



THE CUSHING COLLECTION

PROJECT ARCHITECT: TURNER BROOKS ARCHITECTS

CLIENT: YALE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

PRESENTED OCTOBER 2008



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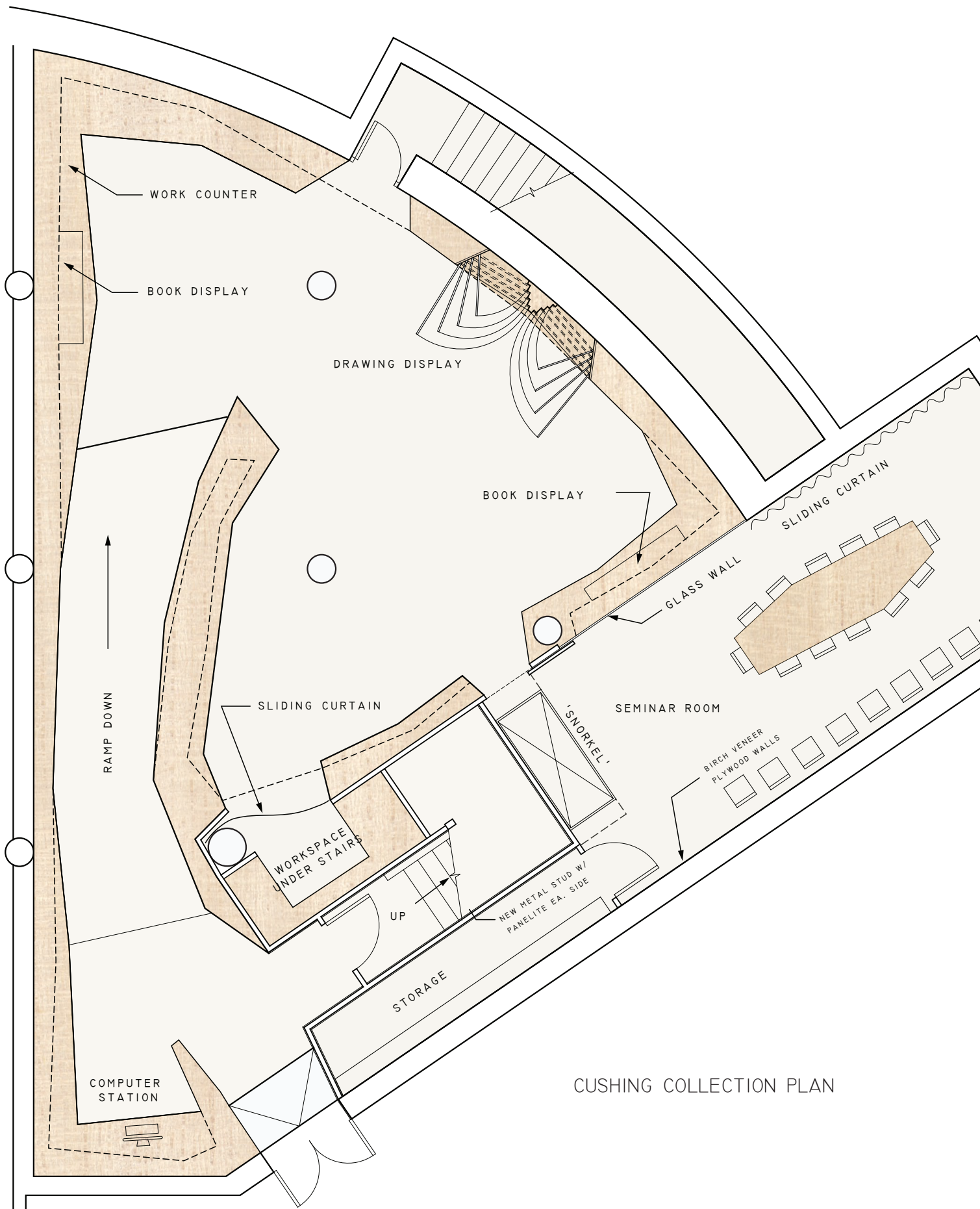
It is appropriate that Cushing Collection is to be finally gathered together again, and placed within the foundation of the library that bears Harvey Cushing's name, at the institution where he started and ended his career. The designated space—odd, irregular, pie shaped, and adjacent to a steam tunnel in the sub-basement—works serendipitously well to accommodate the new use.

The design for the Cushing Collection includes exhibition and storage for the collection, workspace for archivists and researchers, and a seminar room devoted primarily to the issues of modern neurosurgery. The collection and display will include the brain specimens themselves sealed in their jars of formaldehyde, various tools developed by Cushing for his operations, reams of photographs and drawings of patients, some key samples of Cushing's extraordinary book collection, patient

records, and the doctor's personal notebooks and effects. There will be changing exhibitions of selected items from the collection, with the rest organized and stored, though readily available to researchers. A small area within the space of the collection will be designated for continuing recording and archiving of the material.

The different types of items in the collection will be displayed or stored in a manner that is appropriate to the particular piece. For example, photographs and drawings will be mounted on special panels that fold out of a cabinet for easy viewing. Medical instruments will be displayed in stacks of swiveling drawers with glass tops. Books will be displayed in horizontal glass cases let into the counters. Simulacra of the photographic glass plates showing patient case histories will become an illuminated wall display between upper and lower cabinets. The glass

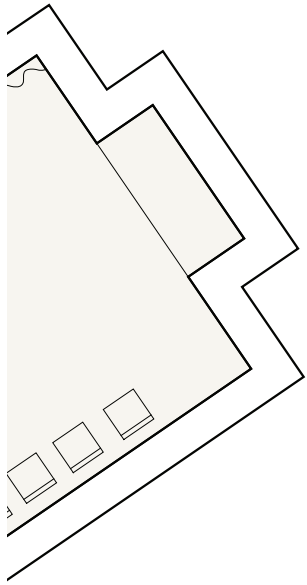




CUSHING COLLECTION PLAN

jars of brains (which will be back-lit) will form a glowing, unifying band wrapping around the entire space.

The feeling of the space will be one of informational density where every surface is a display case revealing a part of the Cushing story, behind which are multiple layers of stored information, ready to be discovered or 'mined' by opening doors, drawers,



or other storage apparatus. Part of the excitement of the place is the element of search and discovery as layers of information emerge and unfold. The desired effect is for a sense of both the intimate and the immense where the individual artifact can be viewed up close and intimately, but is, at the same time, connected coherently to a much larger body of related sources that can be found by further explorations of the collection. The effect in this sense, is for a cabinet that has no end, but extends on seemingly infinitely, inviting exploration.

