The papers of Dr. Bertha Van Hoosen were donated to the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm in 1979 by Ms. Alice Serrell. The papers were open for research in 1992.

Bertha Van Hoosen was born in Stoney Creek Village (now a portion of Rochester Hills, Michigan) on March 26, 1863 to Joshua and Sara Ann (Taylor) Van Hoosen. The Rochester Hills Museum was Dr. Van Hoosen’s home until she left for the University of Michigan in 1880. In 1885, she began her medical studies at the University of Michigan Medical School and received her M.D. in 1888.

Lacking confidence in treating patients, Bertha sought further hospital training over the next four years at the Woman’s Hospital in Detroit, the Kalamazoo State Hospital and the New England Hospital for Women and Children before setting up her own practice in Chicago.

Dr. Van Hoosen was a successful gynecologist, obstetrician and surgeon. She is known for “button-hole” incisions for appendectomies; she pioneered the use of scopolamine morphine (twilight sleep) to lessen the pain of child-birth; and she was the founder and first president of the American Women’s Medical Association.

Dr. Van Hoosen was also an instructor at several schools and universities throughout her lifetime. She traveled to Europe several times as well as the Far East where she experienced the Great Earthquake of 1923 in Yokohama, Japan. In 1947, she published her autobiography Petticoat Surgeon. She returned to Van Hoosen Farm in 1950 to take care of her ill sister, Alice, where she remained with her niece, Sarah Van Hoosen Jones, until her death on June 7, 1952.

The papers of Dr. Bertha Van Hoosen cover mostly her career.

Important subjects covered in the collection are:

Dr. Van Hoosen’s accomplishments as a gynecologist, obstetrician and surgeon.
Contents
1 Manuscript box
0 Storage box
2 monographs

Series I, Personal files, 1900-1950, Boxes 1-1:
Correspondence, death notices, sketching,
post cards, trip expense book, miscellaneous
records.

Series II, Career, 1988-1950, Boxes 1-1:
Correspondence, magazine articles, miscellaneous
records.

Series III, Publishing, 1947, Boxes 1-1:
Index to book, monographs.

*** It should be noted that this collection contains approximately 10 photocopies of
correspondence and magazine articles from the Michigan Historical Collections, Bentley
Historical Library, University of Michigan. This material may be protected by copyright
law (Title 17, US Code). Permission to quote from, publish, reproduce, display or
deposit in other institutions must be obtained from the copyright holder.

There is one linear foot of records for Bertha Van Hoosen stored at the Bentley Historical
Library at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan.
The series contains correspondence, death notices, a pencil sketching, travel expense book and other miscellaneous items. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject then chronological per item.

Box 1

1. Correspondence, 1900-1950
2. Death notices, 1952
3. Miscellaneous, 1912-1926
4. Pencil sketching, 1940
5. Receipts, 1925 & 1936
Series II
Career Files, 1888-1950
Box 1-1

This series contains correspondence, magazine articles and other miscellaneous records. Files are arranged alphabetically by subject and then chronologically per item.

Box 1

1. Magazine articles about Dr. Van Hoosen, 1946, 1950
2. Magazine articles written by Dr. Van Hoosen, 1930, 1949
3. Miscellaneous, N/D

***Note - The cover of Ladies Review -1916 is filed in oversize documents file.

Series III
Publishing, 1947
Boxes 1-1

This series contains the original index to her autobiography and two first edition copies of her book.

Box 1

1. Index to autobiography, 1947
2. Monographs, 1947

Note: See “Crittenton Hospital” Reference File