

MARY EDWARDS WALKER, M.D.:

A Bibliography

Kerry Gleason

Nancy Osborne

Ed Vermue

INTRODUCTION

This bibliography on Mary E. Walker, M.D. is an update from a reading list first created in Penfield Library in 1982. Since then, Dr. Walker has gained more notoriety and the interest in her life has spread across the United States. This guide, which focuses mainly on manuscript materials, is arranged by repository. Secondary sources of information within the repository have been listed if known. We have added some additional secondary sources at the end of the guide. If you know of other sources on Dr. Walker, please contact Penfield Library Special Collections, SUNY Oswego, Oswego N.Y. 13126.



BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Walker was born on a farm in the Town of Oswego, in upstate New York, on November 26, 1832, the fifth daughter of Alvah and Vesta Whitcomb Walker. Much of Dr. Walker's tendency towards non-conformity may be attributed to her parents who, among other things, believed their daughters should receive a professional education. After working first as a school teacher like her sisters, Dr. Walker attended Syracuse Medical School from which she graduated in 1855. After practicing briefly in Ohio, Dr. Walker married a fellow physician, Albert Miller. They moved to Rome, New York, where they set up a medical practice. Dr. Walker did not take Miller's name and they were separated two years later, Dr. Walker accusing her husband of infidelity.

Dr. Walker remained in Rome, running her small practice, advocating social causes and writing for the magazine *Sybil*. Dr. Walker was a supporter of Amelia Bloomer and dress reform. She chose to wear pants style bloomers as did so many other dress reformers in Western New York State. She was elected president of the National Dress Reform

Association in 1866. For the rest of her life, Dr. Walker wore full male attire, claiming that she had been granted permission by Congress (no such claim has been documented). Dr. Walker later spent a year in Iowa where she unsuccessfully attempted to get a divorce. While in Iowa, Dr. Walker attended the Bowen Collegiate Institute where she precipitated a series of incidents which shocked the administration and resulted in her expulsion.



When the Civil War broke out, Dr. Walker traveled to Washington to offer her services. She worked first as a nurse in the improvised hospital in the U.S. Patent Office. Discovering the wives and mothers of soldiers on Washington park benches, Walker helped to found the Women's Relief Association. In 1862, she began working in Virginia. In 1863, she went to Tennessee where she was briefly attached as a surgeon to an Ohio Regiment. Even after her dismissal from this post Dr. Walker remained dressed in an officer's uniform. She roamed the countryside ministering to southern families. For a period of time between April and August of 1864, Dr. Walker was a prisoner of war who was exchanged for a Confederate officer. Finally in September of 1864, Dr. Walker was awarded a paid contract as Acting Assistant Surgeon with the Ohio 52nd Infantry. She left service in 1865 and served for a brief time as surgeon of a Women's Prison Hospital in Louisville, KY. A short time later Dr. Walker was awarded the first Congressional Medal of Honor for Meritorious Service ever awarded to a woman. She was extremely proud of her medal and wore it often, especially when speaking in public.

Beginning in 1867, Dr. Walker's activities become increasingly political. She lived for a few years with Belva Lockwood, a fellow women's suffrage activist, mostly in Washington D.C., but also traveling extensively to promote women's causes. In addition to her dedication to the cause of women's suffrage, Walker had very progressive opinions regarding marriage and divorce. She was an outspoken opponent of alcohol and tobacco use but very tolerant in her religion. Suffragist organizations initially praised Dr. Walker for her Civil War service. However, Dr. Walker was soon alienated from most contemporary suffragists for what they saw as her growing eccentricities. Dr. Walker also disagreed with the women's suffrage movement over their push for an Amendment to the Constitution allowing women to vote. Dr. Walker believed that the Constitution already gave this right to women. Dr. Walker also published two books during this time, the partly autobiographical *Hit* in 1871, and *Unmasked or The Science of Immortality*, in 1878.