In designing the exhibition of the collection we have been influenced by several precedents. The most notable among them are English, and include the John Soane museum in London and the Pitts River Museum at Oxford. Both house collections, one of art and architecture, the other of cultural, anthropological artifacts. With both there is a wonderful interaction between the collection and the architecture itself, where one seems to amplify the other. There is a sense of being led forward into an endlessly fascinating and expanding quest. With the design of the Cushing Collection something similar became the goal.

With regard to this project I want to express particular gratitude to Dennis D. Spencer, the Harvey & Kate Cushing Professor of Neurosurgery at the Yale Medical School, for his determination and commitment to having the Cushing Collection brought together in one place and preserved as a resource. I also want express our deep appreciation of Terry Dagradi, photographer and archivist, for her tireless devotion to the recording and archiving of the collection.

EXPERIENCING THE COLLECTION

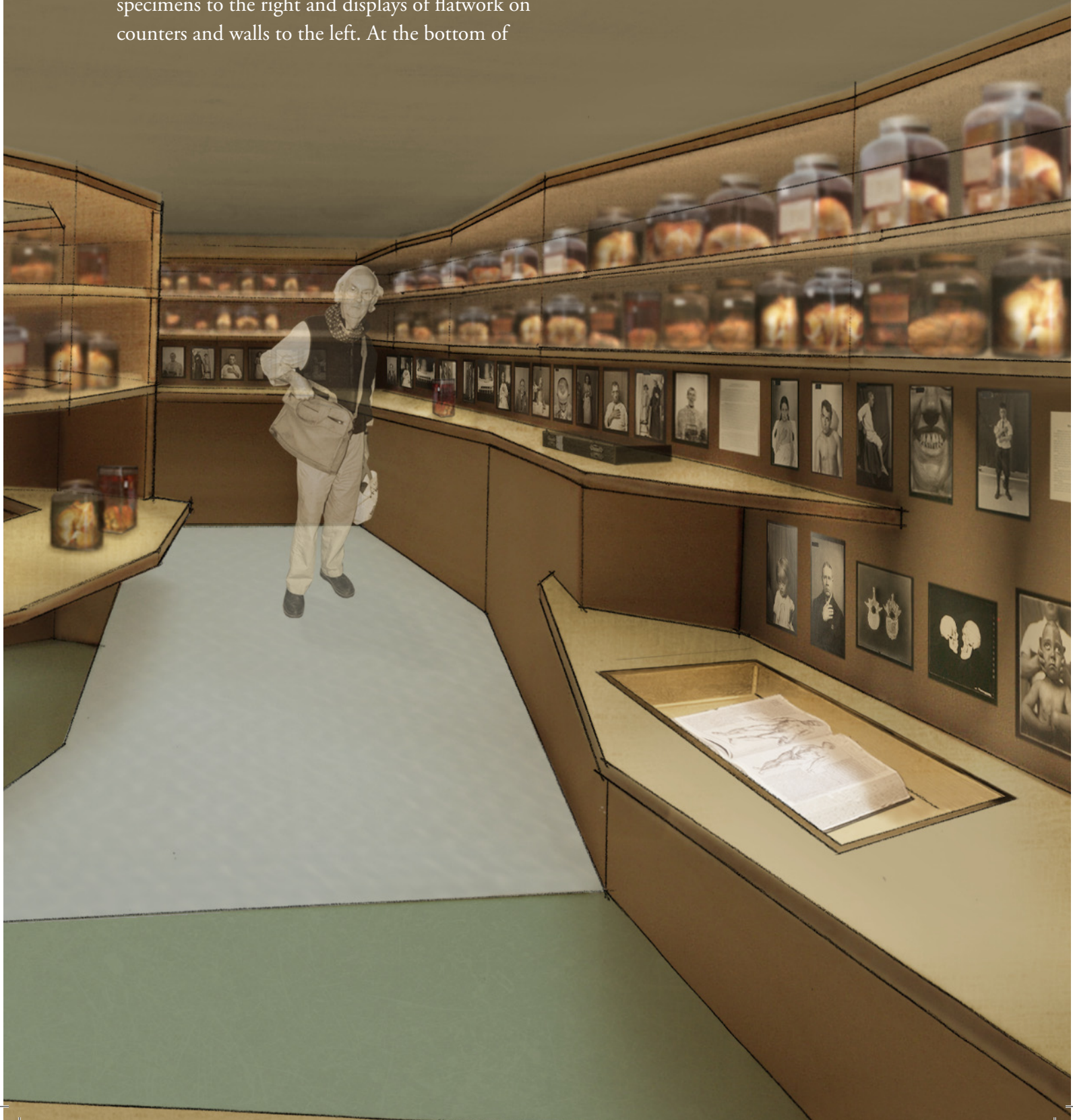
One descends the stairs from the main library floor down two flights to the find the Cushing Collection at the sub-basement level. Filling the existing open space beside mid floor landings a vertical display box. This thin, hollow and partly transparent vessel (we have dubbed it the 'snorkel')

projects upwards from the Cushing Collection below as an enticement to descend the stair. It will graphically announce current exhibits, and present an assortment of artifacts which can be viewed while traversing the stair.



At the bottom of the stair one enters the collection itself. Immediately one is on a ramp descending between glowing exhibits of brain and tumor specimens to the right and displays of flatwork on counters and walls to the left. At the bottom of

the ramp one rounds the end of the primary brain display shelves to encounter the main space and the 'heart' of the collection.



The main space is defined by the curved exterior wall which houses a rich assortment of different types of display cabinets with doors, drawers, sliding panels, that access various elements of the collection. Here one finds the unfolding panels displaying drawings and other flatwork. The cabinets cant

and swell in and out, expand and contract, in a contrapuntal relation to the large scale of the curved wall to make the space come alive with a kind of rhythm and pulse. Within the corners of the space are work areas opening up like small private harbors sheltered on each side by projecting storage cabinets.

