



# FRIENDS

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## The Phineas Sanborn Conner Scrapbook

**M**ENTION the word scrapbook to librarians, archivists, or private collectors, and it is likely that a frown will spread across their faces. The word scrapbook evokes images of yellowed and brittle newspaper clippings, pasted photographs, and other ephemera. Occasionally a treasure, but often a preservation nightmare of dubious historical value.

The later is not true of the Phineas Sanborn Conner scrapbook. Purchased by the College Archivist from Sotheby's in late 1998, the Conner scrapbook is, indeed, a treasure. In fine condition, the scrapbook provides glimpses into the life of Phineas Sanborn Conner, Class of 1859.

After graduating from Dartmouth, Conner entered Jefferson Medical School. He graduated in 1861. That fateful year determined the course of the nation, as well as of many young men's lives. Soon Conner would join the struggle of the Civil War as a Union Army surgeon, and the scrapbook gains much of its value as it reflects Conner's military career.

The scrapbook, containing nearly 100 items, opens with Conner's U.S. Army commissions. Conner's various commissions were signed by Abraham Lincoln, Edwin Stanton,

Secretary of War (see overleaf), and President Andrew Johnson. Following the commissions are letters, circulars, sketches, and other documents that trace Conner's duties during the war, and immediately after it. Many of these

items reflect the Surgeon General's efforts to collect data and specimens from the surgeons in the field. Surgeon General Joseph K. Barnes was keen to develop the recently established Army Medical Museum. Hence, while Conner was stationed at University Hospital in New Orleans, Barnes instructed him to collect and label specimens from military hospitals around New Orleans. Also, while Conner served in the U.S. Army Department of the Gulf, the Surgeon General directed him and other medical officers to report on troop morale and field conditions. Conner's duties in New Orleans, as well as Fort Columbus, New York, brought him in contact with Confederate prisoners of war, while his



*Phineas Sanborn Conner*

tour of duty as medical director of the Department of North Carolina involved addressing public health issues of the early Reconstruction period. Conner would later publish an authoritative history of military medicine during the

*Continued overleaf*

Civil War. His scrapbook testifies that his positions and duties made him well qualified for the subject.

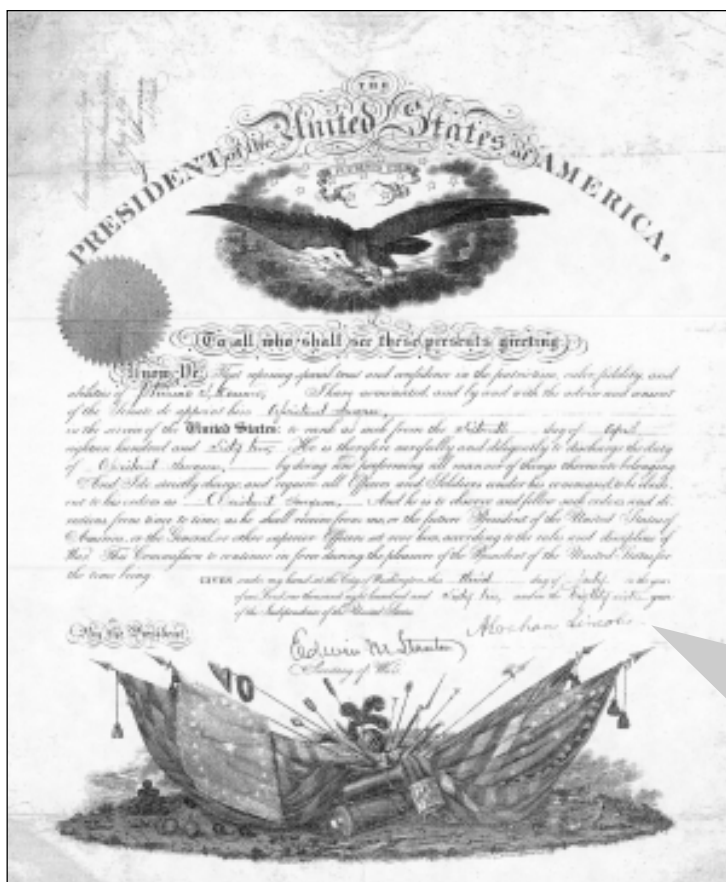
Between 1866 and 1898 there is a long pause in the scrapbook. The pause roughly corresponds to Conner's time away from military and government service. During those years he held professorships in medicine and surgery at Cincinnati College of Medicine, Medical College of Ohio, and Dartmouth College. In 1898, he returned to government service, and the scrapbook resumes. This time, President McKinley appointed him to the Commission to Investigate the Conduct of the War Department in the war with Spain. The scrapbook contains the Commission's report as well as a photograph of the Com-

mission. With the completion of the Commission's work in 1899, so ends the scrapbook.

Phineas Sanborn Conner's scrapbook is interesting for what it contains, as well as what it does not contain. First, it is obvious that Conner assembled the scrapbook with the intent to only document the military and government service aspects of his life. One would have to use other sources to learn about the rest of his life and career. Second, the scrapbook is limited by what he selected for presentation. Indeed, it is a presentation of a life as much as it is a remembrance. Documents are official in character, personal letters that he might have had at hand are absent, and comments on field conditions and prisoners are not to be found. There are no crumbling newspaper clippings. It is neat, clean, and orderly. One would have to look elsewhere to learn about the stark realities of life in a Civil War hospital.