From 1890 on, Dr. Walker lived in Oswego, New York, fighting personal and political battles for women's rights. Later interviews with local Oswego residents reveal that it is her unusual style of dress and her mannerisms that are most often remembered about Dr. Walker. In 1917, Dr. Walker's Medal of Honor was revoked (as were so many others) because there were questions surrounding the terms used to justify this prestigious award. Dr. Walker steadfastly refused to surrender the medal. Dr. Walker died on February 21, 1919. She was buried in a black suit in her family plot in Oswego Town cemetery. Through the efforts of her grandniece and some members of Congress, her Medal of Honor was officially restored to her on June 10, 1977. The medal is now the property of the Oswego County Historical Society.



**PENFIELD LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
OSWEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
Oswego, New York 13126**

<http://www.oswego.edu/library/archives.html>

MANUSCRIPTS

MS 030. Walker, Mary Edwards. "Mary E. Walker Records." 1916-1919. 1 file folder.

ABSTRACT: The record contains the bankbook of Dr. Walker, issued by the First National Bank of Oswego, New York. It lists the deposits, withdrawals, and balance of her bank account from July 7, 1916 to July 1, 1919.

MS 055. Walker, Mary Edwards. "Dr. Mary E. Walker Letters." 1915. 1 file folder.

ABSTRACT: The collection consists of two letters, one written by Dr. Walker and the other received by her. The first letter (no date) was to Marriet E. Gifford discussing her observations of industrial change in Minetto, New York, and a brief visit to Fulton, New York. The second letter, dated October 10, 1915, is from a friend mentioning health problems and regrets for not attending a suffrage meeting.

MS 086. Brown, Clara Adele. "Adele Brown Collection." 1895-1986. 4 boxes.

ABSTRACT: The Adele Brown collection contains Dr. Walker stamps and a background history of the stamp is included in the collection.

ORAL HISTORIES

OH 062. Dietz, Carrie. Interview by Judith Wellman. 1975.

ABSTRACT: Narration of Dietz's experiences in Oswego at the turn of the century and before.

OH 218. Downing, Raymond. Interview by A. Duckert. 1976.

ABSTRACT: A Massachusetts resident recalls the days when Dr. Walker used to visit his home in Greenwich.

OH 096. Groat, Dewitt. Interview by Jeffrey A. Levine. 1978.

ABSTRACT: Narration about life on a farm; recalls Dr. Walker.

OH 098. Perry, Muriel. Interview by Jeffrey A. Levine. 1978.

ABSTRACT: Narration about teaching in the Oswego School District for over forty years. Recollections of Dr. Walker.

OH 143. Salisburg, Lena. Interview by Jeffrey A. Levine. N.D.

ABSTRACT: Narration of an Oswego Town native born in 1888.

OH 158. Savas, Thomas. Interview by Jeffrey A. Levine. 1979.

ABSTRACT: A Greek immigrant discusses his life in Greece, and his life in Oswego.

OH 166. Turner, Thomas. Interview by Jeffrey A. Levine. 1979.

ABSTRACT: Born in 1891, Turner discusses the many changes in Oswego including information about Dr. Walker.

OH 219. WRVO: "Dr. Mary Walker." 1976.

ABSTRACT: A radio program featuring Dr. Walker and the fight to reinstate her Congressional Medal of Honor, with Ann Walker.

STUDENT PAPERS

US-B Walker. Beauchene, Judy. "Dr. Mary Edwards Walker: A Biographical Account Of Her life." 1984.

US-B Walker 3. Brinsmaid, Carey. "Mary Walker in American History." 1988.

US-B Walker. Centola, Eileen. "Dr. Mary Walker." 1973.

US-B Walker 2. Johnson, Barbara K. "Dr. Mary Edwards Walker." 1988.

Special Collections also maintains a Vertical File on Dr. Walker. Three inches of clippings from the popular media, photographs, and ephemeral material, are available.