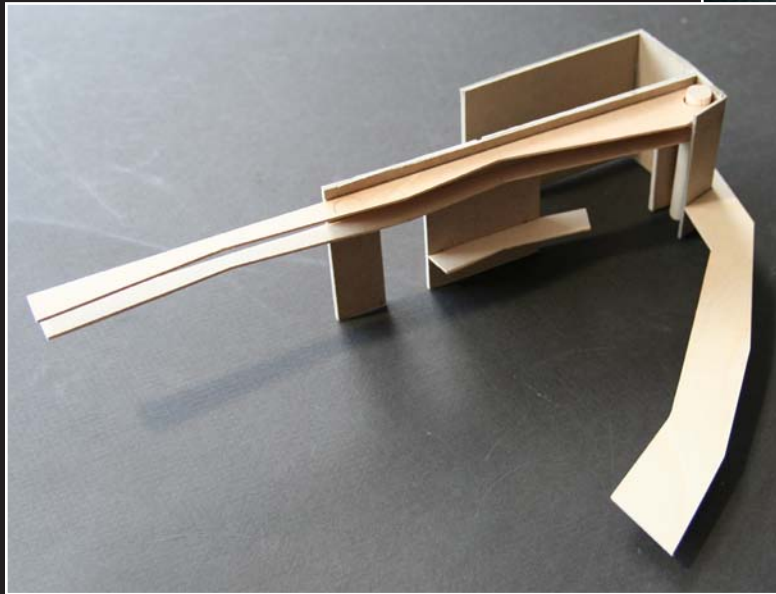
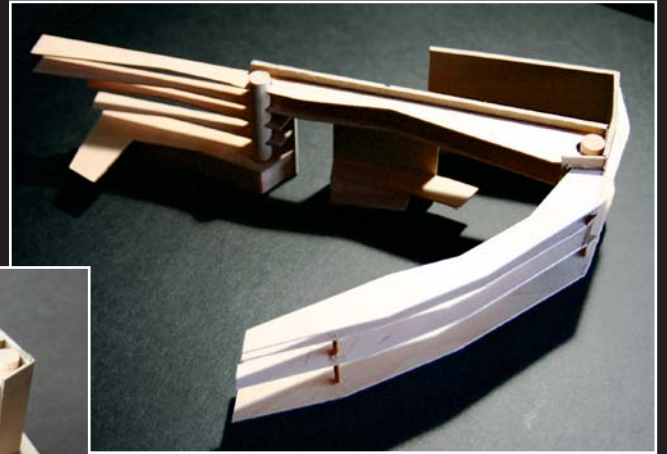




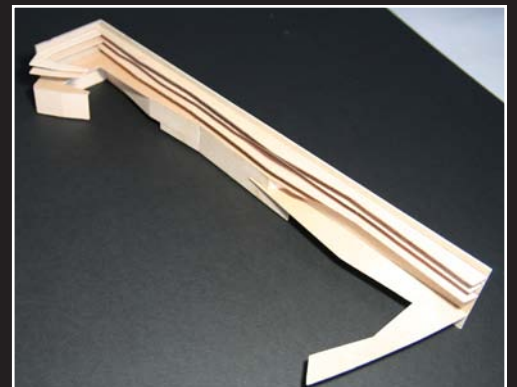
Facing the direction from which one descended into the space there is a curtained opening to the archivist's work area nested under the stair.

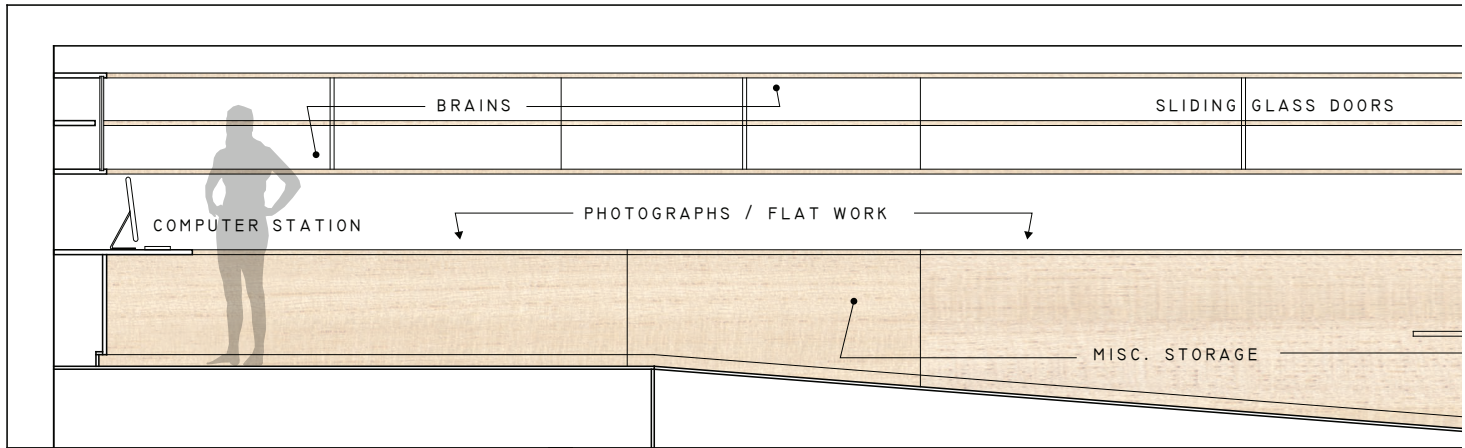
To the left of the archivist's nest, one can navigate through a sliding door in a glass display wall into the seminar space. This room is in great contrast to the space one has just left. It is simple and spare with wood paneled wall, a large table, chairs and a screen. The transparent wall connecting back to the collection may be shut off by drawing a curtain. It is in the seminar room that the historical aspects of Harvey Cushing's pioneering work—through which one has just traveled—are brought into the sphere of the present.