Perhaps Phineas Sanborn Conner only wanted to remember an outline of his war years, rather than the horror of surgery upon those fallen in the war. Proud to have served, as evidenced by the scrapbook's very existence, he did not flaunt his accomplishments in its pages. Rather, we have an expanded chronology, or resume of sorts, for some years. Whatever the reasons for what he included and he left out, Professor Conner's scrapbook holds a lesson: it reminds us that the books, archives, and manuscripts that we collect never stand alone. Where one source casts a shadow, another sheds light. ☪

—DANIEL DAILY



*Abraham Lincoln*

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## Secret Gardens in Special Collections

FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT is remembered today as the author of three children's classics, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *A Little Princess*, and *The Secret Garden*, but during her lifetime she was a popular writer for both children and adults. Special Collections has recently obtained two important editions of *The Secret Garden*, her most enduring work.

Born in England but raised in the United States, Burnett began her career by writing short stories for American magazines. She issued her first novel, *That Lass o' Lowrie's*, in serial form in *Scribner's* in 1876 before publishing it as a book the following year. Readers who think of Burnett as a writer for children will be surprised by the adult themes that occur in *That Lass*. The heroine, Joan Lowrie, is a pit-girl who works in a Lancashire coal mine. The object of her hard-drinking father's abuse, Joan befriends another pit-girl who has had an illegitimate baby, and she falls in love with an engineer who is determined, despite the owners' opposition, to improve safety conditions at the mine. The poverty and ignorance of the colliers are given sympathetic consideration during the course of the story, the first in which Burnett

employed the local dialect that was to appear again in *The Secret Garden*. *That Lass* was well received by the critics, who predicted that Burnett would join Harriet Beecher Stowe and Mrs. Gaskell as an important novelist unafraid to treat controversial themes.

Burnett followed *That Lass o' Lowrie's* with *Haworth's*, *Louisiana*, *A Fair Barbarian*, and *Through One Administration*, which was serialized in 1881 and published in book form in 1883. The story of an unhappily married woman placed against the background of Washington, D.C., social life, *Through One Administration* earned its author comparison with Henry James for its close observation of the contradictions of human character. Within a few years, however, the direction of her career was changed by one book.

That book was *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, published to enormous popularity in 1886. *Fauntleroy* gave Burnett a new audience: children. During the next two decades she wrote short fiction and novels for children, including *A*

*Little Princess*, published in 1905. Many of her works were adapted for the stage, often by her own hand. She continued to write for adults as well, but her novels were lighter and more romantic than her earlier works, although many included controversial themes. The critics disparaged the change from the hard-edged realism of her early style, but her fans remained loyal to her ability to tell a good story.

Burnett published *The Secret Garden* in serial form in *The American Magazine* in 1910 and in book form in 1911. The American publisher, Frederick A. Stokes, issued two styles simultaneously; they are described in *The Bibliography of American Literature*. BAL 2115A is a modest book bound in blue cloth with the title and author's name stamped in gold. Probably intended for her adult readers, it does not contain any illustrations. BAL 2115B, however, contains four illustrations by Maria Kirk, the frontispiece and three plates inserted into the text. It is bound in green cloth with a color print glued to the front cover. Special Collections is fortunate to own both variants, which were purchased with monies from the Herbert Faulkner West Fund.

The English edition, published by Heinemann with illustrations

by Charles Robinson, was also published in 1911. Robinson (1870-1937) was well known for his fluid, decorative line and unusual color combinations. His illustrations for *The Secret Garden* are evocative of Mary Lennox's lonely isolation when she first arrives at Misselthwaite Manor, and of her sense of wonder as the garden works its magic on her and her cousin Colin. Many examples of Robinson's work can be found in the Sine Collection of British Illustrated Books, but monies from the Hickmott Fund enabled Special Collections to purchase this edition, thus completing an important trio in the history of children's literature. ❖

—PATTI L. HOUGHTON

### FURTHER READING:

Bixler, Phyllis. *Frances Hodgson Burnett*. Boston: Twayne, 1984.

Thwaite, Ann. *Waiting for the Party*. Boston: D.R. Godine, 1991.



An illustration from the first English edition.

## Things are Changing!

### The New Berry Library

**A**FTER years of meticulous planning by many committees, task forces, and countless individuals at the College and beyond, the new Berry Library will open at the beginning of the fall term, on September nineteenth. Phase 2 of the Baker/Berry Library Project—the demolition of Kiewit, the renovation of Baker, and the construction of Carson Hall—will then begin.

At right, an architect's rendering of the north façade of Berry Library. 🌿



### A Valediction from Margaret Otto

**I** WELCOME this opportunity to share my thoughts with the Friends of the Dartmouth Library as I move towards my retirement in October. My tenure as Librarian of the College began in July 1979. During my 21 years at Dartmouth I have had the privilege of witnessing the transformation of an excellent 20th century academic library into an equally fine



Joseph Meisinger

21st century library, a library which has marched forward confidently and successfully into a world forever changed by the technological revolution.

Today the Dartmouth College Library lives in two environments; one of print and one of electronic data. Both are essential if we are to meet the intellectual needs of the students and faculty of this institution. We continue to value, collect, and support content in the traditional hardcopy formats but we also recognise the necessity to add to our resources materials in electronic form.

The past, present and future success of the Dartmouth College Library has depended and will continue to depend on your interest and support. Please know I am grateful for all the Friends have done. 🌿



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