

Guide to the William M. Watts Papers

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Guide to the William M. Watts Papers

Collection number: MS 37

African American Museum and Library at Oakland
Oakland, California

Processed by:

Sean Heyliger

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Sean Heyliger

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Descriptive Summary

Title: William M. Watts papers

Dates: circa 1910s-1980

Collection number: MS 37

Creator: Watts, William M., Dr.

Collection Size: .5 linear feet (2 boxes)

Repository: African American Museum & Library at Oakland (Oakland, Calif.)
Oakland, CA 94612

Abstract: William M. Watts (1885-1980) was born on February 15, 1885 in Lodi, Texas to Perry and Jane Watts. After earning a medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, Watts practiced medicine at hospitals in Houston, Texas and Fresno, California before opening the first hospital for African Americans in Oakland, California in 1926 at 3437 Harlan Street in North Oakland. The William M. Watts papers include photographs, patient and account ledger, license applications, newspapers clippings, funeral program, and one edition of the *Jackson County Medical Journal*.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

No access restrictions. Collection is open to the public.

Access Restrictions

Materials are for use in-library only, non-circulating.

Publication Rights

Permission to publish from the William M. Watts Papers must be obtained from the African American Museum and Library at Oakland.

Preferred Citation

William M. Watts papers, MS 37, African American Museum and Library at Oakland, Oakland Public Library. Oakland, California.

Acquisition Information

Donated to the Northern California Center for Afro-American History & Life by Katie Mae Watts and Marjorie Caffee, 1992.

Processing Information

Processed by Sean Heyliger, 05/15/2013.

Biography / Administrative History

William M. Watts (1885-1980) was born on February 15, 1885 in Lodi, Texas to Perry and Jane Watts. After earning a medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, Watts practiced medicine at hospitals in Houston, Texas and Fresno, California before opening the first hospital for African Americans in Oakland, California in 1926 at 3437 Harlan Street in North Oakland. While in Oakland, Watts contributed to *Western American*, a local African American newspaper, the medical advice column "How to Keep Well." The hospital closed due to financial troubles in 1927, and Watts returned to Marshall, Texas to operate the Sheppard-Watts Hospital following the death of his brother. Watts continued to practice as a physician until his retirement in the late 1960s.

Scope and Content of Collection

The William M. Watts papers include photographs, patient ledger, license applications, newspapers clippings, funeral program, and one edition of the *Jackson County Medical Journal*. The bulk of the papers are 25 photographs of Dr. William M. Watts; portraits and social events of Watts' friends and family; group photographs taken of staff outside of Watts' hospitals in Oakland, California, Houston, Texas, and Marshall, Texas in the 1910-1920s; and exterior photographs of the church in Lodi, Texas where Watts' was a pastor.

The papers also include a 600 page patient and account ledger kept for Watts Sanitarium in Houston, Texas and Sheppards-Watts Hospital in Marshall, Texas. The ledger includes patients' names and addresses, brief descriptions of ailments and treatments performed by Dr. Watts, and charges paid for medical services. The ledger also includes an account ledger of the sanitarium's costs for automobile maintenance, nurses' salaries, and laundry service.

Arrangement

Series I. Photographs Series II. Patient and accounts ledger Series III. Assorted printed material

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Watts, William M., Dr.

African American physicians.

African Americans--Hospitals--History.

Oakland (Calif.)--History--20th century.

Lodi (Tex.)

Separated Material

Three medical textbooks were removed and added to the African American Museum and Library at Oakland's library collection: Bacteriology and surgical technic for nurses/Emily M A Stoney; Frederic Richardson Griffith; A manual of physical diagnosis/O'Reilly, 1911; Manual of operative surgery/John Fairbairn Binnie.

Photographs







Physical Description: 25 photographs




Series Scope and Content Summary







Includes portraits and photographs of Dr. William M. Watts, his wife Maggie Watts, and family and friends in Oakland, California and Lodi, Texas. Also includes group photographs of doctors and nurses standing outside of Watts' hospital in Oakland, California and Sheppard-Watts Hospital in Marshall, Texas.

Arrangement

Arranged by photograph identification number.