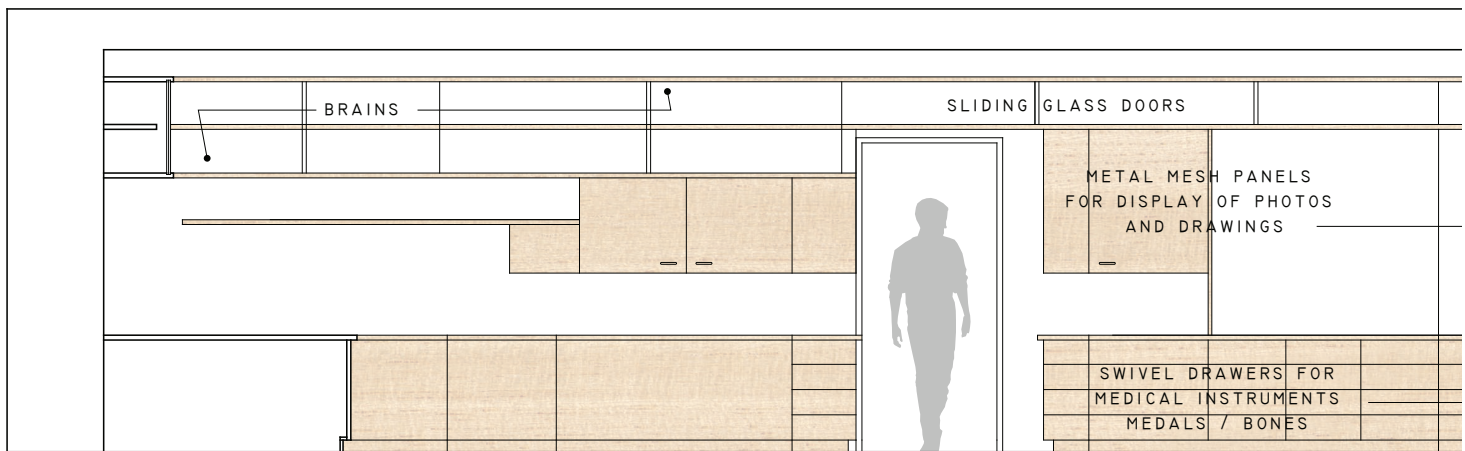


STUDY MODELS

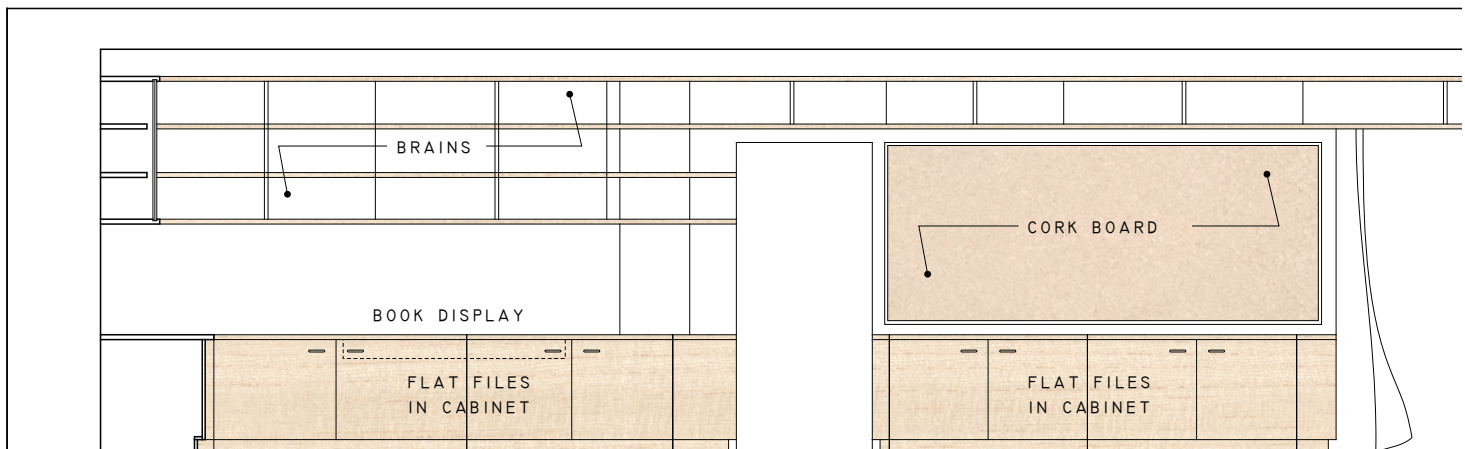




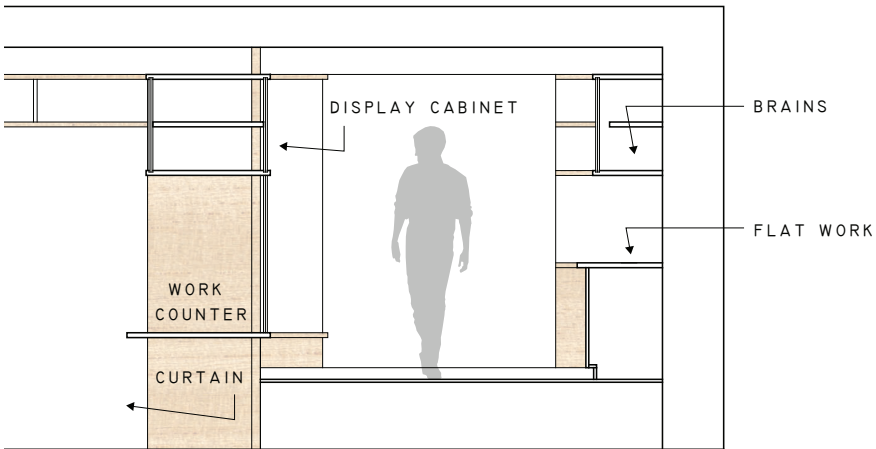
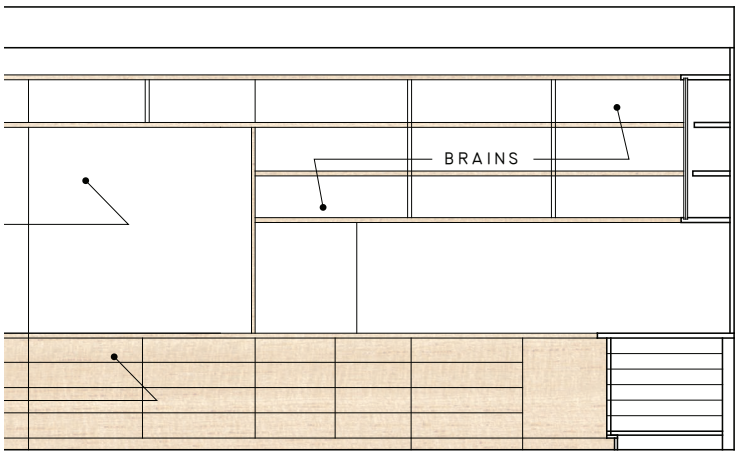
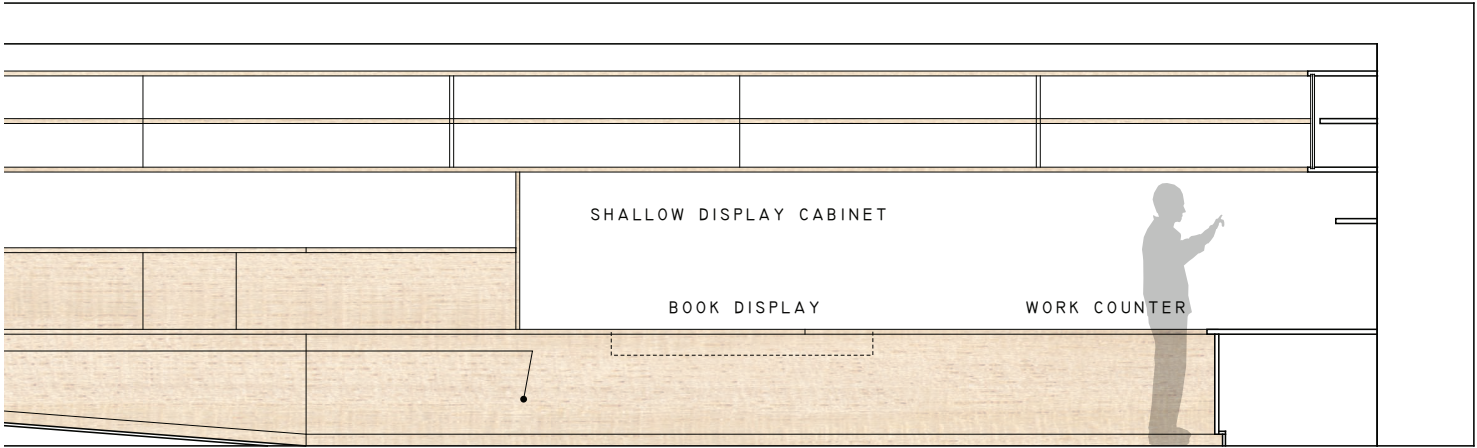
ENTRY WALL ELEVATION

