

**Massachusetts General Hospital
Robert S. Hurlbut Papers, 1930-1960 [inclusive]
MC 23**

2 c.f. in 5 containers

5 containers: 3 standard size document boxes, one legal size document box, and one flat box.

Accession number: 2013-10

Processed May-July, 2015 by Lucy Ross

Acquisition: Donated in December 2013 by Robert S. Hurlbut's daughter, Patricia Hurlbut Jenkins.

Access: Portions of the collection are subject to restricted access due to the inclusion of patient medical information. Consult the MGH Archivist for further information.

Copyright: Requests to publish materials from the collection should be directed to the MGH Archivist.

Scope and Content:

This collection includes records by and relating to Robert S. Hurlbut, including course notes and material from his time at Harvard Medical School (1934-1938), necropsy notes from the time of his internship at Massachusetts General Hospital (1940), correspondence, invoices, and architectural plans relating to the Robert S. Hurlbut Memorial Room in the Gray Building of MGH (1946-1948), and programs from the 150th convocation of MGH (1960). The HMS notes paint a tightly-focused picture of the state of general medical pedagogy at Harvard Medical School in the mid-to-late 1930s, both in the materials that Hurlbut recorded and the syllabi and handouts included in the collection. Handouts include psychological test forms, official forms from Boston-area public health institutions, and many booklets regarding topics such as tuberculosis, how to conduct a patient examination, and thyroid disorders.

Materials in this collection span from ca. 1930-1960, mainly consisting of records generated in 1934-1938, 1940, 1946-1948, and 1960. This collection does not contain records of his service in World War II or the majority of his time and activities at MGH. There are no materials relating to Hurlbut's life before entering Harvard Medical School, and the only records created by Hurlbut after his graduation from HMS are his necropsy notes from 1940 (Series II). The records pertaining to the Hurlbut Memorial Room (Series III) do not contain any information on the reasons for the creation of the room.

The records are arranged into four series: Series I: Harvard Medical School; Series II: Necropsy Notes; Series III: Hurlbut Memorial Room; and Series IV: MGH 150th Anniversary Convocation.

Biographical Note:

Robert Satterlee Hurlbut (1912-1945) was born in Cambridge, the son of the then-Dean of Harvard College. Hurlbut graduated from Harvard in 1934, married Sally Drew of Milton, and entered Harvard Medical School shortly thereafter, graduating in 1938. Following his graduation, Hurlbut served as an intern, assistant resident, and surgical house officer for the East Surgical Service at Massachusetts General Hospital. His internship included a special focus in Urology and Pathology. Hurlbut had modest ambitions, stating, "I do not expect to be any great figure in the surgical field, but I should like to have the reputation of being a good doctor to whom any man would be willing to entrust his case."

At the outbreak of World War II, Dr. Hurlbut applied for a commission in the United States Navy. After serving in a variety of naval hospitals, dispensaries, and other medical offices, Dr. Hurlbut was appointed the Medical Officer of the USS Halligan, a 2100-ton Fletcher Class Destroyer, in 1943, aboard which he served in the Atlantic Ocean, North Africa, and the Pacific Ocean. The destroyer was lost in action off Okinawa in 1945, and Dr. Hurlbut was presumed dead.

A residency colleague of Dr. Hurlbut, Dr. Francis Moore, worked with Hurlbut's wife and mother to create a memorial library at MGH in Hurlbut's honor. The Hurlbut Room officially opened in November 1947, and is located in the hospital's Gray Building.

Hurlbut's obituary, composed by Dr. Francis Moore and including an excerpt of a letter from Hurlbut, can be found in the June 1945 edition of the MGH News:
http://mgghistory.org/view/filedoc_-1539111686

A more detailed account of Hurlbut's time at MGH and in the Navy, as well as of the creation of the Hurlbut Memorial Room, can be found in the *MGH Surgical Society Newsletter* article "Who Was Hurlbut?" by Charlie Ferguson:
http://www.massgeneral.org/surgery/assets/pdfs/surgicalsociety/SUMMER_2003.pdf

A full catalogue description of Hurlbut's portrait, including an extensive biographical note, can be found here: <http://www2.massgeneral.org/history/catalogueDetails.asp?catalogueNo=133>

Related Collections:

Papers of Byron Satterlee Hurlbut, ca. 1916. Harvard University Archives
Father of Robert S. Hurlbut and Dean of Harvard college

Processing Note:

I inspected the collection, removed rusted paperclips, staples, and other binding materials, removed acidic folders, and flattened bent or folded papers where possible. Blueprints and materials bound with staples that could not be removed were isolated with acid-neutral paper. Future processing could include flattening and re-housing folded materials (such as blueprints from Series III) and removal of any remaining staples. Confidential patient information, which needs to be screen and restricted before researchers have access, could be isolated in separate, restricted folders and separation slips could be inserted in their place in the original folders.