BOOKS

Adams, George W. Doctors in Blue: The Medical History of the Union Army in the Civil War. E6211. A3

Congressional Record, 50th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Report, 602, p.30 Washington, 1888.
4D-12D Documents/Law

Congressional Record, 55th Congress, 2nd Session, H.R. 9732. Washington, 1898.
4D-12D Documents/Law

Conway, Moncure Daniel. Autobiography, Memories and Experiences of Moncure Daniel Conway
BX 9869. C8 A3

Groat, Charles V. Dr. Mary Walker - A Reader. 1994. Spec. Coll. R 154 W18 G873

Isham, Asa B., et al. Prisoners of War and Military Prisons. LAC 161 (second floor)

James, Edward T., et al. Notable American Woman. 1971. Ref HQ 1123. N899 Vol.3

Leonard, Elizabeth D. (1994). "A Thing That Nothing But the Depraved Yankee Nation Could Produce": Mary Walker, M.D., and the Limits of Tolerance". In Elizabeth Leonard, Yankee Women: Gender Battles in the Civil War (pp. 105-157). New York: W.W. Norton.

Malone, Dumas, (ed). Dictionary of American Biography. Ref E176. D562

The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography. Ref E 176. N28 12

Massey, Mary Elizabeth. Bonnet Brigades. E 628. M3

Schott, Joseph L. Above and Beyond: The Story of the Congressional Medal of Honor. E181. S35

Snyder, Charles M. Dr. Mary Walker: The Little Lady in Pants. R 154. W 18

Snyder, Charles M. Oswego: From Buckskin to Bustles. F129.O7 S65

Stanton, Elizabeth Cady, et. al. History of Woman Suffrage. JK 1896. S8

U.S. Congress Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Medal of Honor recipients, 1863-1978.
Washington D.C. : GPO, 1979. UB433. A54 1979

Walker, Mary E. Hit. Spec Coll HN 64 W 17

Woodward, Helen Beal. The Bold Women. CT3260. W67

ARTICLES

- Chatfield, Jennifer. "Mary Edwards Walker, M.D. (1832-1919)." NAHO 1975: 9-11. [In Special Collections vertical file].
- Ebel, Col. Wil. "Safeguarding the Medal of Honor." The Retired Officer Magazine. July, 1977: 21-23. [In Special Collections vertical file].
- Gubar, Susan. "Blessings in Disguise: Cross Dressing as a Redressing for Female Modernists." Massachusetts Review. 1981 22(3): 477-508.
- Knight, E. "Dr. Mary Walker." Publication of the Oswego County Historical Society. 1949: 89-90. F127.091 O9 1949
- Lockwood, Alison. "Pantsuited Pioneer of Women's Lib, Dr. Mary Walker." Smithsonian. 1977 7(12): 113-119.
- Long, Robert Emmet. "A Source for Dr. Mary Prance in *The Bostonians*." Nineteenth-Century Fiction. 1964 . 19(1): 87-88.
- New York State Historical Association. Proceedings. v. 16 (1917): 22, 27.
- New York State Historical Association. Proceedings. v. 17 (1919): 16-17.
- Wright, Fred P. "Dr. Mary E. Walker." Publication of the Oswego County Historical Society. 1953: 46-53. F 127.091 O9 1953

OSWEGO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 135 East 3rd Street, Oswego, New York 13126

The material in the Dr. Walker collection consists of about 100 items, including letters, newspaper and magazine articles, and several books covering the years 1861 to 1980. The letters comprise nearly half of the collection and consist of family correspondence, three letters from temperance societies, and one from Dr. Walker to "The Honorable Senate and House of Representatives." The society has Dr. Walker's two diplomas from the Syracuse Medical College to practice medicine and perform surgery, and the original Executive Order for Dr. Walker's Medal of Honor signed by President Andrew Johnson and Secretary of War Edward M. Stanton. They have an oil painting of Dr. Walker attributed to A.J. Hubbell, 1878.

The artifacts with the collection include Dr. Walker's Congressional Medal of Honor, the Medal of Valor, and another small medal identifying Walker as extra assistant Surgeon in the Army of the Potomac during 1861. Other artifacts include her silk top hat and two medical cases. Numerous photographs spanning her lifetime are also in the collection. Most of these are copies although some are originals. The Oswego Historical Society also has scattered diaries kept by Dr. Walker's sister, Aurora (Walker) Coates, from 1886 to 1900. These diaries discuss her sister Mary.

