

**University of Sheffield Library. *Special Collections and Archives***

**Ref: MS 110**

**Title: Lydia Henry Documents**

*Scope: Documents on the early life and career of Lydia Manley Henry, graduate of the University of Sheffield Medical School*

Dates: 1918-1979

Level: Fonds

Extent: 1 box (2 files)

Name of creator: Lydia Manley Henry

**Administrative / biographical history:**

The collection consists of notes by Dr Henry, the first woman medical student at Sheffield to graduate, on her early life in Sheffield as a medical student and her subsequent relatively short career in medicine, together with three photographs and an audiotape memoir. There are also notes relating to her time as a pupil at Sheffield Day High School for Girls.

Lydia Manley Henry (1891-1985), MB, ChB, MD, DSc, known familiarly as 'Leila', was born in Macduff, Banffshire, 30th June 1891. After the death of her father when she was only two and a half years old she stayed in Scotland with her aunt until the age of 14, when she moved to Sheffield to join her mother, who had sought employment as a Lecturer at the Day Training College for Teachers before becoming Vice-Principal of the new City Training College in 1905. She attended the Sheffield Day High School for Girls.

The Medical School, formally now part of the new University of Sheffield founded in 1905, whose statutes demanded equality of academic opportunity between the sexes, began for the first time to admit female students. Lydia Henry was one of the first of these to be enrolled, in 1909 (Elizabeth Ethel Jenkins, who appears with her in the Medical examination lists for 1910 had appeared in the Day Students list of 1906-7, but seems not to have completed the course), and graduated MB ChB in 1916, at the same time as another woman medical student (Florence Elizabeth Millard, who had registered later) - these two being the first female graduates in medicine at Sheffield. She was also awarded an MD in 1920. During her undergraduate years at Sheffield she developed a serious streptococcal infection as a result of dissection work which caused her to miss a year of her studies. As practical training she worked in both the Sheffield Royal Infirmary and the Sheffield Royal Hospital, a process facilitated by the loss of many medical students and staff to the armed forces during the Great War. Her intern year at the Sheffield Royal Infirmary proved exceptionally onerous due to Zeppelin raids and accidents in the local munitions works. She also became the first woman assistant in the Royal Infirmary's female VD clinic.

At the end of her internship she joined the Scottish Women's Hospitals Committee, which provided women doctors to serve in France, and served as an assistant surgeon in the hospital set up in the Abbey of Royaumont, north of Paris, within reach of the Western Front. She was awarded the Croix de Guerre by the French government.

In 1920 her thesis on gas gangrene brought her an MD from Sheffield University, the first woman to receive one and only the second Sheffield MD ever awarded. In 1925 she emigrated to Canada, where she married, adopting the name 'Mrs J. Stewart Henry', and her medical career effectively came to an end. In 1978, at the 150th anniversary of the Medical School in Sheffield, she received an honorary DSc degree from her old University.

[An account of Lydia Henry's career is given in "The Women of Royaumont: a Scottish Women's Hospital on the Western Front", by Eileen Crofton (1997), on which these notes are partly based].

Related collections: Bartolomé Papers, Hall Collection  
Source: Presented by Dr Henry in 1977  
System of arrangement: By file

Subjects: Hospitals - Great Britain - Sheffield; Medical education - Great Britain; Women in medicine - Great Britain  
Names: Henry, Jessop Hospital for Women, Sheffield; Lydia Manley, 1891-1985; Scottish Women's Hospital, Royaumont; Sheffield High School; Sheffield Royal Hospital; Sheffield Royal Infirmary; University of Sheffield - Medical School;

Conditions of access: Available to all researchers, by appointment  
Restrictions: None  
Copyright: According to document

Finding aids: Listed below

Associated material: A collection of documents relating to the work of Dr Henry at Royaumont is held by the Faculty of Medicine, University of Sheffield; further material is in the Liddle Collection in the Brotherton Library at Leeds University and consists of 3 boxes of Lydia Henry's personal memorabilia, donated by her family, including letters (mostly in French) from soldiers to Dr Henry after their discharge from Royaumont; badges; scraps of songs; typescript of her experiences in France; many small photographs and postcards; letters to colleagues who had left Royaumont before her; memorabilia concerning the Royaumont & Villers-Cotterets Association; large collection of glass lantern slides which she used in the years after 1919 for talks.

## Itemised list:

### **110/1 Notes by Dr Lydia ('Leila') Manley Henry**

Items 1 - 6 below were received via the University of Sheffield Faculty of Medicine in 1977

- /1 Outline of career by date. [c.1977]  
Ms, 1 leaf
- /2 Memoir. 'Notes received from Dr. Leila M. Henry'. [c.1977]  
Ms, 25 ll.  
*inc. notes on Sheffield University Medical School, Jessop Hospital for Women, internship at the Sheffield Royal Infirmary, Sheffield Girls High School, Royaumont, MD award*
- /3 "For Whom the Bell Tolloed". [c.1977]  
Ms, 1 leaf  
*notes on Sheffield Royal Infirmary and Adolphus Stagg, the Head Porter*
- /4 Notes on the Sheffield University Medical School and Sheffield Royal Hospital, 1915-16. [c.1979]  
Ms, 3 ll.
- /5 Notes on Sheffield Day High School for Girls, 1906 - . [c.1977]  
Ms, 5 ll.
- /6 (a) Letter from Leila Henry to Geoffrey Dyer, Archivist at Sheffield University Library, enclosing 110/1/6 (b)  
Ms, 2 ll. 12 Aug 1979
- /6 (b) "Medical Women in Public Health. 1921". 1921  
Ts, 6 ll.  
*Ts of an article written for The Journal of the Medical Women's Federation following an address given by Dr Henry to medical students in Liverpool*

Items 7 - below are photocopies of notes supplied by Dr Henry to Dr Eileen Crofton, author of "The Women of Royaumont", (1997), to some extent covering the same ground as items 1 - 6, together with a transcription by Dr Crofton of part of the tape-recorded interview in Section 3.

