



THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES

- NAME OF COLLECTION:** **Vera Scantlebury Brown Papers**
- ACCESSION NO:** **84/82**
- ACTIVITY:** Medical practitioner and pioneer in infant and early child welfare
- DATE RANGE:** 1917-1977 (Dr Scantlebury Brown's own material, 1917-1939).
- SIZE OF COLLECTION:** 76 cms. (5 archive boxes)
- DATE OF TRANSFER:** 1984
- ACCESS CONDITIONS:** Open
- HISTORICAL NOTE:** Vera Scantlebury Brown was born in Linton, Victoria, in 1889, the daughter of a general practitioner with an interest in psychiatry. She was educated at Toorak College and the University of Melbourne Medical School, from where she graduated in 1917. She worked as a resident at the Melbourne Hospital and Children's Hospital until 1917 when she went to England and served as assistant surgeon in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Back in Melbourne in 1919 she received appointments at the leading women's and children's hospitals as well as the Victorian Baby Health Centres Association and the Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria. In 1924 she was awarded the degree of Doctor of Medicine; in 1926 she became part-time director of the newly-created infant welfare section of the Victorian Health Department. Infant welfare advanced rapidly under her guidance where she pioneered compulsory training for infant welfare sisters and published influential guides to infant feeding and child care. She was equally pioneering in the areas of ante natal and pre-school care. Deeply admired for both her professional abilities and her personal qualities, she was appointed O.B.E. in 1938. She died in 1946.
- DESCRIPTION:** Diary letter books and other notebooks. Research material on VSB. (*see below*)
- NOTE ON COLLECTIONS:** The collection is in three parts. First is material created by Vera Scantlebury Brown – her diary letter books and other notebooks. Second is documents compiled by Sister Edith Dawson, a colleague and friend of VSB. Third is material compiled and created by Wendy Kapper as part of a research project undertaken in the Dept. of Social Studies at the University of Melbourne in 1976-77. The latter includes index cards to the

diary letter books and to Sr Dawson's documents and to Wendy Kapper's own research.

NOTE ON LISTINGS:

Wendy Kapper's original numbering system for the diary letter books has been retained throughout.

DATE:

20 October 2004

1-4	1	DIARY LETTER BOOKS [<i>Series Note</i> Carbon copy letter books used by VSB when she was away from home to write long journal-type letters, usually over several days, that she sent to her family and others, and retained the carbon copy. <i>Original numbering of letter books from Wendy Kapper's indexing has been retained</i>].	1917 - 1930
	Vols A1- A15	Letters to family [The letters were written during the period VSB spent working as an assistant-surgeon in the Royal Army Medical Corps in England during WW1].	1917-1919
1	Vol A1	Letters 1-3	3 Mar 1917 – 17 Apr 1917
1	Vol A2	Letters 4-9	23 Apr 1917 – 24 May 1917
1	Vol A3	Letters 10-17	29 May 1917 – 11 Jul 1917
1	Vol A4	Letters 18-22	12 Jul 1917 – 11 Aug 1917
1	Vol A5	Letters 23-27	21 Aug 1917 – 10 Sep 1917
1	Vol A6	Letters 28-34	11 Sep 1917 – 16 Oct 1917
1	Vol A7	Letters 35-40	24 Oct 1917 – 26 Nov 1917
1	Vol A8	Letters 41-48	3 Dec 1917 – 29 Jan 1918
1	Vol A9	Letters 49-54	2 Feb 1918 – 1 Mar 1918
1	Vol A10	Letters 55-67	5 Mar 1918 – 6 May 1918
2	Vol A11	Letters 68-78	11 May 1918 – 4 Jul 1918
2	Vol A12	Letters 79-86	8 Jul – 1918 – 26 Aug 1918
2	Vol A13	Letters 87-94	2 Sep 1918 – 17 Oct 1918
2	Vol A14	Letters 95-103	24 Oct 1918 – c. 4 Dec 1918
2	Vol A15	Letters 104-?	13 Dec 1918 – 17 Feb 1919
2	Vol AN1	Letters to F.K. Norris	29 Jun 1917-16 Sep 1917
2	Vol AN2	Letters to F.K. Norris	17 Sep 1917- 13 May 1917
2	Vol AN3	Letters to F.K. Norris	16 Jun 1918-3 Nov 1918

