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A Guide to the
Nathan Francis Mossell Papers
1873-1983 (bulk 1885-1945)

1.75 Cubic feet

UPT 50 M913

Prepared by Evi Heilbrunn
August 2012

The University Archives and Records Center
3401 Market Street, Suite 210
Philadelphia, PA 19104-3358
215.898.7024
Fax: 215.573.2036
www.archives.upenn.edu
Mark Frazier Lloyd, Director

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PROVENANCE

Donated by Mrs. Ardelia Stewart, Executrix of the will of Gertrude Elizabeth Nicholson Cunningham, Nathan Mossell's granddaughter, in 1989, through the assistance of Mrs. Gussie H. Gelzer, secretary to the Alexander Family.

ARRANGEMENT

The Nathan Mossell papers are organized into four series: Biographical, Writings, Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital and Lincoln University. The family papers are organized by family member: Gertrude Bustill Mossell, Mary Cambell Mossell, Mossie Mossell Griffin, Bustill-Mossell Family and Gertrude Cunningham. The material in each series has been arranged alphabetically.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Nathan Francis Mossell was born in Hamilton, Canada, on July 27, 1856. His parents eventually settled in Lockport, New York circa 1865, where Nathan spent the majority of his childhood. In 1873, Mossell entered Lincoln University's preparatory program, receiving a Bachelors degree in 1879. While at Lincoln, he met and courted his future wife, Gertrude Hicks Bustill(1855-1948) and after graduation, decided to pursue a medical education in Philadelphia, a city that served as the national center of American medical education during the nineteenth century.

Dr. Mossell serves as a pioneer among African American medical professionals in the late nineteenth century, paving an educational as well as professional path for both black men and women in Philadelphia as physicians and nurses. In 1879, Mossell became one of the first African Americans enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1882, Mossell was the first African American to receive a diploma from the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. Roughly a decade late, in 1895, Dr. Mossell established the first private black hospital in the city and the second in the United States, the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital and Nurse Training School at 1512 Lombard Street. With few options available to black physicians during the 1880s, Douglass Hospital not only served as the first institution devoted to treating and healing black bodies in the city, but also symbolically represented one of the earliest efforts to initiate the rise of a respected, professional class of African American men and women. He served as Douglass Hospital's Superintendent and Medical Director for over thirty-years, retiring in the early 1930s. Beyond his multiple accolades as a physician, Mossell was also a staunch civil rights crusader. His inability to accept what he commonly referred to as "caste prejudice" established him as a public figure above all else, who was determined to fight for equal rights for African Americans. His writings attest to his fervent opinions about discrimination against blacks and his efforts to change racist policies in the vicinity of Philadelphia, but also nationally through organizations such as the NAACP. Beginning in the early 1890s, Dr. Mossell fought for the desegregation of Girard College, a school originally founded to educate and support white orphans. Other efforts such as his participation in the Niagra Movement in 1905, reflected his opposition to how other African American uplift leaders approached and envisioned the social assimilation of black Americans by the early twentieth century. On October 27, 1946, he died at the age of ninety-one, leaving behind his wife and two daughters, Florence and Mary Mossell.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Nathan Mossell Papers document his medical career and social leadership from the 1890s to 1940s and they include professional and public writings by Dr. Mossell, specifically on the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital and socio-political issues facing African Americans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The collection also contains two scrapbooks with newspaper clippings on Douglass Memorial Hospital, hospital events and memorabilia, as well as correspondence between members of the Douglass Board of Managers and its Medical Director. Many documents are the original brochures and advertisements from hospital fundraisers as well as graduation ceremonies for the Nurse Training School.

Family materials include writings by Gertrude Bustill Mossell, as well as documents relating to the genealogical history of the Mossell-Bustill family. A family photo album contains forty-three portraits of members of the Bustill and Mossell families as well as close friends, dating from the 1860s through the 1880s.

CONTROLLED ACCESS HEADINGS

Corporate Name(s)

- Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital (Philadelphia, Pa.).

