #139 Boston, MA Archbishop's House, Sept 1918 re: appreciation of work sisters are doing
- #140 Washington, D.C. Catholic University of America, Oct 6, 1918 re: thanking sisters for attending sick soldiers at university
- #141 Gettysburg, PA Camp Hospital, Camp Colt, Oct 28, 1918 re: thanking Rev. Boyle & sisters for work at Xavier Hall during epidemic
- #142 Philadelphia, PA Archbishop's House, Oct 30, 1918 re: heroine during epidemic, witnesses of charity
- #143 Albany, NY Office of Superintendent of Alms House, Nov 8, 1918
- #144 Extension Magazine, Jan 1919 re: clipping
Annals 1918 – pp. 55-75 excerpt
"A student Nurse's memories of 1918 Influenza Epidemic_ - by Thelma Ford Murray