Series Descriptions:

Series I: Harvard Medical School [ca. 1930 - 1938]

Material related to Robert S. Hurlbut's time at Harvard Medical School (1934-1938), including class notes taken by Hurlbut on notecards and in notebooks (1934-1938) and additional class materials such as syllabi, handouts from class and field trips, exams, and booklets relating to class topics (ca. 1930-1938). This series also includes a box of slides and slide preparation tools from the Pathology course that Hurlbut took during the 1935-1936 semester. The series is subdivided by course and, in cases where no course is indicated, by format. Folder contents are organized chronologically, respecting original order where possible. Several folders contain patient identifying information (partially restricted)

Series II: Necropsy Notes, 1940 (Restricted)

Typed notes on onionskin paper, detailing necropsy examinations performed by Dr. Hurlbut. Records include patient identifying information and extensive medical information (name, age, cause of death, etc.), as well as individual record ID numbers. These notes date from June-November, 1940.

Series III: Hurlbut Memorial Room, 1946-1948

Correspondence, architectural plans, and itemized invoices relating to the creation of the Hurlbut Memorial Room. Correspondence is to Mrs. Robert S. Hurlbut (née Sally Drew) from the Chairman of the MGH Board of Trustees Francis C. Gray, MGH Assistant Treasurer George S. Weld, interior decorators C.B. Swift Company, Coolidge Shepley Bulfinch and Abbot Architects, and MGH Director Nathaniel W. Faxon. Includes one copy of a letter to Katherine Codman from Dr. Francis D. Moore, forwarded to Mrs. Hurlbut by Dr. Moore. Also includes architectural plans and blueprints from Coolidge Shepley Bulfinch and Abbot Architects and a large-format print of a portrait photo of Dr. Hurlbut.

Series IV: MGH 150th Anniversary Convocation, 1960

Commemorative programs and reception booklet commemorating the 150th convocation of Mass General Hospital, including dinner menus, a list of honored guests, and honorary citations issued to other medical organizations

Series I, Harvard Medical School	Box	Folder
Anatomy, Bio-chemistry, Neuro-anatomy, and Parasitology notebook [ca. 1934-1936]	1	1
Bacteriology notebook, 1935- 1936	1	2
Bacteriology outline, 1935 - 1936	1	3
Biochemistry notebook II, 1936	1	4
Dermatology and Syphilology handouts [ca. 1936-1937]	1	5
Dermatology and Syphilology notecards, 1936-1937	1	6
Genito-urinary Surgery notecards, 1937	1	8
Gynecology notecards, 1936- 1937	1	9

Series I, Harvard Medical School	Box	Folder
Gynecology, Pyelitis in Pregnancy manuscript and notes [ca. 1937-1938]	1	10
Laryngology notecards, 1936- 1937	1	11
Medicine I notecards, 1936 * contains anonymized patient information	2	1
Medicine I schedules, 1936	2	2
Medicine II booklets, 1931- 1935	2	3
Medicine II exam and handouts, 1936-1937	2	4
Medicine II notecards, 1936- 1937	2	5
Ophthalmology notecards, 1937	2	6
Otology notecards, 1936-1937	2	7
Pathology notebook I, 1935- 1936	2	8
Pathology notebook II, 1936	2	9
Pathology slide box [ca. 1935- 1936]	5	n/a
Patient cases [n.d.] * contains anonymized patient information	2	10
Patient examination notes [ca. 1936-1937] □ * contains full patient identifying information □ Restricted	2	11
Pediatrics booklets [ca. 1931- 1937]	3	1
Pediatrics notecards, 1936- 1937	3	2

Series I, Harvard Medical School	Box	Folder
Pediatrics schedule, exam, and outline, 1936-1937	3	3
Preventative Medicine handouts [ca. 1936-1937]	3	4
Preventative Medicine notecards, 1936-1937	3	5
Psychiatry outline and circular, 1933-1936	3	6
Psychiatry, psychological tests [ca. 1930 -1936]	3	7
Schedule of Fourth-Year Courses, 1937		8
Surgery I, notecards, 1936	3	9
Surgery I, schedule and handout, 1936	3	10
Surgery II, booklets, 1934-1937	3	11
Surgery II, notes, 1936-1937	3	12
Surgery II, notes and manuscript on shock [ca. 1936-1937]	3	13
Surgery II, schedule and guidelines, 1936-1937	3	14
<u>Useful Drugs</u> , 1934	3	15

Box and Folder List:

Series II, Necropsy Notes	Box	Folder
Necropsy notes, 1940	4	1

Series III, Hurlbut Memorial Room	Box	Folder
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Series III, Hurlbut Memorial Room	Box	Folder
Correspondence, 1946-1948	3	14
Architectural plans and blueprints, [ca. 1946-1948]	4	2
Portrait photo [n.d.]	4	3

Series IV, MGH 150th Anniversary Convocation	Box	Folder
Programs, 1960	3	15
Reception booklet, 1960	4	4