/7 "at Collegiate Hall"

Ms. 5 ll. [n.d.]

*inc. arrival at Sheffield in 1905, the Training College and Sheffield Girls High School*

/8 "Colleg. Hall. Adjustment"

Ms. 2 ll. [n.d.]

*inc. Banff Academy up to 1905*

/9 "L.M.H."

Ms. 4 ll. [n.d.]

*1916-17, inc. graduation at University of Sheffield, internship at Sheffield Royal Infirmary under Major Finch, funeral of Aunt in Macduff and meeting with Stewart Henry*

/10 [Untitled]

Ms. 3 ll. [n.d.]

*1919-20, inc. award of M.D. at Sheffield and controversy over 'second candidate'*

/11 [Untitled]

Ms. 10 ll. [n.d.]

*inc. brief notes on period 1916-21, and appointment as Assistant MOH in Blackburn 1921-3 (inc. VD work)*

Items 12 - 14 below are photocopies of documents supplied by Dr Crofton to Dr Helen Mathers as information towards the Centenary history of the University of Sheffield and placed with this collection by permission of Dr Crofton

/12 "Press cutting ?1922"

Ts. 1 leaf.

*Note on a news report from a Blackburn? paper re a lecture on sexual matters and birth-control given to local girls*

/13 Transcription (part) by Eileen Crofton of audiotape reminiscences by Dr Henry (see below, 110/3)

Ms. 4 ll. [c.2000]

/14 Transcription (part) by Eileen Crofton of audiotape reminiscences by Dr Henry (see below, 110/3)

Ms. 4 ll. [c.2000]

**110 / 2      Photographs of Lydia Manley Henry**

/1    HL. Seated, wearing Croix de Guerre. 1918

Signed

On reverse: 'Leila M. Henry, M.B., Sheffield. 1916. French Croix de Guerre.  
Taken - 1918. in Sheffield. M.D. 1920.

/2    TQL. Standing, wearing M.D. gown. Colour. 1920

On reverse: 'L.M. Henry in 1920 following M.D. congregation. Copied from  
photograph taken by Swain, Regent St., London'

Enclosed in paper sheet with ms. note 'L.M. Henry in M.D. Gown. 1920'

/3    HL. Seated, with pen and paper. Colour. 1978

On reverse: 'Lydia M. Henry. aet. 87. date early April, 1978'

Enclosed in envelope with Mrs J. Stewart Henry's printed name and address,  
with ms. not ' 'photograph taken early April 1978'

**Audio-tape recording**

[Dr Henry's recorded reminiscences].

This is a copy of an original recording in the possession of Dr Eileen Crofton of Edinburgh which was donated to her by Dr Henry's daughter (Mrs Ann Murdoch), this copy being donated by Dr Crofton to the University of Sheffield Library.

A part transcription is available at 110 / 2 / 13-14 above

/ 3a

Side 1. 46 mins.

1909-16 Sheffield University Medical School as the first female medical student who graduated (MBChB, on June 30, her birthday); the effect of war on local hospitals; internship in 1916 at the Royal Infirmary, memories of the Lodge and Adolphus Stagg the porter, system of bell tolling, casualty duties and injuries from the munitions works and Zeppelin raid, spread of VD and consequent clinics, assistant in the Women's Clinic.

1917 Scottish Women's Hospital at Royaumont appeal but turned down, went to Edinburgh, [blank section], reads excerpts submitted to Royaumont Newsletter of 1966, family life in Canada in the 1960s, Royaumont reunion in Brittany.

Side 2. 47 mins.

Canada cont., [fades out], 1917-19 Royaumont, and additional hospital at Villers-Cotterets, award of military decorations to staff, 1920- Royaumont Newsletter, and Reunion, and further memories of Royaumont, 1939 attempt to found a new 'Royaumont', 1956 Amercian connection with Royaumont and 'This Is Your Life' programme.

/ 3b

Side 1. 46 mins.

Suffragettes, medical women in history, the Great War, 1914 setting up of the Scottish Women's Hospital which was offered to the War Office but refused and then to the French Croix Rouge and set up at Royaumont.

1917-19, Lydia Henry joined the staff, reminiscences and early history of the abbey where it was housed, the additional hospital at Villers-Cotterets [some repetition of material in 110 / 3a here]

Side 2. 44 mins.

1920-, Royaumont Newsletter and reunions, 1916-18 graduation at Sheffield, internship at the Royal Infirmary and the controversy which resulted, death of aunt and return to Macduff, meeting with Stewart Henry and marriage, 1917 Stewart Henry war wounds at Vimy Ridge et seq., Zeppelin raid on Sheffield, 1918 Royaumont and leave, German offensive, [gap]

1921-23 Assistant Medical Officer of Health at Blackburn, VD clinics, lecturing, milk deliveries, social evils like abortions, friendship with Sir Lewis and Lady Beard and others.