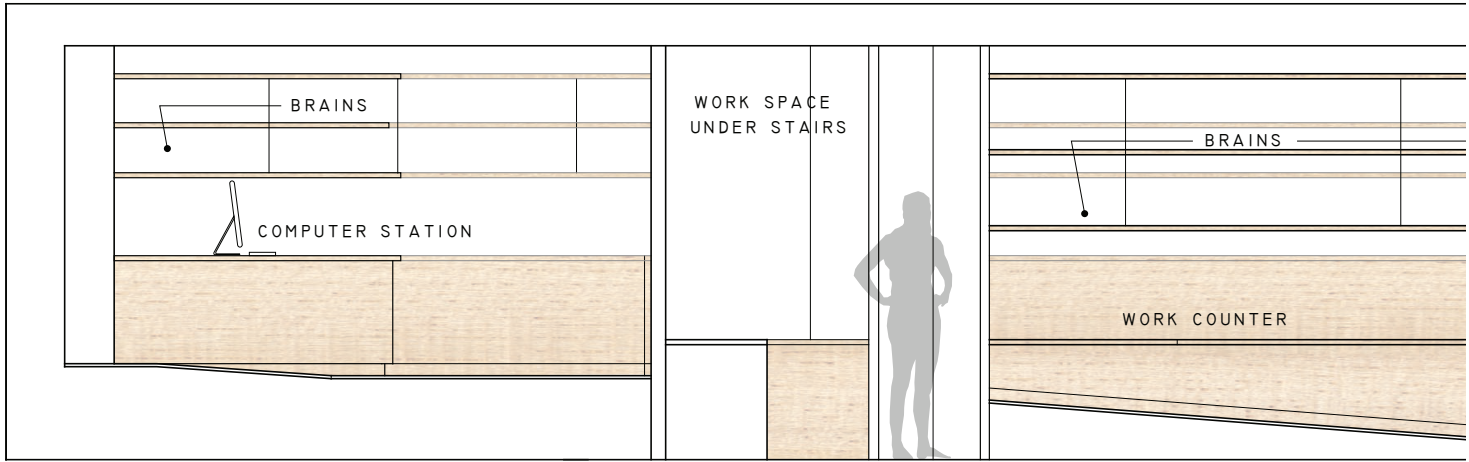


CURVED WALL ELEVATION

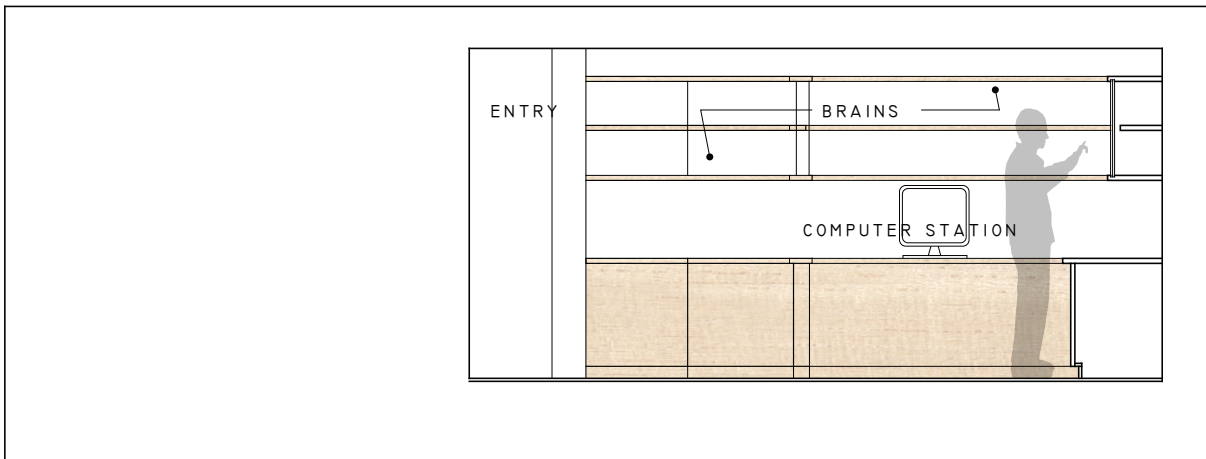