BOOKS

- Hall, Marjory. Quite Contrary- Dr. Mary Edwards Walker. New York, 1970. [children's book]
Article dealing with Dr. Mary Walker in My Opinion and Betsy Bobbet's. New York, 1884.
[photocopy.]

PAMPHLETS

- Dix, D.L. Circular No. 8 from Surgeon General's Office, July 14, 1862. Washington, 1862.
- Hammon, William A. Circular No.7 from Surgeon General's Office, July 14, 1862. Washington, 1862.
- Walker, Dr. Mary E. Crowning Constitutional Argument. Oswego, 1907.
- Essay concerning the building of a "Consumptive School Sanitarium." n.p., 1900. [photocopy].

ARTICLES

- Lucas, Kay. "Mary Edwards Walker, M.D. National Parent Teacher. (1960): 18-19.
"Should the President of the U.S. And Congress Legally Restore the Medal of Honor to the Only Woman Recipient, Mary Edwards Walker, M.D., Civil War Suffragette-Surgeon?" Alert Science-Medical Weekly. (June 16, 1975)

**ONONDAGA COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
LOCAL HISTORY AND GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT
The Galleries, Salina Street, Syracuse, New York 13202**

The Onondaga County Public Library owns a scrapbook containing articles about Dr. Walker collected between 1931 to 1977.

**GEORGE ARENTS RESEARCH LIBRARY
BIRD LIBRARY, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
Syracuse, New York 13210**

The Walker papers span the years from 1799 to 1919 and consist of 4 boxes (2 feet) and one microfilm reel. The collection contains 339 items of correspondence from 1833 to 1913. The majority of these, covering the years 1852 to 1913, are addressed to Dr. Walker and discuss arrangements for her post-Civil War tours and lectures, her book Hit, her pension claims, and other subjects. Her correspondents include the reformers Lydia Sayer Hasbrouck and Belva Ann Lockwood; physicians Charles Alfred Lee, Ann Preston, and George Miller Sternberg; political wives Mary Baird Bryan and Frances Folsom Cleveland; military and political figures James Heaton Baker, Jacob Collamer, William Lawrence, and Edward Davis Townsend; and the novelist Mary Andrews Denison. There are eight holograph letters of Dr. Walker (1863-1877) and one undated holograph note. Very little of the correspondence deals with her medical practice.

Legal and financial documents include Dr. Walker's bills and receipts, a deed to her farm, her divorce material, Pension Office records, and wills. A sizeable amount of memorabilia including an autograph collection, newspaper clippings, genealogical data, medical memorabilia, newspapers and photographs are in the collection.

BOOKS

- Walker, Dr. Mary E. Unmasked, or The Science of Immorality. Jersey City, 1888. [microfilm].

PAMPHLETS

- Walker, Dr. Mary E. Crowning Constitutional Argument. Oswego, 1907.
Walker, Dr. Mary E. Isonomy. Oswego, 1898.

UNPUBLISHED THESIS

- Lawson, Dorris Moore. "Dr. Mary E. Walker: A Biographical Sketch," unpublished master's thesis, Syracuse University, 1954.

**RESEARCH COLLECTION, UPSTATE MEDICAL CENTER LIBRARY
Syracuse, New York 13202**

This collection includes .2 cubic feet of relative information. Includes a research collection of articles and clippings about her life and career, 1939-1984; copies of pages from her personal scrapbook about her activities and speeches, 1855-1867; her obituary, 1919; and a bibliography of manuscript sources on Dr. Walker in Upstate New York repositories.

**ROME HISTORICAL SOCIETY
200 Church Street, Rome, New York 13440**

This collection contains microfilm and copies of papers chiefly related to Dr. Walker's military career, including her service as a surgeon with the Army during the Civil War, her application for a pension, her reception of the Medal of Honor, and its reinstatement in 1977. There is also genealogical correspondence between Anne North Hinton, and Barbara Howlett, a Rome Historical Society researcher, and Helen Hay Wilson, a grandniece of Dr. Walker concerning Ms. Hinton's possible relationship to Dr. Walker. The collection includes newspaper and magazine articles about Dr. Walker.

**ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
ALLEGHENY UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
3300 Henry Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 19129**

The Lida Poynter Manuscripts contains 30 linear feet of papers from 1850 to 1946 and 42 photographs. It consists of a typed (unpublished) manuscript by Lida Poynter on the life of Dr. Walker. There are also about 12,000 pages of notes on journal articles, newspaper articles and correspondence to and from Dr. Walker (19th century). The photographs were collected by Mrs. Poynter "from various sources." Also housed is the manuscript collection of Ms. Jane Bliss Taylor. MS-148 is a handwritten manuscript of Taylor's recollections of Dr. Walker.

**STATE LIBRARY OF PENNSYLVANIA
Walnut Street and Commonwealth Avenue, P.O. Box 1601, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105**

The Liliane Stevens Howard collection contains a biographical essay on Dr. Mary Walker. [source: Andrea Hinding (ed.), Women's History Sources. New York: Bowker, 1979.]

**CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Clark Street at North Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60614**

The society maintains a women's suffrage collection of about 25 items covering the period 1871-1910. Dr. Walker is represented in this collection. [source: Andrea Hinding (ed.), Women's History Sources. New York: Bowker, 1979.]

**SCHELESINGER LIBRARY, RADCLIFFE COLLEGE
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138**

Included in this collection is a postcard dated 1888, from Dr. Walker to William Bok concerning her attempts to vote. Also at this location is the Jessie Tarbox Beals photo collection. This photographer took pictures for many people including Dr. Walker, whose photograph is in this collection.

**SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA LIBRARIES
Iowa City, IA 52242**

This collection includes an autographed letter to William H. Newell from Dr. Walker about a proposed lecture and included in the collection is a photograph of Dr. Walker and a printed page entitled "Extract from Dr. L.T. Frall's Herald of Health."

**MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
Washington D.C. 20408**

In this collection is one roll of 35mm duplicate positive microfilm of the selected military service records relating to Mary Walker, M.D.

OTHER SECONDARY SOURCES

BOOKS

- Brooks, Stewart. Civil War Medicine. Illinois: Thomas, 1966.
Holmes, J.T. 52nd O.V.I.: Then And Now. Vol 1. Ohio: Oberlin Print, 1898.
Trenchard, Edward. "The Services and Sacrifices of the Daughters of the Republic During Rebellion."
Paper in Personal Recollections of the War of the Rebellion Vol. 4. NY: Putnam's, 1912.

ARTICLES

- Castel, Albert. "Mary Walker: A Samaritan or Charlatan?" Civil War Times Illustrated. 33, May/June 1994: 40-43.
Filzen, Lydia C. "The Lady's Carrying a Scalpel!" Civil War. 11, April 1994: 8-13.
Sounder, Eunice. "Self-Made Man." Armed Forces Journal International. April 1980: 67.
Speigel, Allen D. and Andrea M. Speigel. "Civil War Doctress Mary: Only Woman to Win Congressional Medal Of Honor." Minerva: Quarterly Report on Women and The Military. 12 (3), 1994: 24-35.
Speigel, Allen D. and Peter B. Suskind. "Mary Edwards Walker, M.D.: A Feminist Physician a Century Ahead of Her Time." Journal Of Community Health. 21(3), June 1996: 211-235.
Stockton, Jack P., III. "Mary Walker, Her Medals of Honor, and the Army Reorganization Bill of 1916." Military Collections and History. 14, Fall 1962: 76-79.
Thomas, Martha. "Amazing Mary." Civil War Times Illustrated. 23, March 1984: 37-41.
Tower, Samuel A. "Commemorative For Civil War Surgeon." New York Times. June 13, 1982: H50
Wright, Fred P. "Dr. Mary E. Walker." Oswego County Historical Journal. 1953: 46-53.