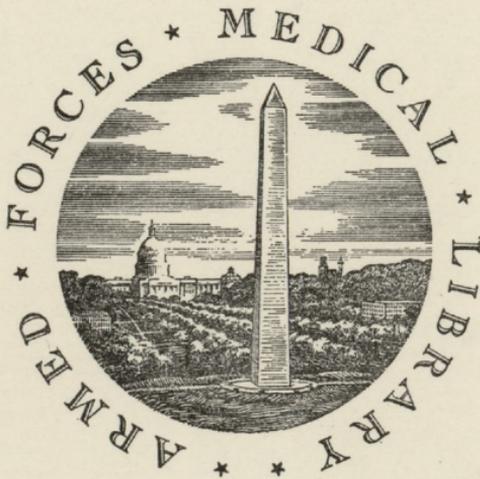


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John Shaw Billings During the Civil War

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THE DEVELOPMENT
OF
MEDICAL
BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY

Estelle Brodman

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Armed Forces Medical Library
Washington, D.C.*

MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
1954

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Preface

No large-scale history of the development of medical bibliography has appeared before; since this work is the first such attempt, it suffers from all the expected, and probably a number of the less usual, defects of first tries. The great range of the book results in more superficiality than is desirable. Whole masses of information appear to be missing or unavailable. My interpretation of at least some of the facts is likely to be questioned by certain readers; my erudition may easily be doubted. Working on the collection of data and their explanation over a period of four years, between other full-time professional duties, I have often wanted to echo the words of Ploucquet, "I began the work, and have done what anyone could do who is occupied by other duties of a public nature. It has been a huge task, and I hope that this work, such as it is, will be of some use. I hope that posterity will use it as a basis on which to build further, to attempt the completion of a structure which from its very nature can never be completed."

The method used in this work consisted of: learning of the existence of the medical bibliographies, examining all that were available to me (either by going to the library possessing them or borrowing them on interlibrary loan), and drawing conclusions about the place of each one in the history of medical bibliography. To learn of as many bibliographies as possible, I started by searching general bibliographies of bibliographies, such as Petzholdt, Stein,

Besterman, and Schneider, and the largest bibliographies of medicine, such as the *Index-Catalogue* and the Catalogue of the medical section of the Bibliothèque Nationale. With a list of medical bibliographies in hand, obtained in this fashion, I proceeded to examine all the bibliographies I could. For the more elusive titles, the Union Catalogue of the Library of Congress was searched. Each bibliography was in turn examined for its inclusion of further bibliographies of medicine, and any title so listed was added to the basic list, until finally a feeling of coming to the point of diminishing returns set in, as fewer and fewer new titles were uncovered. At that point active searching for new titles was discontinued.

As I examined each bibliography, I asked a series of questions: 1. Is this really a medical bibliography as defined in my work? 2. What differences are there in this work as compared to its predecessors or contemporaries? 3. To what are these changes due, especially in relation to the history of bibliography in general, to medical practice and medical education, and to the history of the times? 4. What influences did this work have on its contemporaries or successors? (This is particularly difficult to judge, since we possess only indirect evidence of the use of these works.) The most important works, to my mind, for the history of medical bibliography were then discussed in detail in the body of the work; the lesser works were relegated to the list in the appendix.

Such a system, of course, has many drawbacks, of which the most serious is the necessity for withholding judgment until a large number of the works has been examined; indeed, of being willing to change one's hypotheses several

times in the course of the work. As a pioneer attempt to view a large field, however, it is probably the only feasible method. I look forward to seeing what others will do with the subject in the future.

I have been asked what conclusions emerge from my study. I come away from the examination of these bibliographies with a belief that medical bibliography is still groping in the dark for techniques which will allow it to do successfully what it has been so painfully and incompletely doing since its very beginning: namely, to cover the entire medical literature, in whatever form, wherever published, and in whatever language, and to cover it accurately, promptly, and in easily usable form. Each time medical bibliography has reached the point where it seemed to have gained mastery over the literature, the literature has grown in size or changed in form, or otherwise made the previous techniques of medical bibliography inadequate to the tasks. This I have tried to point out in the last chapter, where I have also said that medicine must continue making its present bibliographic techniques as adequate as possible so that it can gain time to do the fundamental research necessary to determine how medical bibliography must be changed to fulfill its mission.

There remains now only the very pleasant task of publicly thanking those who have helped me in preparing this work. Although I am indebted to so many people that I cannot possibly name them all, I should like to call attention here to those who gave most generously of their time and knowledge. Looking back on it, I am appalled by the amount of their time which I must have consumed; nothing I can say could repay their manifold kindnesses. What

is good in this volume is as much theirs as mine; what is bad is mine own.