SEMINAR ROOM WALL ELEVATION

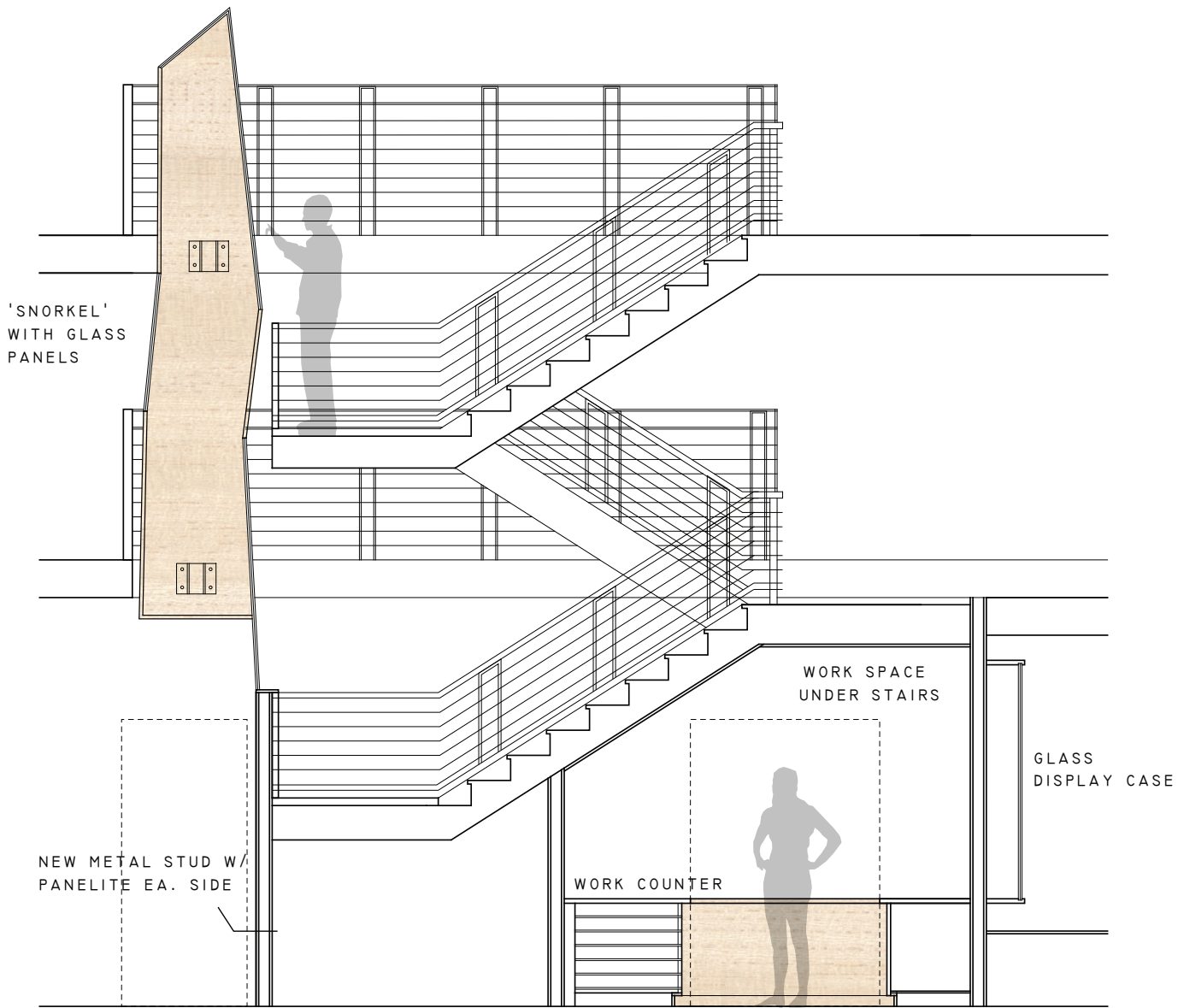
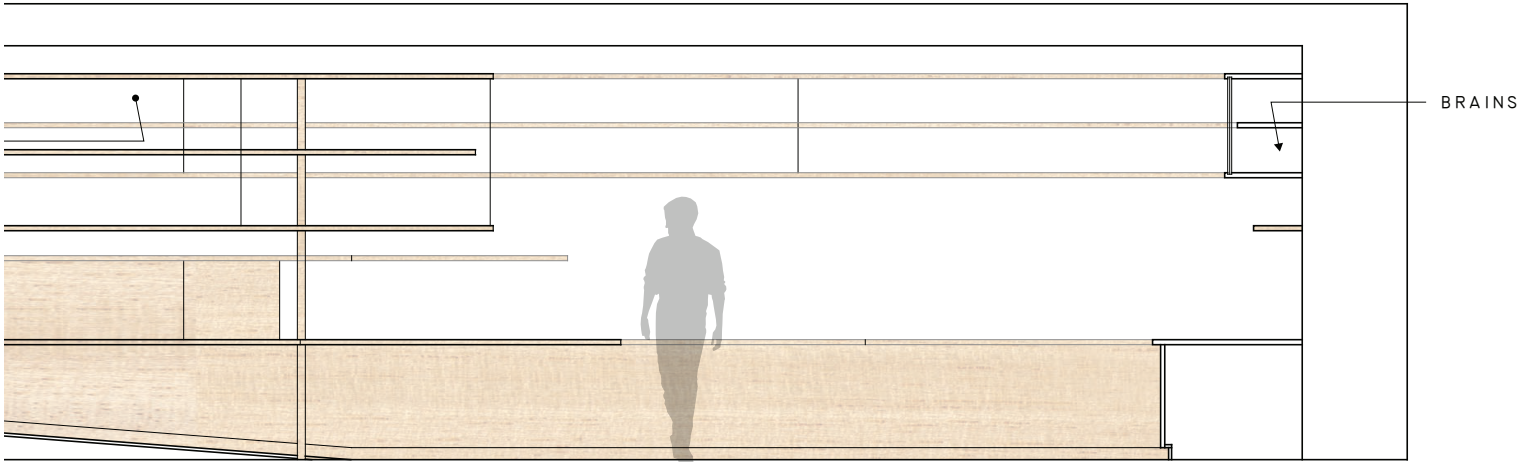