Personal Name(s)

- Bustill Family
- Cunningham, Gertrude
- Griffin, Mossie Mossell
- Mossell, Gertrude H., (Gertrude Hicks), 1855-1948
- Mossell, Mary C.

Subject(s)

- African American physicians--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.
- African American women--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.
- African Americans--Civil rights--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.

- African Americans--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.
- African Americans--Professional education--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia.
- African Americans--Social life and customs.--Pennsylvania--Philadelphia

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INVENTORY

NATHAN FRANCIS MOSSELL	Box	Folder
Biographical		
Awards/Testimonials	1	1
"The Birth of the Negro Medical Profession in Philadelphia" by Daniel Walden and Thomas Treadwell 1968	1	2
Christmas Cards	1	3
"Dr. Nathan F. Mossell" by Sylvia James (a play in conjunction with the Philadelphia Fellowship Commission) 1947	1	4
Funeral Service 1946	1	5
Journal of Negro History 1922	1	6
"Nathan Francis Mossell, 1856-1946," Journal of the National Medical Association, 1 full journal, 6 reprints, 1 photocopy 1954	1	7
"Nathan Mossell, 1856-1946 Black Physician, Social Critic: A Preliminary Sketch" by Daniel Walden and Thomas Treadwell 1970	1	8
Obituary of Nathan Francis Mossell 1946	1	9
Radio Addresses	1	10
Race Relations in the US-An Appeal to England and Europe 1910	1	11
Scrapbooks		

1897 - 1906

pp. 1 - 2	4	1
pp. 3 - 4	4	2
pp. 5 - 6	4	3
pp. 7 - 8	4	4
pp. 9 - 10	4	5
pp. 11 - 12	4	6
pp. 13 - 14	4	7
pp. 15 - 16	4	8
pp. 17 - 18	4	9
pp. 19 - 20	4	10
pp. 21 - 22	4	11
pp. 23 - 24	4	12
pp. 25 - 26	4	13
pp. 27 - 28	4	14
pp. 29 - 30	4	15
pp. 31 - 32	4	16
pp. 33 - 34	4	17
pp. 35 - 36	4	18
pp. 37 - 38	4	19
pp. 39 - 40	4	20
pp. 41 - 42	4	21
pp. 43 - 44	4	22
pp. 45 - 46	4	23

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pp. 47 - 48	4	24
pp. 49 - 50	4	25
pp. 51 - 52	4	26
pp. 53 - 54	4	27
pp. 55 - 56	4	28
pp. 57 - 58	4	29
pp. 59 - 60	4	30
pp. 61 - 62	4	31
pp. 63 - 64	4	32
pp. 65 - 66	4	33
pp. 67 - 68	4	34
pp. 69 - 70	4	35
pp. 71 - 72	4	36
pp. 73 - 74	4	37
1906 - 1937	2	
1935 - 1946		
loose items (1)	3	1
loose items (2)	3	2
pp. 1 - 2	3	3
pp. 3 - 4	3	4
pp. 5 - 6	3	5
pp. 7 - 8	3	6
pp. 9 - 10	3	7
pp. 11 - 12	3	8

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pp. 15 - 16	3	9
pp. 17 - 18	3	10
pp. 19 - 20	3	11
pp. 21 - 22	3	12
pp. 23 - 24	3	13
pp. 25 - 26	3	14
pp. 27 - 28	3	15
pp. 29 - 30	3	16
pp. 29 - 30, loose items (1)	3	17
pp. 29 - 30, loose items (2)	3	18
pp. 29 - 30, loose items (3)	3	19
pp. 31 - 32	3	20
pp. 33 - 34	3	21
pp. 39 - 40	3	22
no nos. (1)	3	23
no nos. (2)	3	24
loose items	3	25
front cover	3	26
back cover	3	27
Telegrams and letters sent on the occasion of NFM's 86th and 90th birthday	1	12
Writings		
Autobiographical		
At the Grave of Thaddeus Stevens 1934	1	13
Autobiography	1	14

