INTRODUCTION
Access
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Citation
[Identification of item], Jonathan Forman, AB, MD Collection, Spec.201121/Forman, Medical Heritage Center, John A. Prior Health Sciences Library, The Ohio State University.

Processing Notes
This collection was processed August 17, 2011 by Kristin Rodgers. The collection is arranged alphabetically.

Property Rights
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Provenance
This collection was donated to the Medical Heritage Center.

HISTORICAL SKETCH
Jonathan Forman was born in 1887 near Austinburg, a small village in Northeastern Ohio. He was an only child. After attending a one-room schoolhouse, at age fourteen he enrolled in the Grand River Academy of Austinburg. He enrolled at The Ohio State University in 1906 and majored in liberal arts.

Forman decided to pursue a career in medicine. He initially considered the University of Michigan and the University of Pennsylvania. As he prepared to enroll, Dr. Albert Bleile offered him a teaching fellowship in histological anatomy. With such an opportunity he decided to enroll in the Starling-Ohio Medical College (SOMC). The fellowship paid his tuition at SOMC, allowed him to finish his undergraduate degree, and to teach histology to the veterinary medical students.
In August 1911, though still a medical student, he joined the Department of Pathology at SOMC as a demonstrator under the supervision of Dr. Ernest Scott. He remained a member of the department until 1919.

Forman graduated from SOMC in 1913 and immediately became the surgical pathologist for Protestant Hospital (later known as White Cross Hospital, then as Riverside Methodist Hospital), St. Francis Hospital, and Children’s Hospital. In 1917, during World War I, he helped to organize a naval base hospital at the request of the American Red Cross. As a member of that naval unit he was assigned to the operating base at Hampton Roads, Virginia and was the Director of Laboratories until the spring of 1919. At that time he received the Austin Fellow in Physiology at Harvard Medical College under Dr. Walter Cannon. During this fellowship he studied and co-authored several publications relating to his research on the metabolism of the adrenal cortex.

In 1920 he returned to Columbus and entered a private practice in partnership with Dr. Verne Dodd and Dr. E. J. Gordon. At the time, The Ohio State University College of Medicine (officially organized in 1914 as a college) was using St. Francis Hospital and Protestant Hospital as teaching hospitals. Forman, Dodd and Gordon located their office at 394 East State Street, just a few steps away from St. Francis.

Initially Forman developed a practice with emphasis on gastrointestinal disturbances and wrote a number of publications relative to his GI investigations. Discussions with Dr. Warren Vaughn, an early pioneer in the United States in the field of allergy, led to Forman's interest in GI allergy. Developing a practice in food allergy attracted other allergic patients, especially when a Dr. James Phillips lost his eyesight. All of Phillips allergic coryza (rhinitis) and asthma patients transferred to Forman giving him a large population of allergic patients. He specialized in the practice of allergy, and he published extensively in this field for over fifty years. Forman is best known for writing The International Letters on Allergy and compiling a bibliography of the world publications dealing with allergy, which contained over 150,000 references. He also became an associate editor of the College of Allergy’s Annals of Allergy.

From his interest in food allergy, he began investigating the role of nutrition. This activity brought him into association with national leaders concerned with soil conservation. Because of his natural talent as a speaker, agricultural interests utilized him on national tours. For over a decade he toured the U. S. with Louis Bromfield, world-renowned author and dedicated agricultural conservationist, spreading the word on soil conservation and the production of high quality foods. Forman became president of “Friends of the Land,” a national organization for soil conservation.

In 1928, he and Dr. Ivor Clark organized The Medical Review Club, the first group of Columbus physicians who periodically met to have dinner and discuss some appropriate medical subject in great depth.

In 1934 Forman was appointed to the position of Professor of History of Medicine and was retained until 1959. During this time, in collaboration with Iowa D. Smith, Arthur J. Linn, and Carl Wittke, Forman published A Century of Medical Progress - The Ohio State University College of Medicine 1834-1934. Volume I. Forman also began a regular column in the Ohio State Medical Journal called “The Historians Notebook.” These articles were brief essays on
aspects of Ohio’s medical history covering such topics as tuberculosis and Cholera epidemics of the nineteenth century. From his interest in medical history, he and a small group of interested physicians and dentists organized the Ohio Academy of Medical History.

In his later years, Forman expressed strong opinions on national health issues. During the 1950s, Forman became one of the nation’s leaders evaluating the fluoridation of public water supplies in order to prevent dental caries.

Forman died in 1974.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE
The Jonathan Forman, AB, MD Collection (approximately 0.25 linear feet) contains information about and writings by Dr. Forman.

CONTAINER LISTING

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