SECTION THROUGH STAIR WORKSPACE

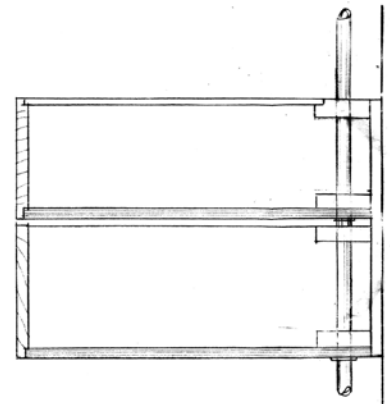
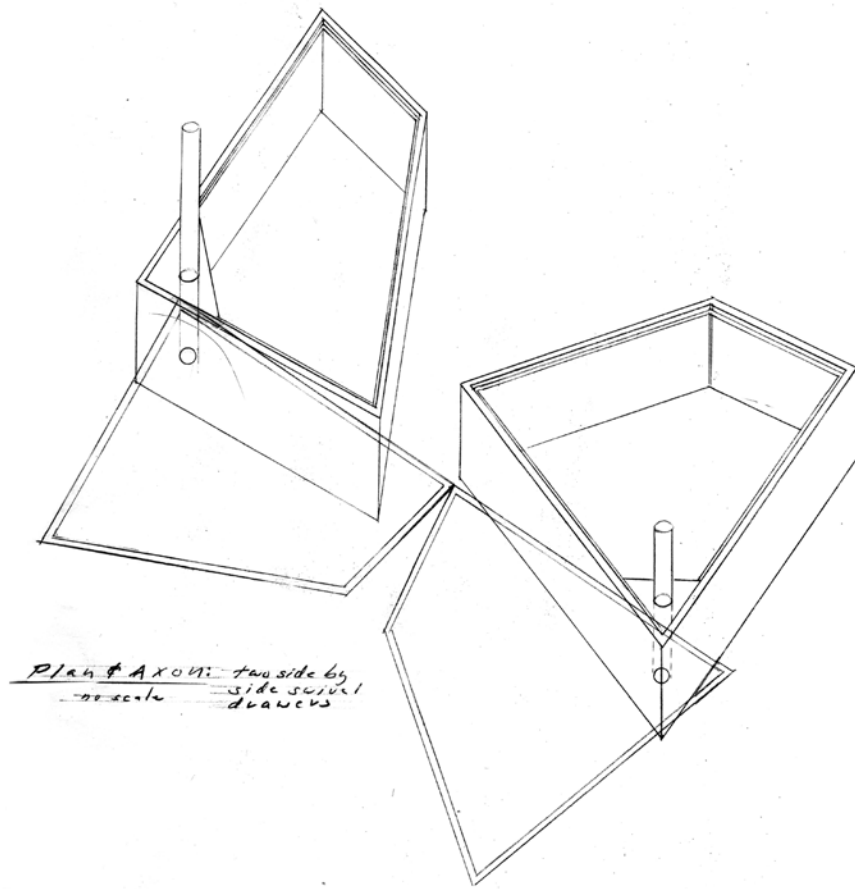


ELEVATION AT ENTRY

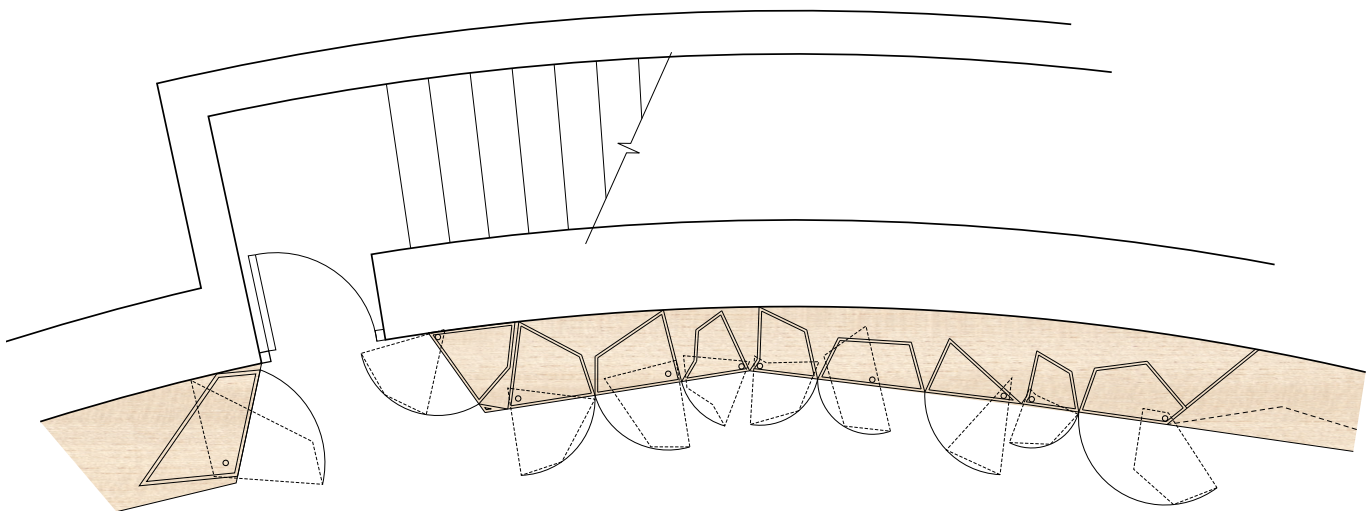


SECTION THROUGH 'SNORKEL'

SWIVEL DRAWER DETAIL

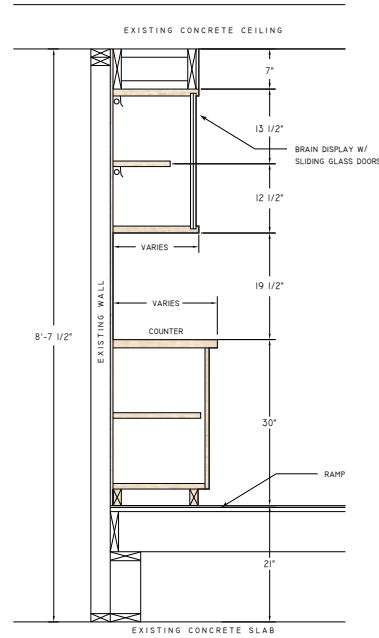


Section: two stacked
swivel drawers

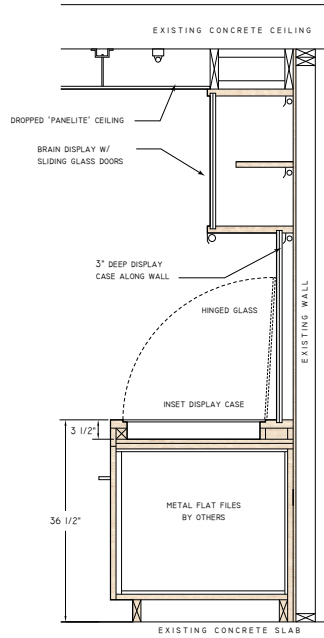


PRELIMINARY SECTION DRAWINGS

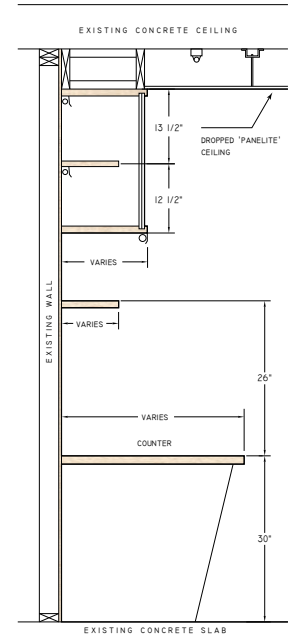
SECTION 1: TOP OF RAMP
1/2" = 1'-0"



