



# *National Archives and Records Administration*

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## ***Annual Reports of the Columbia Hospital for Women, 1866–1953***

During the Civil War, many women came to the District of Columbia in search of missing relatives. Many of these women became ill and required medical attention. In response, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton authorized the establishment of the Columbia Hospital for Women in 1866. Throughout its history, the hospital underwent several name changes, including the Columbia Hospital and Lying-In Asylum, the Columbia Hospital for Women and Lying-In Asylum, and finally the Columbia Hospital for Women.

The Columbia Hospital for Women became a pioneer in the field of obstetrics and gynecology. The Federal Government operated the hospital until 1953, when it was transferred to a board of directors and became a private, nonprofit hospital.

### **Annual Reports**

The Surgeon General's Office in the War Department wrote the annual report for the Columbia Hospital for Women. The hospital was located in the District of Columbia, and the Department of the Interior acted as the intermediary between many agencies in the District and Congress. Therefore, the Surgeon General forwarded the report to the Secretary of the Interior, who included the report in his annual report to Congress.

The annual reports do not usually include the names of patients, but include such information as

- Numbers of patients admitted and of those dismissed, cured, and relieved; those remaining under treatment; and those who died
- Number of patients by nativity, or national citizenship, and race
- Number of patients who were wives or widows of U.S. army soldiers or relatives or friends of civilians
- Number of patients by cause of death
- Number of free and paying patients
- Number of births
- Number of U.S. patients by different states represented, and
- Financial reports.

### **How to Find the Annual Reports**

The Columbia Hospital's annual reports are usually available at large university or public libraries, and at U.S. Government Depository Libraries. The National Archives and Records Administration has copies of the reports at its facilities in Washington, DC, and in College Park, Maryland. The Library of Congress also has a complete set of the annual reports. To identify a local depository library, go to the Government Printing Office web site at <http://catalog.gpo.gov/fdlpdir/FDLPdir.jsp> and select the link to "FDLP Public Page." That web site will provide you with information to contact a depository library to ascertain if it has copies of the annual reports.

The hospital's report falls under the purview of the Secretary of the Interior. Generally, the Interior Department's annual report has a table of contents, so locating the Columbia Hospital's report will not be difficult.

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