- Box 1:1 **Portrait of William Watts [001] circa 1910s** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Cbc66d9e6-5844-47cb-81ab-f229eeb0da4f/>
- Box 1:1 **Group of men standing at church altar [002] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Cc557a040-3332-453a-85a4-ba538899cf58/>
- Box 1:1 **William Watts standing next to car, California [003] circa 1920s** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C8aae8da6-e89a-4f21-acce-14ed0f7da573/>
- Box 1:1 **Maggie Watts driving car, California [004] circa 1920s** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Cd43a731e-a8a4-47f5-8106-482b63d4a1fc/>
- Box 1:1 **William Watts and Mae Frances Bousley in living room, Lodi, Texas [005] 1970** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C37c28506-4d39-411c-93ce-246ab02ab53d/>
- Box 1:1 **William Watts sitting in chair next to Christmas tree, Lodi, Texas [006] 1970** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Ca723897d-7fb5-45ec-b963-e847281fe73c/>
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- Box 1:1 **William Watts sitting on front fender of car, California [007] circa 1920s** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C9c9c93c-f66e-4faf-9735-8322f142123d/>
- Box 1:1 **William Watts and Mae Frances Bousley standing next to Christmas tree [008] circa 1970s**
- Box 1:1 **William Watts in clerical collar [009] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Ccb76d73a-b811-42f5-a658-e88f433395d/>
- Box 1:1 **Portrait of Nancy Jane Runnels Watts, mother of William Watts [010] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Ca279eb61-1712-466f-a728-20d40e22a73e/>
- Box 1:1 **Two men walking outside of church, Lodi, Texas [011] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Ce117deea-0118-4031-b7c1-f1b2ad076e2f/>
- Box 1:1 **James R. Sheppard and four nurses standing outside of hospital [012] circa 1920s** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Ca1a14e9c-b6ad-43e8-b280-4211c7a37524/>
- Box 1:1 **Portrait of Frances A. Watts Kemper, sister of William Watts [013] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C8a5ab0d1-d531-4be1-be83-fe4763698599/>
- Box 1:1 **Portrait of Rosa L. Watts Jones, sister of William Watts [014] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C1b069cf8-e835-4dfd-ae5f-057d5e5c2797/>
- Box 1:1 **Exterior of William Watts' house, Lodi, California [015] 1980** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C771283fc-d02a-456f-a567-5c3e87bc2175/>
- Box 1:1 **Herman Bousley and William Watts standing out of C.M.E. church, Lodi, Texas [016] 1974** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C7cfa8611-eb75-41a0-8518-823845fb3d81/>
- Box 1:1 **Portrait of Maggie Watts [017] circa 1920s** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C6c415d5a-8f39-4137-9aaf-c8b729fd8afe/>
- Box 1:1 **William Watts standing outside of Sheppard-Watts hospital, Marshall, Texas [018] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C1771d683-435d-4fba-b916-2d1b2dbc8d96/>
- Box 1:2 **Herman Bousley and William Watts standing out of C.M.E. church, Lodi, Texas [019] 1974** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Cc35cd528-64be-4837-95fe-c146c45b217e/>
- Box 1:2 **Exterior of the Sheppard-Watts hospital, Marshall, Texas [020] 1961** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C69bcca01-c1da-4593-995b-cb98ce06ed40/>
- Box 1:2 **Maggie Watts and Frances Watts Kemper sitting in front of Dr. William Watts' office, Houston, Texas [021] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Cf2abc823-b04f-45dd-872d-7cc71e59904b/>
- Box 1:2 **Portrait of William M. Watts [022] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C05c90a6a-dccb-4010-ad97-ffdcc7c4d031/>
- Box 1:2 **Portrait of William M. Watts [023] undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C32759bb4-79c5-4764-8147-95ac7822377c/>
- Box 1:2 **Seven men and a nurse standing on the porch of Watts' Sanitarium [sic] [024] circa 1910s** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Cde4937c5-e7b4-4e09-a8e8-58adbb364c8f/>
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- Box 1:2 **Dr. William Watts and three nurses standing in front of W.M. Watts' Private Hospital, Oakland, California [025] circa 1920s** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Cf8915971-0b1c-4c97-a30a-6fb581946c5b/>
- Box 2 **Patient and accounts ledger [600 pp.] 1918-1969**
- Assorted printed material**
- Physical Description:** 6 folders
- Series Scope and Content Summary**
- Includes photocopies of Dr. William M. Watts' Texas State Board of Medical Examiners license, a Board of Examiners of the State of California delinquent license form, newspaper clippings related to Watts' hospital in Oakland, and a funeral program from his funeral service.
- Arrangement**
- Arranged by format.
- Box 1:3 **Newspaper clippings undated**
- Box 1:4 **Funeral program 1980** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C092e5dc4-142c-4465-beeb-8a63423fc623/>
- Box 1:5 **Board of Examiners of the State of California delinquent license form 1943** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7Cbc60bcbb-4041-421f-8bfa-e6427a0b1d60/>
- Box 1:6 **Texas State Board of Medical Examiners license 1921** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C00519cfb-ef39-42a0-8cb0-a54782800eb3/>
- Box 1:7 **Sheppard Memorial Hospital, Laura Whitaker's courses studied undated** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C583f3516-fe3b-451e-b78f-8014c53baf45/>
- Box 1:7 **Jackson County Medical Journal, Vol. XXVI, No. 41 1932** 
<https://oakland.access.preservica.com/file/sdb%3AdigitalFile%7C9dca69b4-9e75-4408-86c7-eb59ba6ef4f4/>