2	Vol ADS	Letters to Dorothy Stevenson	2 May 1917-25 Jan 1918
2	Vol B1	Letters to Mother To family from Tasmania To mother from Toorak	18 Mar 1919-14 Dec 1919 5 Oct-22 Oct 1921 14 Sep-25 Sep 1918
2	Vol B2	Letters to family from journey to NZ and USA	10 Jan 1924-16 Mar 1924
2	Vol B3	Letters to Mother	29 Oct 1928-5 Dec 1928
3	Vol B4	Letters to mother (contains loose letter: 29 Mar 1929)	10 Dec 1928-6 Mar 1929
3	Vol B5	Letters to Mother	22 Mar 1929-10 Jun 1929
3	Vol B6	Letters to Mother	3 Sep 1929-14 Oct 1929
3	Vol B7	Letters to Mother	21 Oct 1929-20 Nov 1929
3	Vol B8	Letters to Mother	28 Nov 1929-18 Dec 1929
3	Vol B9	Letters to Mother	2 Jan 1930-8 Feb 1930
3	Vol B10	Letters to Mother	18 Feb 1930-2 Apr 1930
3	Vol B11	Letters to Dottie (sister)	25 Sep 1931-23 Feb 1932
3	Vol C	Victorian Baby Health Centres Association: Report Book of Medical Officer (VSB) [Includes Special Reports and letters to 'Pritch' (children's nurse), 1939]	1920-1924 1939
4	Vol D	Draft history of Baby Health Centres Association Marking notes for Mothercraft Nurses Exam, 1932	
4	Vol E	Notes made on visit to NZ and USA	1924
4	Vol F	Blank notebook	
4	Folder 1	Loose case notes made of hospital patients, apparently WW1 wounded soldiers. [8 pp]. Two newscuttings removed from diaries of items relating to VSB.	n.d. n.d.
4		<i>A Guide to the Care of the Young Child</i> by Vera Scantlebury Brown and Kate Campbell (Dept. of Health, Victoria, 1947) [1 copy]	

- 4 Folder 2 **MATERIAL COMPILED BY SISTER EDITH DAWSON.**
 [Includes photocopies of news items about VSB, published during and after her life (incl. obituaries), conference reports and broadcast-transcripts honouring VSB, a transcript of talk given by VSB, and other items relating to infant and child welfare. 2 copies of each.
 One folder.]
- 4 **WENDY KAPPER'S RESEARCH** Compiled 1976-1977.
 [Research and indexes compiled by Wendy Kapper in the course of a research project of the Dept. of Social Studies at the University of Melbourne, supervised by Cath James (daughter of VSB)].
- 4 Folder 3 **Biographical notes on Dr Vera Scantlebury Brown.** 1977
 [Written by Wendy Kapper. 43 pp.]
- 5 IC 1 **Index cards to diary/letter books.**
 [Index to names, alphabetically arranged].
- 4 IC2 **Index to volumes of diary/letter books**
 [Index to date range covered in each volume].
- 4 IC3 **Interview records.**
 [Index cards of notes made by Wendy Kapper in the course of interviewing family and colleagues about VSB. Interviewees include:
 Eileen Lester (sister)
 Cath James (daughter)
 Dame Kate Campbell
 Sister Edith Dawson
 Dame Mary Herring
 Darrell Wardle (nephew)
 Mrs S. Martin (cousin)
 Miss Thea Wilkinson
 Miss Dorothy Ross
 Miss M. Davis
 Dr Lena Thomas
 Dr A.E. Wilmot]
- 4 IC4 **Index to interviews.**
- 4 IC5 **Index to Royal Commission on Health**
- 4 IC6 **Index to Sister Dawson's material.**
 [Index cards to material described above].
- 4 IC7 **Index to Dept. of Health documents.**
 [Bibliographical index cards of reports written by VSB and published by the Victorian Dept. of Health. The reports themselves are not held in this collection].
- 4 IC8 **Index to relevant sections of Truby King's biography.**
 [Sections indexed refer to infant and child welfare. Biography itself not held in this collection].

E N D