The Clansmen 1906	1	15
Constitutional League Sends Message to President 1903	1	16
Era of the New Deal 1938	1	17
Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital and Training School	1	18
Letters, Newspaper Editorials and Radio Speech, 1907-1943	1	19
The Medical Profession: A Toast 1944	1	20
Men and Issues Here 1901-1937	1	21
Race Problems and Leadership 1898	1	22
Race Segregation in Public Education	1	23
Restricted Suffrage	1	24
Social Equality and Prejudice	1	25
Stephen Girard's Will versus the People	1	26
Teaching of History Considered in Relation to Race Problems 1899	1	27
This Nation and the British Empire need a New Birth of Freedom	1	28
The Modern Hospital: It's Construction, Organization and Management 1908	1	29
Phlebitis following Abdominal Operations is of Septic Origin 1901	1	30
Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital		
Annual Report, 1920	1	31
Dedication program, 1909	1	32
Douglass Hospital Pamphlets, Event Brochures	1	33
Endowment Report, n.d.	1	34
Fundraising broadsides with NFM and Frederick Douglass engravings	1	35

Gala May Fete and Extraordinary	1	36
Historical Accounts of Douglass Hospital	1	37
Lincoln University		
Class-Day Exercises: Class of 1873	1	38
Commencement Exercises, 1943 (2)	1	39
Lincoln Alumni Magazine, [1885];	1	40
GERTRUDE BUSTILL MOSSELL		
	Box	Folder
"Dear Old Philadelphia":poem printed on postcard (4) 1913	1	41
"Forerunners of the Afro-American Council," Howards American Magazine, p. 410-424 1900	1	42
"I am Calling to You" poem with engraving of Frederick Douglass (2),1919; "Emancipation," 1913: Religious poem; "The Power of the Press": article appearing in Afro-American Encyclopedia: Thoughts, Doings and Saving of the Race 1896	1	43
"Little Dansie's One Day at Sabbath School," 10 p. (3) 1902	1	44
Obituary 1948	1	45
Twenty 19th Century Black Women (Washington, D.C. : National Council of Negro Women), p. 29 1979	1	46
MARY CAMPBELL MOSSELL		
	Box	Folder
Advertisements: Niagara Laundry; Dry Goods, Trimmings and Notions	1	47
MOSSIE MOSSELL GRIFFIN		
	Box	Folder
Obituary	1	48
BUSTILL-MOSSELL FAMILY		
	Box	Folder
"The Bustill Family," Journal of Negro History, October (3 xerox copies) 1925	1	49

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Bustill family genealogical papers	1	50
Bustill family reunion announcements 1912 1923	1	51
Newspaper Clippings		
Bustill family	1	52
Education	1	53
Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital/Mercy-Douglass Hospital	1	54
Gertrude Bustill Mossell	1	55
Miscellaneous	1	56
Paul Robeson	1	57
Racial Inequality	1	58
Society/Family/Personal	1	59
Vietnam War and Domestic politics	1	60
Photographs Gertrude Bustill Mossell, other family members, and office building on Pine Street (12)	1	61
Photographs Nathan Francis Mossell (8 photo., 3 engr.)	1	62
Photograph Album 1860 1880	5	
GERTRUDE CUNNINGHAM		
Black History pamphlets and brochures	1	63
Correspondence (1)/Mercy Service Club (1)	1	64
Index to Nathan Francis Mossell's Scrapbook	1	65
McGovern Campaign; Photographs -- Many showing Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander, Juanita Kidd Stout, and Helen O. Dickens as well as other family members (52) 1972	1	66
Photographs 1977-1983	1	67
Resolution from Board of Education of Township of Moorestown, State of New Jersey (2)	1	68

The Shortchanged children of suburbia: what schools don't teach about human differences and what can be done about it 1967	1	69
Vietnam War	1	70