Sir Walter Mercer

Reference and contact details: GB 779 RCSEd GD/12
Location: RS R5
Title: Sir Walter Mercer
Dates of Creation: 1895-1965
Held at: The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh
Extent: 42 series
Name of Creator: Walter Mercer
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Date(s) of Description: 1981; revised March 2009

Administrative/Biographical History:
Sir Walter Mercer, MB ChB FRCS Ed (1891-1971), surgeon, was born at Stow, Midlothian. He was educated at George Watson's College, Edinburgh and Edinburgh University. He then held appointments as a house surgeon in Edinburgh and Carlisle. During the First World War he served as a captain with the RAMC. After being invalided home he served as a surgeon in the Edinburgh War Hospital at Bangour. In 1920 he was appointed surgeon of the Tynecastle Orthopaedic Clinic, and in 1921 his responsibilities were increased to cover Craigleith Hospital. That year he was also elected FRCS Ed. He married Helen Maisie Lunan in 1923. In 1925 he moved to the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh and was surgeon to the Edinburgh War Hospital. During the Second World War, Mercer was appointed as consultant in orthopaedic surgery to the Department of Health and surgeon to the thoracic unit for the East of Scotland. In 1948 became the Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery for Edinburgh University. Mercer was elected FRSEd, 1935 and was President of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, 1951-1957. He was knighted in 1956, and awarded an honorary MCh by Liverpool University in 1958, the year of his retirement. His publications include 'Orthopaedic Surgery' (1932).

The papers of Sir Walter Mercer, MB, FRCS ed, FRS, Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at Edinburgh University comprise notes and articles spanning forty years, from the 1920s to the 1960s although most date from the 1940s and '50s. They include his own notes for lectures and articles and copy articles printed in medical journals on subjects which interested him. They are alphabetically arranged in his own subject headings.

GD12/1 Amputations. Typescript and printed, 1941-54
GD12/2 Ankle, Fractures in Region of. Typescript and printed, 1926-51, n.d.
GD12/5 Athletic injuries: text of a lecture, with manuscript annotations. Typescript, n.d.
GD12/6 Athletic injuries. Typescript and printed, 1937-50
GD12/7 Boils and Carbuncles. Typescript and printed, n.d.
GD12/8 Bone Grafting: includes the text of a lecture or article by Mercer on the subject, 1923. Typescript, printed and manuscript, 1923-43.
GD12/10 Brachial Plexus. Typescript, 1919-20
GD12/12 Club Foot. Typescript and printed, 1925-34, n.d.
GD12/13 Colle's Fracture, Typescript, printed and manuscript, 1932-50, n.d.
GD12/15 Cripples, with notes on the provision of medical services for orthopaedic
   cases in Scotland. Typescript and printed. Includes sample administrative
   records concerning an orthopaedic case, 1949-54
GD12/16 Elbow. Includes draft texts of an article by Mercer on Tennis Elbow.
   Typescript and printed, 1923-48, n.d.
GD12/17 Epiphysis. Includes the text of a chapter or article on Epiphysitis and notes
   by Mercer on the back of a requisition form for removal of a patient from
   the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, 1920s.
   Typescript, printed and manuscript, 1920s, 1930, n.d.
GD12/18 General (101-200). Includes a numbered list of contents in Mercer's
   hand. Typescript, printed and manuscript, 1895-1954
GD12/19 Geriatrics. Includes three letters from the Secretary of Edinburgh
   and Leith Old People's Welfare Council, 1951. 1949-51
GD12/20 Harvey. Includes texts of lectures given by Mercer as Harveian Orator, menu
   of the Harveian Festival Dinner and letters of Dr Clifford Kennedy and Dr
   James K Kennedy. Typescript, printed and manuscript, 1957-9, n.d.
GD12/21 Harvey Includes [?] a Scotsman supplement on British and Canadian Medicine,
   20 July 1959, notes for and a text of an article or lecture by Mercer on
   heart surgery and papers on other matters. Typescript, printed and
   manuscript, 1859-1959.
GD12/22 Congenital Dislocation of the Hip. Includes draft lecture notes and texts
   of lectures. Typescript, manuscript and printed., 1934-49
GD12/23 Injuries of the Hip. Typescript, printed and manuscript, 1938-49, n.d.
GD12/24 History. Printed 1927-57
GD12/25 Knee joint, derangements of. Typescript, printed and manuscript, 1920-46
GD12/26 Occupational Therapy. Includes a typescript list of the members of the
   Scottish Association of Occupational Therapists, 1952 and two letters from
   Miss Jean Waterston, Honorary Secretary of the Scottish Association
   of Occupational Therapists, 1950-1. Typescript, manuscript and printed, 1949-51
GD12/27 Orthopaedics. Typescript, manuscript and printed, 1949-60.
GD12/28 Sacralisation. Includes two letters from a patient, 1933, a catalogue of J.S.
   Lowden Limited concerning a Stamp Sale, 11 December 1936.
   Typescript, manuscript and printed, 1933-6
GD12/29 Sacro-iliac joints. Includes a letter concerning and short case-histories
   of sixteen patients at Bangour Hospital, 1956.
   Typescript, manuscript and printed, 1956, n.d.
GD12/30 Sciatica. Typescript, printed and manuscript, 1938-51
GD12/31 Scoliosis. Includes short case history. Typescript and manuscript, n.d.
GD12/32 Shoulder(1). Includes a letter of James S Hall, OBE, FRCS, 1958 and one
GD12/33 Shoulder (2). Typescript, manuscript and printed, 1925-56.
GD12/34 Soft Tissue Injuries. Typescript and manuscript, n.d.
GD12/35 Spina Bifida Occulta. Typescript, manuscript and printed, 1937-53
GD12/36 Splints. Typescript and printed, 1940-7.
GD12/37 Sutures. Typescript and manuscript, 1934, 1960, n.d.
GD12/38 Sympathetic System, Disturbances of. Typescript and printed, 1934-53
GD12/39 Hip Lecture. Typescript, manuscript and printed. Includes case histories and
   brief notes on patients, 1922-59.
GD12/40 Lecture notes on the contribution of Edinburgh to Orthopaedic Surgery and Sir Walter Mercer's inaugural lecture as Professor. Includes a printed copy of the lecture. Typescript and printed, 1949, n.d.
GD12/41 Reminiscences of a Surgical Training. Inaugural address by Sir Harold Stiles, Professor of Clinical Surgery, University of Edinburgh, 1919.
GD12/42 Draft Lecture or article concerning kidney transplants. Typescript and manuscript. Includes printed RAC map showing the Forth Road Bridge and two printed leaflets of the Scottish Clean Car Club, 1965, n.d.

Material concerning his patients will not be available due to Data Protection