Miss Gertrude L. Annan, Associate Librarian of the New York Academy of Medicine, and Dr. Dorothy M. Schullian of the History of Medicine Division, Armed Forces Medical Library, checked many quotations and references for me and made numerous suggestions throughout the work. Mr. W. J. Bishop, formerly Librarian, Wellcome Historical Medical Museum Library, London; Miss Janet Doe, Librarian, New York Academy of Medicine; Dr. W. B. McDaniel, II, Librarian, College of Physicians of Philadelphia; Miss Mary Louise Marshall, Librarian, Rudolph Matas Medical Library, Tulane University; and Mr. W. D. Postell, Librarian, Louisiana State University School of Medicine, discussed, both verbally and by lengthy letters, many of the theories expressed in the text. Dr. W. W. Francis, Librarian, Osler Library, McGill University, made helpful suggestions for the first two chapters. Mr. Verner Clapp, now Acting Librarian, Library of Congress, took time from his busy schedule to read and criticize Chapters I through IV. Dr. Henry Viets of Boston and Dr. John Fulton of Yale University have given me the benefit of their wide knowledge of medicine and of bibliography. Dr. W. J. Wilson, Chief, History of Medicine Division, Armed Forces Medical Library, has helped in the determination of the extent of medical publication. My brother, Keeve Brodman, has given me a physician's view of the medical literature; he and Mr. Jerome Deutschberger are responsible for the mathematical interpretation of the curve in Chapter IV. Mr. Deutschberger also compiled the index. Miss Dorothy L. Goodenow, formerly Head Cataloger,

College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, read the entire manuscript for grammar and sentence structure. The members of the Reference Division of the Armed Forces Medical Library read the text critically and aided in running down obscure references. Lt. Col. Frank B. Rogers, MC, USA, Director, Armed Forces Medical Library, not only opened the files of the Library to the investigation, but took time to discuss each chapter of the work analytically.

Advice on many points and proof-reading help came from Miss Mildred E. Blake, Rudolph Matas Medical Library, Tulane University; Miss Anna E. Dougherty, Armed Forces Medical Library; Miss Marie Harvin, University of Maryland Medical Library; and Mr. Seymour I. Taine, Editor, *Current List of Medical Literature*. Miss Eleanor Johnson, of the New York Academy of Medicine Library, checked the entire manuscript, including the bibliographies, for accuracy and consistency, and read proof in all stages of the work.

And finally I must acknowledge the great help from the members of the doctoral committee of the Joint Faculties of the Graduate School at Columbia University: Dr. Austin Evans of the History Department, Chairman, Mr. Thomas P. Fleming of the School of Library Service, Miss Margaret Hutchins of the School of Library Service, Dr. Fred A. Mettler of the Department of Anatomy, Dr. Maurice F. Tauber of the School of Library Service, and Dr. Lynn Thorndike of the History Department.

Washington, D. C.

ESTELLE BRODMAN

January, 1954.

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The Development of Medical Bibliography

INTRODUCTION

BIBLIOGRAPHY of any subject is developed in response to a need. This need is usually caused by the volume of the literature, which makes it necessary to develop some means by which an individual can select the information he needs easily and expeditiously from the entire mass of available material. Wherever there is a fairly large literature on the subject, guides to its contents have grown up, since without such guides the student would be obliged to hunt laboriously through every work on the subject before locating the desired information. The first requirement for any bibliography, therefore, is that there be a need for it, since without such a need, bibliography is useless and wasteful and not likely to be cultivated.

The second requirement is that there be available a person or group of persons who are interested in preparing such bibliographies and capable of producing them; in other words, the man and the time must meet. And the last requirement for bibliography, as for any advance in knowledge, is adequate equipment or apparatus. Just as the final proof of the circulation of blood through the capillaries had to wait until the development of the microscope, through which the passage of the blood from the arteries to the veins could actually be observed, so bib-

liography has had to wait for the development of suitable equipment to solve many of its problems. Indeed, some of the problems presented to bibliographers today seem impossible of solution because of a lack of machines adequate to today's demands.

Just as in other fields, bibliography in the field of medicine developed as a result of the need for it, the existence of the men willing and able to produce it, and the requisite equipment to do the task; indeed, medical bibliography has paralleled that of other fields in many respects. In the present work the primary attempt will be to describe this development in medical bibliography, paying special attention to the techniques, the people who developed them, and the equipment used. For each bibliography discussed there will be a biographical sketch of the compiler; a description of the work which will emphasize advances in technique; and a discussion of the importance of this work in the history of medical bibliography. A list of bibliographies not discussed in the body of the work is included in Appendix II.

Since the term "medical bibliography" will be used throughout this work, it is necessary to define it. Medical bibliography is the general term used for any lists of books on medicine; but in this discussion it will have a more circumscribed meaning: namely, lists of books or journals pertaining to medicine in general but not to any of its subdivisions or specialties. For example, a bibliography on eighteenth century medicine in Germany will be discussed, but a bibliography on ophthalmology in Germany will not be included. It should, of course, be pointed out that

general bibliographies on all aspects of medicine would naturally contain material on specialties such as ophthalmology; however, by the very fact that they contain material on all the specialties and subdivisions of the field they become general medical bibliographies and are, therefore, proper objects of study for this work.

In addition to circumscribing medicine to mean what formerly was called "the practice of medicine," the term "bibliography" is defined in more specific terms also. Not all lists of works on medicine are included. Indeed, catalogs—whether of libraries or of booksellers and publishers—are intentionally omitted. The only exception to this rule is the *Index-Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office*,¹ which is included on the pragmatic ground that it influenced medical bibliography to such an extent that no true picture of the field could be given without a study of this work. Also omitted are personal bibliographies and those bibliographies which are not the main portions of a work.

Only printed medical bibliographies in the western languages are included. No distinction is made between indexes and abstracting tools as bibliographies.

¹U. S. Armed Forces Medical Library. *Index-Catalogue of the Library of the Surgeon-General's Office, U. S. Army (Army Medical Library)*. Wash., Govt. Print. Off., 1880-. 57v.