

[Archives & Special Collections, Columbia University Health Sciences Library](#)

[Anne K. Williams, "The First six hundred"](#)

WILLIAMS, ANNE K., d. 1944.

"The First six hundred" typescript, 1920-1928

2 folders (258 pages)

#M-0203

SCOPE AND CONTENT: Typescript of a presumably unpublished memoir by Anne K. Williams, a nurse who served in France during World War I with United States Army Base Hospital No. 2, a unit largely made up of doctors and nurses from Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. She sailed in May 1917 with the Base Hospital's first detachment which arrived in early June at Étretat on the Norman coast.

Williams served there until May 1918 when she was detached to the staff of Mobile Hospital No. 2. Mobile hospitals served near the front and her unit saw heavy action that summer at Vatry, Chateau-Thierry, and the Argonne. After the Armistice, Mobile Hospital No. 2 moved with the Army of Occupation to Trier, Germany. It rejoined Base Hospital No. 2 at Étretat on Christmas Day, 1918. The unit returned to New York in early January, 1919.

The memoir (129 pages) is a detailed account of the difficult and often dangerous work an army hospital nurse encountered during the war. Williams generally does not give dates more specific than the month, the season, or a major holiday. Her memoir is the basis for other accounts of Base Hospital No. 2 and Mobile Hospital No. 2 as published in Eleanor Lee's *History of the School of Nursing of the Presbyterian Hospital New York, 1892-1942* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1942) and Albert R. Lamb's *The Presbyterian Hospital and the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, 1868-1943: A History of a Great Medical Adventure* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955).

Williams never mentions her name (and rarely those of her colleagues) and usually writes in the first person plural. While the memoir doesn't include her name, records of the School of Nursing verify her authorship of it.

Since the memoir is dedicated to Anna Maxwell, founder and first Director of the Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing (1892-1921), it must pre-date her death on January 2, 1929.

LANGUAGE: English.

ACCESS: Open without restrictions. Columbia University does not hold the copyright to this item.

PROVENANCE: Gift of the Columbia University-Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing Alumni Association, Inc., 1998 (accession #1998.07.30).

LOCATION: Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Box 6, folders 6-7.

NOTE: There are two copies of the manuscript, each 129 pages in length, and which appear to be identical.

RELATED RECORDS: Archives & Special Collections has several other collections relating to Base Hospital No. 2 including the diaries of Elspeth Gould and Fred Junkin Hinkhouse; the George Emerson Brewer scrapbook; the papers of F. Esther Fortune; the Anne Penland Papers, and an almost complete set of the Base Hospital newspaper, *The Dooins*. Consult the finding aids on the departmental website for more information.

Both Archives & Special Collections and the Columbia University libraries' general circulating collection hold copies of *Nobody Ever Wins a War: The World War I Diaries of Ella Mae Bongard, R.N.*, the published diaries of Base Hospital No. 2 nurse.

Subjects

Williams, Anne K., d. 1944.

United States. Army Nurse Corps.

United States Army Hospital, no. 2.

Nurses – United States – Personal narratives.

World War, 1914-1918 – Hospitals – France – Étretat.

World War, 1914-1918 – Hospitals, charities, etc.

World War, 1914-1918 – Personal narratives, American.

World War, 1914-1918 – Medical care – France.

Hospitals, Military – World War I.

Military Nursing.