

# R. M. Peardon Donaghy World War II neurosurgery papers

Ms Coll 91



Katherine Isham

2023

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## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition .....	3
Conditions Governing Access .....	3
Preferred Citation .....	4
Biographical / Historical .....	4
Content Description .....	4
Collection Contents .....	5
Selected Search Terms .....	6

## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Medical Historical Library, Cushing/Whitney Medical Library  
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333 Cedar St.  
New Haven, CT 06520-8014  
203-737-1192  
203-785-5636  
historical.library@yale.edu  
<http://historical.medicine.yale.edu/>

**CALL NUMBER:** Ms Coll 91

**CREATOR:** Donaghy, R. M. Peardon (Raymond Madiford Peardon), 1910-1991

**TITLE:** R. M. Peardon Donaghy World War II neurosurgery papers

**DATES:** 1943-1945

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** .25 linear feet (1 box)

**LANGUAGE:** English

**SUMMARY:** The collection documents R. M. Peardon Donaghy's service as the leader of a World War II United States Army mobile neurosurgical unit in Europe between 1943-1945. The collection includes Donaghy's field notebook containing handwritten patient notes; loose operative notes of neurosurgical procedures on small printed forms; 4 photographs; and a letter of recommendation for Donaghy.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/ms.med.0091>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use on site, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/ms.med.0091>.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Pete Donaghy, Betsy Garrett Widmer, Peigi Huseby, and John Donaghy, 2022.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

## Preferred Citation

R.M. Peardon Donaghy World War II neurosurgery papers, Historical Library, Harvey Cushing/John Hay Whitney Medical Library, Yale University.

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## Biographical / Historical

R. M. (Raymond Madiford) Peardon Donaghy (1910-1991) was a neurosurgeon known for his work in microsurgery. Donaghy served as a surgical resident at the Children's Hospital of Montreal and worked with Dr. Arthur Elvidge at the Montreal Neurological Institute. He continued his training in Boston, first at the Lahey Clinic, then at the Massachusetts General Hospital under John Mixter. He also studied psychiatry and neuropathology as a Dalton Scholar, examining brain abscesses with Dr. Charles S. Kubik.

When the United States entered World War II in 1941, Donaghy enlisted in the U.S. Army. He attended military training at Fort Sam Houston, where one of the first military neurosurgical units was established. From 1943-1945 Donaghy served as a captain and combat surgeon in a mobile neurosurgery unit in Europe where he helped treat wounded American and German soldiers. He was awarded 5 battle stars for his service.

In 1946 Donaghy left the military and returned to his alma mater, the University of Vermont to serve as chair for the Division of Neurology. His laboratory research encompassed neurovascular surgery and trauma of the spinal cord. He also helped develop tools and techniques for microsurgery, cofounding the world's first microsurgery research and training laboratory with Dr. Julius Jacobsen in 1958. Donaghy later served as the director of neurosurgical research at the Medical Center Hospital of Vermont and was the author and co-author of dozens of articles on the topic of neurosurgery. He retired in 1977, but remained professor emeritus of neurosurgery at the University of Vermont College of Medicine until his death in 1991.

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## Content Description

The collection documents R. M. Peardon Donaghy's service as the leader of a World War II United States Army mobile neurosurgical unit in Europe between 1943-1945. The collection includes Donaghy's field notebook containing handwritten patient notes; loose operative notes of neurosurgical procedures on small printed forms; 4 photographs; and a letter of recommendation for Donaghy.

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## Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1	Field notebook	circa 1943 - 1945
b. 1, f. 2	Operative notes Forty-one loose operative notes written on small forms that were tucked inside the front cover of the field notebook.	circa 1943 - 1945
b. 1, f. 3	Photographs Four small black and white photographs, includes group portrait of medical team; Donaghy after working 16 hour surgery shift; mess tent; and unidentified tent.	circa 1943 - 1945
b. 1, f. 4	Letter of recommendation Letter written by Colonel R. Glen Spurling of the United States Medical Corps recommending Donaghy to the University of Illinois School of Medicine. Includes envelope.	1945

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## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Brain -- Surgery  
Medicine, Military  
Neurology  
World War, 1939-1945