



**Waring Historical Library  
and University Archives**  
171 Ashley Avenue  
MSC 123  
Charleston, SC 29425  
[waring.library.musc.edu](http://waring.library.musc.edu)

June 5, 2020

## **Waring Historical Library Statement Regarding Recent Events** **Dr. James Tolley, Waring Library Society President**

The Medical University of South Carolina has recognized that communities across our nation are publicly and privately grappling with the pain, inhumanity, and impact of systemic racism, and that the University remains resolutely committed to values of respect and compassion.

**In addition to this commitment, the Waring Historical Library stands with communities of color and recognizes the importance of listening to and learning from their voices and experiences, while documenting them in an intentional manner.**

**There have been countless moments in our nation's history when there have been disregard and abuse of the lives, stories and bodies of African Americans (see documented example below). These institutionalized prejudices persist to this day not only in our judicial, social and economic systems, but also in healthcare. We stand in solidarity with those supporting, driving and longing for overdue change, and we commit to doing our part.**

**We believe that by examining our history, we develop community and shape our local and national culture. As a historical collection—special collections, archives, and museum—the materials we collect and share determine the culture we choose to establish and helps advance the future we wish to create.**

The Waring Historical Library collects and preserves materials relating to the history of health sciences in South Carolina and the South, and it documents the health sciences of the Atlantic World during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Like other museums and archival collections, we have failed to document the lives, and in our case, the medical history of diverse populations, including the African American community. Only through a commitment to inclusivity, diversity and equity in our programs, our collection practices and in our outreach, will we be successful in our mission to address and diminish those historical gaps.

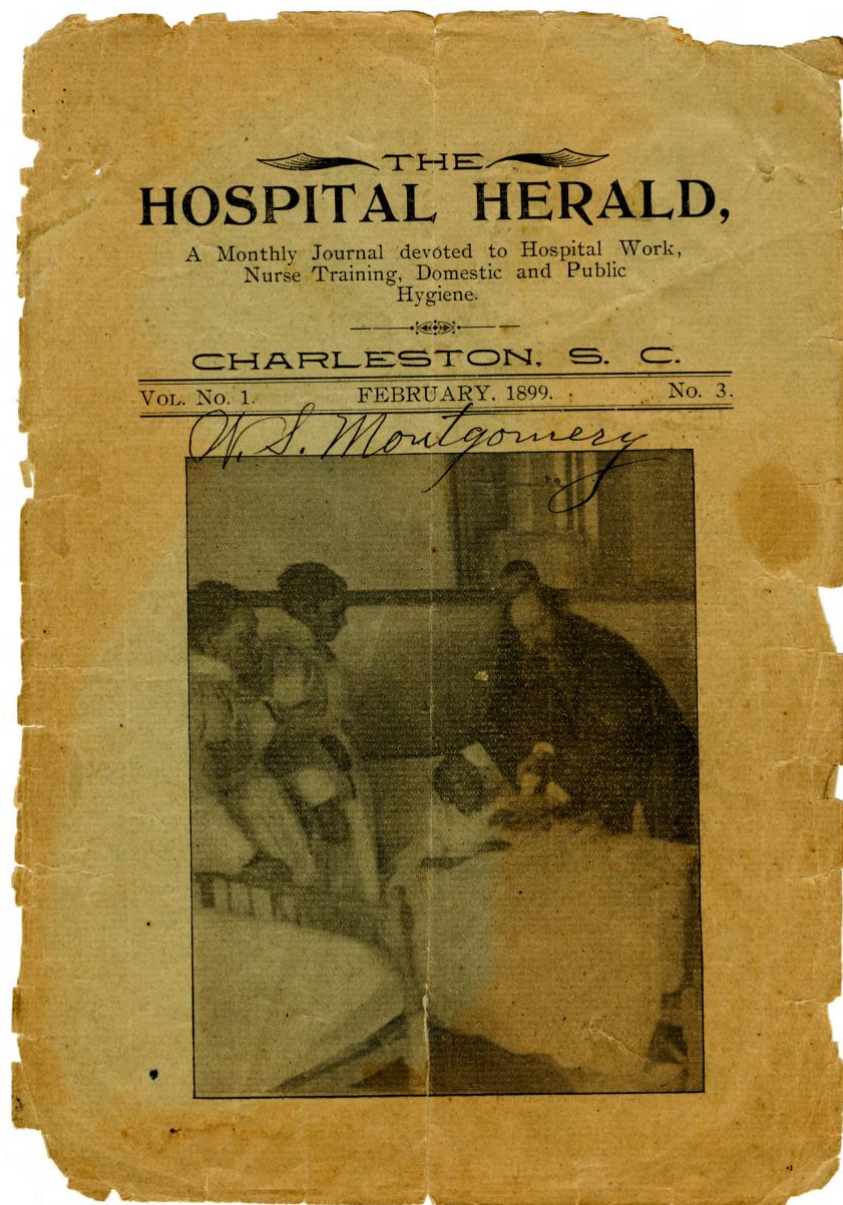
We need to build the capacity for individuals to see themselves in the history of our society, the history of our institutions, and the history of the health sciences. Diverse populations existed, lived, loved and died, and our collections need to better reflect that reality. In this way we can gain understanding, develop compassion and create a better present and future.

*"An equal opportunity employer, promoting workplace diversity."*

As an institution dedicated to understanding the human condition through the study of history of health sciences in Charleston, South Carolina and the Atlantic World, **we vow to offer opportunities for reflection and hopefully, offer opportunities for healing to begin.**

It is interesting to note how history repeats itself in many ways and how much we can learn from it.

James H. Tolley, MD, MAT  
President, Waring Library Society  
Assistant Professor Emeritus Emergency Medicine  
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*The Hospital Herald*, February 1899. One of the few examples in the Waring collection documenting the history of health sciences in the black community in South Carolina. The Waring seeks to actively collect material to correct this lack of representation. Photo Courtesy of the Waring Historical Library, MUSC, Charleston, SC.

Dr. Alonzo McClennan, African American physician, and two nursing students treating Mrs. Lavinia Baker, after her arrival at the Hospital and Training School for Nurses on Cannon Street in Charleston. Mrs. Baker's husband was appointed postmaster in Lake City, South Carolina. Her family was attacked by a lynch mob and their home set on fire in February 1899. Her husband and baby were killed in the attack, and Mrs. Baker and her surviving children were receiving medical care at the hospital. (Todd L Savitt, "Walking the Color Line: Alonzo McClennan, *The Hospital Herald*, and Segregated Medicine in Turn-of-the-Twentieth-Century Charleston, South Carolina," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, Volume 104, October 2003).

## **Community Resources**

[The State of Racial Disparities in Charleston County, by the College of Charleston](#)

[NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund](#)

[City of Charleston Community Resources](#)

[Books on Social Justice and Race, CHSToday](#)

[Coastal Crisis Chaplaincy](#)