



Smithsonian

*National Museum of American History Kenneth E. Behring Center*

## Guide to the Crawford W. Long Collection

NMAH.AC.0120

Robert S. Harding, archivist and Grace Angle, volunteer

1984

Archives Center, National Museum of American History  
P.O. Box 37012  
Suite 1100, MRC 601  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012  
archivescenter@si.edu  
<https://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

# Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Scope and Contents.....	2
Arrangement.....	2
Biographical / Historical.....	2
Names and Subjects .....	2
Container Listing .....	4

---

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
<b>Title:</b>	Crawford W. Long Collection
<b>Date:</b>	1897
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAH.AC.0120
<b>Creator:</b>	Taylor, Frances Long, Mrs. Long, Crawford Williamson, Dr., 1815-1878 (Creator)
<b>Extent:</b>	0.5 Cubic feet (3 boxes)
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The collection documents Crawford W. Long's use of sulphuric ether on a patient. The materials include glass plate negatives, correspondence, printed documents, and photprints.

---

## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

The collections was donated by Mrs. Frances Long Taylor in 1921.

### Provenance

The collection was transferred from the Division of Medical Sciences (now the Division of Medicine and Science) on February 15, 1985. Four of the five pamphlets were given by Dr. Long's daughter, Mrs. Frances Long Taylor, in 1921 and the provenance of Senate Document No. 60 of the 69th Congress, 1st Session, a record of the proceedings in Statuary Hall on the presentation of a statue of Dr. Long, is not known.

### Processing Information

Processed by Robert S. Harding, archivist and Grace Angle, volunteer, 1984.

### Preferred Citation

Crawford W. Long Collection, 1841-1926, Archives Center, National Museum of American History

### Restrictions

Collection is open for research.

### Conditions Governing Use

Collection items available for reproduction, but the Archives Center makes no guarantees concerning copyright restrictions. Other intellectual property rights may apply. Archives Center cost-recovery and use fees may apply when requesting reproductions.

---

## Biographical / Historical

Crawford Williamson Long was born November 1, 1815, in Danielsville, Georgia, the son of James and Elizabeth Ware. He was a studious boy who entered Franklin College (now the University of Georgia) at fourteen and graduated in 1835, second in his class. After teaching one year he began to read medicine, first under a preceptor, later at Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky, and finally at the University of Pennsylvania, where he received a degree in 1839.

Following eighteen months in New York, where he gained a reputation as a skillful surgeon, he began to practice in Jefferson, a village in Jackson County, Georgia. In August 1842, Dr. Long married Caroline Swain, the niece of Governor David Lowry Swain of North Carolina.

During the early 1840's laughing gas was the subject of much discussion and a number of demonstrations of its effects on volunteers. In January, 1842 several of Long's friends induced him to let them have a nitrous oxide frolic. No nitrous oxide was available but Long offered sulphuric ether as a substitute, explaining to his friends that it was equally exhilarating and as safe as nitrous oxide. After observing that the young men who had inhaled the sulphuric ether did not experience pain, Dr. Long decided to test its ability to produce insensitivity in his practice.

On March 30, 1842, Dr. Long administered sulphuric ether to James Venable and removed a small tumor from his neck. This was the first recorded surgical procedure using inhalation anaesthesia. On June 6 he removed another tumor from Venable's neck and on July 3 amputated a boy's toe. By September Long had performed eight operations using ether as the anaesthetic. This experience with ether was not published until December, 1849 as a result of the controversy over W. T. G. Morton's claim to priority in its discovery. At that time Dr. Long described his first five operations using ether in a paper in the Southern Medical and Surgical Journal under the title "An Account of the First Use of Sulphuric Ether by Inhalation as an Anaesthetic in Surgical Operations."

In 1850 Crawford Long moved to Athens, Georgia, where he immediately acquired a large surgical practice. He died there on June 16, 1878. In 1910 an obelisk was erected to his memory in Athens and in 1926 Georgia placed his statue in Statuary Hall in the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

---

## Scope and Contents

The collection includes five publications: a biographical sketch; personal recollections of a contemporary pharmacist, together with correspondence and documentation of Long's priority in the use of ether; a paper read before the Johns Hopkins Historical Society; the proceedings in Statuary Hall when Crawford Long's statue was unveiled; and a memorial to Dr. Long published by the University of Pennsylvania.

