



State of Tennessee  
Department of State  
**Tennessee State Library and Archives**  
403 Seventh Avenue North  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0312

**ROSS, JOHN WALTON**  
**(1843-1920)**  
**PAPERS**  
**1891-1919**

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**MICROFILMED**

## INTRODUCTION

The papers of John Walton Ross, 1891-1919, chief of charities and hospitals at Havana (1899), in charge of Las Animas Yellow Fever Hospital at Havana (1901), rank of medical director, U.S.N. (1903), and assistant to Gorgas in overcoming yellow fever in the canal zone (1904-1905), were given to the Manuscript Division by Mr. Jack Killebrew, and his daughter, Mrs. W.E. Silvey of, Clarksville, Tennessee, in January, 1960.

The materials in this collection measure 2 linear feet. There are no restrictions on the materials. Single photocopies of unpublished writings in the John Walton Ross Papers may be made for purposes of scholarly research.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The papers of John Walton Ross, numbering approximately 1,500 items, contain correspondence, accounts, diaries, orders, reports, memorabilia and sketches. The bulk of the material falls in the years 1904-1905 when Dr. Ross was the assistant to Dr. W.C. Gorgas, engaged in research on the causes and cures for yellow fever. Their work was carried on in the Panama Canal Zone. The accounts cover the years 1899-1908, and include hotel and restaurant bills from South America, and also some personal accounts. Dr. Ross kept diaries for the years 1897 and 1899, which contain information on conditions in Cuba at this time. The reports include some important data on yellow fever epidemics in Florida (1896), in the North Atlantic Squadron of the U.S. Navy (1898), and in Cuba (1899). There are also reports on hospital conditions in Cuba in the early 1900s and information pertaining to the formation of new hospitals. The sketches are of Major Ross's cottage in Cuba, and also of the road plan (including hospitals) of Havana.

Dr. Ross's correspondents included Gen. John Boyd, Maj. J.E. Pilcher, W.C. Gorgas, Admiral John G. Walker, Dr. John C. Wise, and many letters from family and friends while he was stationed at Havana.

Seven medical account books dating from 1885 to 1892 give interesting case histories of Dr. Ross's patients. The earliest book is headed "New York City". Later ones do not give the name of the place where he was practicing.

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

### Dr. John Walton Ross

- 1843                    January 11 – Born near Clarksville, Tennessee; Son of James Ross (an educator) and Mary Barker Ross
- 1861                    Enlisted in Confederate Cavalry, served through the war
- 1870                    Graduated from Tulane as M.D
- 1870                    Entered U.S. Navy as Asst. Surgeon
- 1875-76                Served aboard “Franklin”
- 1878                    Worked with “Howard Assoc” in fighting yellow fever at Holly Springs, MS
- 1879                    Repeated above at Memphis
- 1889                    In charge of controlling yellow fever at Fernandina
- 1899                    Chief of Dept. of Charities and Hospitals at Havana
- 1900                    January 24 – Married Dara Clayton, daughter of Alexander Mosby Clayton, Judge of Supreme Court of Mississippi
- 1901                    Charge of yellow fever hospital at Las Animas, Havana
- 1903                    Rank of medical director, conferred by special act of Congress
- 1904-05                Asst. to Gorgas in overcoming yellow fever in Canal Zone
- 1905                    Retired because of fever
- 1920                    February 8 – Died at Pasadena, California

## CONTAINER LIST

### Microfilm Roll #1

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#### Box 1

##### **Accounts (Bills, Receipts, etc.)**

1. 1899-1901
2. 1902-1903
3. January -March, 1904
4. April- July, 1904
5. August - December, 1904
6. 1905-1908
7. Accounts (Ledger) – Dr. Ross – 1904
8. Biographical Data 1915-1917
9. Booklets (Pamphlets) 1893-1903

#### Box 2

##### **Correspondence (Family)**

1. Macrae, J.M. – 1904
2. Marshall, Edw. Ross – 1899-1905
3. Ross, Clara Clayton – 1900-1917
4. Ross, E.B. – 1904
5. Ross, Mildred (Mrs. J.W.)1892-1899
6. Ross, Mildred (Mrs. J.W.) 1900-1904
7. General – 1899
8. General – 1900-1905
9. General – undated

#### Box 3

##### **Correspondence (Special)**

1. Boyd, Gen. John – 1896
2. Byrns, Joseph W. –1913
3. Carter, H.R. – 1904
4. Gorgas, Marie – 1900-1904
5. Gorgas, Aileen, - 1899-1903
6. Gorgas, W.C. – 1898-1904
7. Hendrick, Archdeacon – 1904
8. Martin, Lucy – 1904
9. McCauley, S.W. – 1899-1904
10. Pilcher, Maj. James Evelyn – 1904
11. Redfern, D.E. – 1904
12. Ross, J.W. – 1891-1899
13. Ross, J.W. – 1900-1904

14. Ross, J.W. – 1905-1910
15. Ross, J.W. – 1911-1913
16. Ross, J.W. – 1914
17. Ross, J.W. – 1915-1919
18. Walker, Admiral John G. –1904
19. Wise, Dr. John C. – 1904

#### **Box 4**

1. Diaries – Dr. J.W. Ross – 1897, 1899
2. Envelopes – Empty
3. Memorabilia (Calling cards)
4. Memorabilia (General)
5. Memorabilia (Invitations)
6. Memoranda – Lists, Receipts – undated
7. Newspaper clippings – General – 1903
8. Newspaper clippings re: Panama Canal and yellow fever
9. Orders (circulars) – 1900-1904

#### **Box 5**

##### **Reports**

1. Yellow fever in Florida – 1896
2. Malaria in N. Atlantic Squad – 1898
3. Personnel needed for hospital in Cuba – 1899
4. Personnel needed for hospital in Las Animas – 1899
5. Yellow fever epidemic – Cuba – 1899
6. Methods of killing mosquitoes – 1901
7. Hospital reservation at Colon – 1904
8. Organization of Health Dept. for Panama 1904
9. Prevention of disease – 1904
10. Estimate for hospitals – 1905
11. Duplicates – 1904
12. Miscellaneous – undated

##### **Sketches**

13. Cottage for Maj. Ross in Cuba, 1901
14. Hospitals in Cuba and Road plan – undated

##### **Telegrams**

15. 1904

**Microfilm Roll #2**

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**Box 6**

**Medical Journals**

1. Sept. 26, 1885 – March 6, 1886
2. Feb. 8, 1887 – July 22, 1887
3. July 23, 1887 – March 31, 1888
4. April 1, 1888 – August 23, 1889

**Box 7**

**Medical Journals**

1. Aug. 24, 1889 – November 4, 1889

**Microfilm Roll #3**

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**Box 7**

**Medical Journals**

2. June 11, 1890 – June 30, 1891
3. July 1, 1891 – June 23, 1892