Millersville meets the Woman’s Medical College

Prepared by Hannah Charlton
The first American medical school for women was created by a Pennsylvania legislative act. The institution—the Female Medical College of Pennsylvania—was founded that same year in Philadelphia. 40 women attended the first year.
1854 ~ Lancaster County Teachers Institute opens. Became a Normal School in 1855.
In response to the prevailing opposition to women entering the medical field, Dr. Emeline H. Cleveland wrote in an introductory lecture:

- In recognition of the fact that woman has ever held a large place in the chamber of sickness, it is simply asked, shall she retain that place in ignorance of the laws of life and health, of the nature and causes of disease, and dependent alone, or mainly, in alleviating suffering, upon her instincts and sympathies, or shall her natural endowments be increased and strengthened by education, and she fitted to become not only the efficient nurse, but the intelligent adviser and reliable counsellor.

Letitia Frantz was born in Lancaster.
Because Philadelphia hospitals would not allow women students to treat patients, Dr. Ann Preston founded the Woman's Hospital of Philadelphia so that women could gain clinical experience.
March 31, 1865

Anandi Joshi is born to a wealthy Brahmin family in India. At age 14, Anandi became interested in studying medicine after losing her infant son, and her husband encouraged her ambitions.
1867

Female Medical College renamed as the Woman's Medical College.
Lilian Welsh graduated from Millersville University. She attended the Women’s Medical College and received her degree in 1889. Welsh taught at the Women’s College of Baltimore, which later became Goucher College.
Letitia Frantz graduated from Millersville. Her uncle, Henry Landis, was a doctor in Reading and specialized in respiratory ailments.
Anandi Joshi began attending the Women’s Medical College with the support of a Mrs. Carpenter, who read about Joshi’s desire to study medicine in Princeton’s Missionary Review. Joshi’s decision went against orthodox Hindu beliefs, which discouraged the education of women.

Letitia Frantz was attending the Women’s Medical College at the time and wrote about Joshi’s arrival in a letter to her father:

> Have you seen the Heindoo princess yet? She dresses like an Indian & looks like an Indian & they say she daren’t eat what we eat.
September 30, 1883

Excerpt of letter from Letitia Frantz to her father, Andrew M. Frantz

Prof. Bodley had a reception at her house yesterday evening for the new Brahmin student. I did not attend, so I cannot tell you about it, but expect you will see accounts of it in the papers. A paper carrier said to Mrs. Badeau this morning, "Have you seen the Hawaiian princess yet? she dresses like an Indian and looks like an Indian: they say she doesn't eat what we eat."
October 21, 1883

And another thing, before you give me or any one else a dose of quinine, be sure that the bowels have been thoroughly moved—five grains of saline in the evening & a sedlitz powder in the next morning, would be a good preparation; or a dose of castor oil—"oil of sorrow" so called by Thomas Carlyle, as we were told in a lecture yesterday, had to take a great deal of that oil.)

Excerpts of letter from Letitia Frantz to her mother, Esther Frantz.
1884

- Dr. Letitia Franz received her medical degree and set up a practice specializing in nose and throat in Lancaster.
Dr. Anandi Joshi received her medical degree. Not only was she India’s first female doctor, but she was the first Indian woman to pursue a Western education. Despite family concerns over her poor health, Joshi returned to India to practice. She died of tuberculosis in 1887, at the age of 22.
Further Information

- To see Letetia Frantz’s letters, along with other family members, see: [http://digital.klnpa.org/cdm4/browse.php?CISOROOT=%2Ffrantz](http://digital.klnpa.org/cdm4/browse.php?CISOROOT=%2Ffrantz)
Sources

- Cazalet, Sylvain. “Female Medical College & Homeopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania.” www.homeoint.org/cazalet/histo/pennsylvfem.htm


- Frantz Family Papers (MS 71), 1883


- For more information about Dr. Anandibai Joshi, please see these resources in Ganser Library:
  - “Dr. Anandibai Joshi Time and Achievement” Videocassette