Also included are an original letter (dated December 3, 1911) from Dudley W. Buxton to Mrs. Taylor, Dr. Long's daughter, regarding a paper he had read before the Royal Academy of Medicine, and glass plate photonegatives and one film negative, with corresponding photographic prints, of a number of letters attesting to Dr. Long's use of sulphuric ether as an anaesthetic on approximate or specific dates.

---

## Arrangement

The collection is arranged into one series.

---

## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Anesthesia  
Medical sciences  
Physicians

Types of Materials:

Photographs -- Black-and-white negatives -- Glass -- 1890-1920  
Photographs -- Black-and-white photoprints -- Silver gelatin -- 19th-20th century

Names:

Edward VII, King

---

## Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	<p>Crawford W. Long. Proceedings in Statutory Hall of the United States Capitol upon the Unveiling and Presentation of the Statue of Crawford W. Long by the State of Georgia. Senate Document No. 160. Washington, D.C., 1926 1 Book Notes: Paperbound book, 69 pp.</p>
Box 1, Folder 2	<p>Foy, George, M.D. Crawford Williamson Long, M.D. The Discoverer of Ether Anaesthesia. A Biographical Sketch. , 1903 1 Document Notes: Book bound in blue leather, 17 pp. Reprinted from Janus. undated, but autographed by Foy on first page, 8 June 1903. S.I. accession no. 66216. With exhibit label stating that this is one of three copies which were bound in limp blue leather, and stamped in gold for presentation to King Edward VII, because of his interest in anesthesia.</p>
Box 1, Folder 3	<p>Jacobs, Joseph, Phar. D. Dr. Crawford W. Long. The Distinguished Physician Pharmacist. Atlanta, Georgia. , 1919 1 Book Notes: Booklet, 47 pp. U.S.N[atational] M[useum] Cat. No. M 1095, Acc. No. 66216.</p>
Box 1, Folder 4	<p>University of Pennsylvania. Memorial to Dr. Crawford W. Long...An Account of the Ceremonies... Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania , 1912 April 1 Book Notes: Bulletin reprint, 15 pp. (Reprint from Old Penn), April 1912. U.S.N[atational] M[useum] Cat. No. M 1089, Acc. No. 66216.</p>
Box 1, Folder 5	<p>Young, Hugh H. "Long, the Discoverer of Anaesthesia. A Presentation of His Original Documents," The Johns Hopkins Historical Bulletin, 77-78., 1897 1 Document Notes: Reprint, 22 pp. (August September 1897). U.S.N.M. Cat. No. 1086</p>
Box 1, Folder 6	<p>Photoprints, from glass plate and film negatives , undated 17 Photographic prints Notes: copies of letters relating to the use of ether as an anaesthetic by Dr. Long, attesting to the approximate or specific date of its use. Location of original letters unknown.</p>
Box 1, Folder 7	<p>Original letter from Dudley W. Buxton to Mrs. Taylor, Dr. Long's daughter, regarding a paper he read before the Royal Academy of Medicine, 3 December 1911</p>
Box 2	<p>Negatives (glass and film) 1 Glass negative (14" x 17")</p>
Box 2, Item 8;	<p>De Laperrier, 1854</p>

Box 2, Item 7; Box 2, Item 1	
Box 2, Item 2	Mary E. Mare, 1846, 1854
Box 2, Item 3	James E. Hayes, 1854
Box 2, Item 4	Thurmond, 1853
Box 2, Item 5	Dr. Groves, undated
Box 2, Item 6	Dr. Long, undated
Box 2, Item 9	Stapler, 1853
Box 2, Item 10	Rawls, undated
Box 2, Item 11	Camak, 1878
Box 2, Item 12	J.M. Venable, 1842
Box 2, Item 13	Vinson, 1849
Box 2, Item 14	Mrs. Carlton, undated
Box 2, Item 15	Thompson, 1854
Box 2, Item 16	Rawls #2
Box 2, Item 17	James H. Hayes, 1853 December
Box 2, Item 18	James E. Hayes, 1854
Box 3	Photonegatives 17 Glass negatives 1 Negatives (photographic)