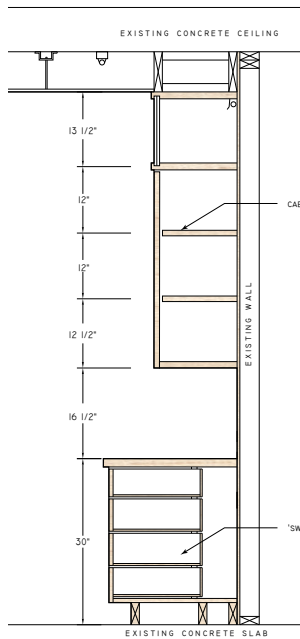
SECTION 2: INSET DISPLAY
1/2" = 1'-0"



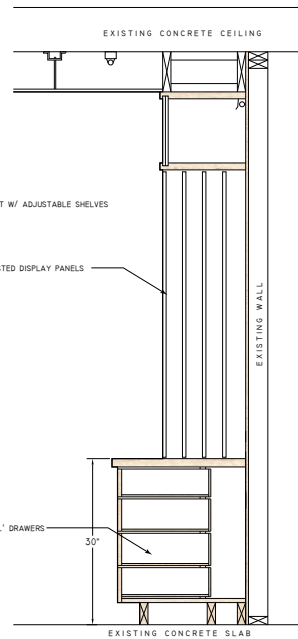
SECTION 3: WORK AREA
1/2" = 1'-0"



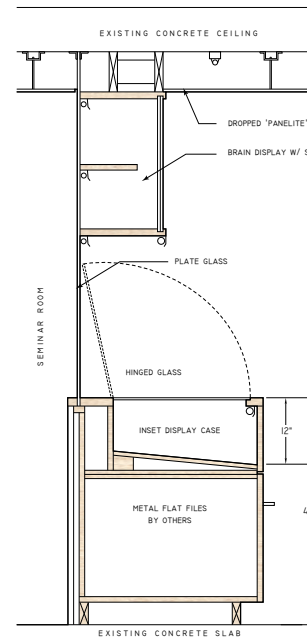
SECTION 4: CABINET AND DRAWERS
1/2" = 1'-0"



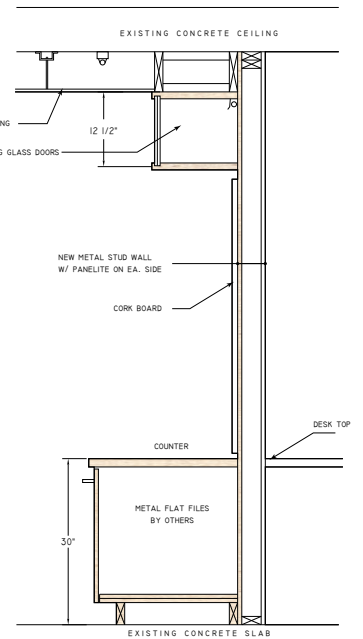
SECTION 5: NESTING DISPLAY PANELS
1/2" = 1'-0"



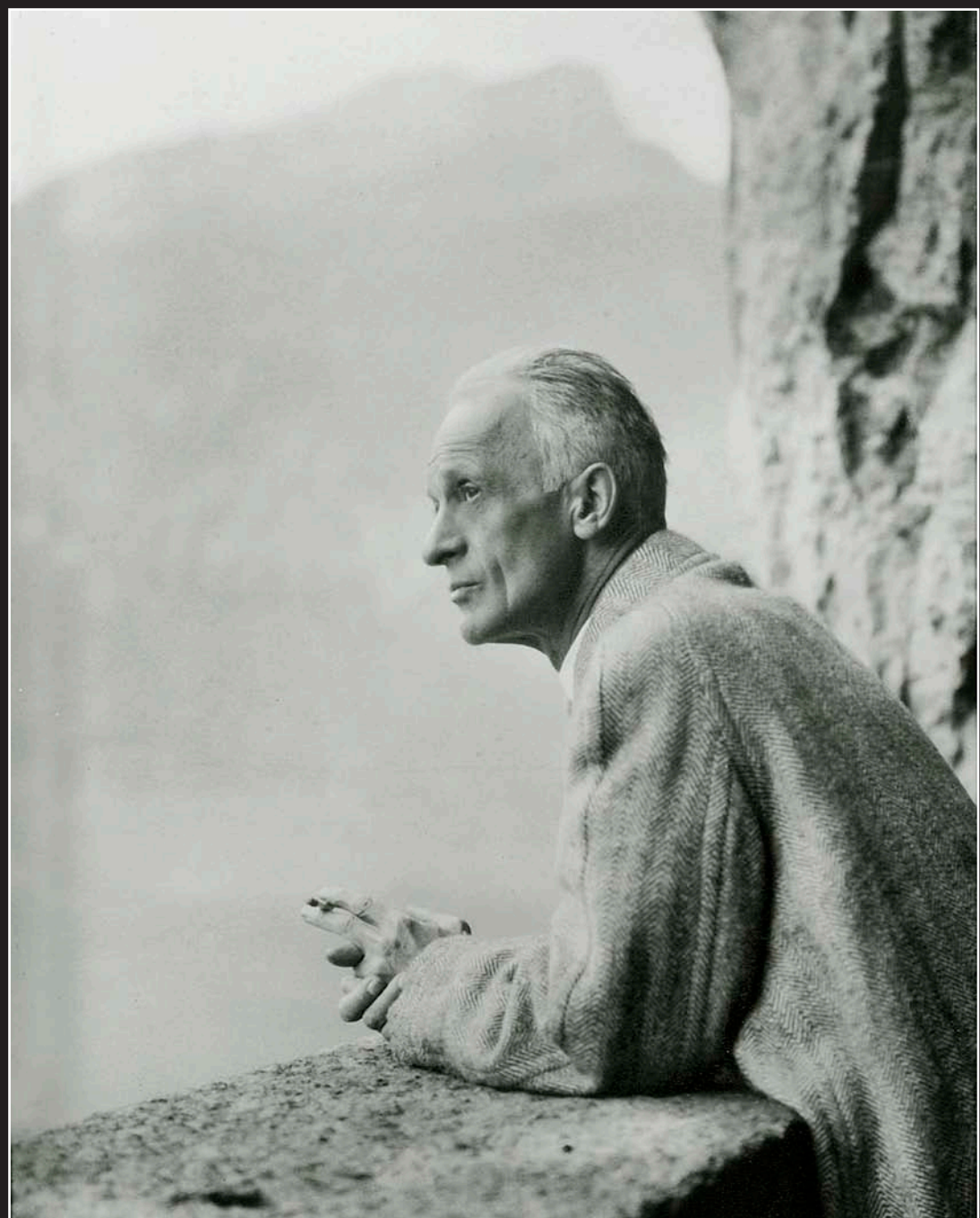
SECTION 6: SEMINAR ROOM WALL
1/2" = 1'-0"

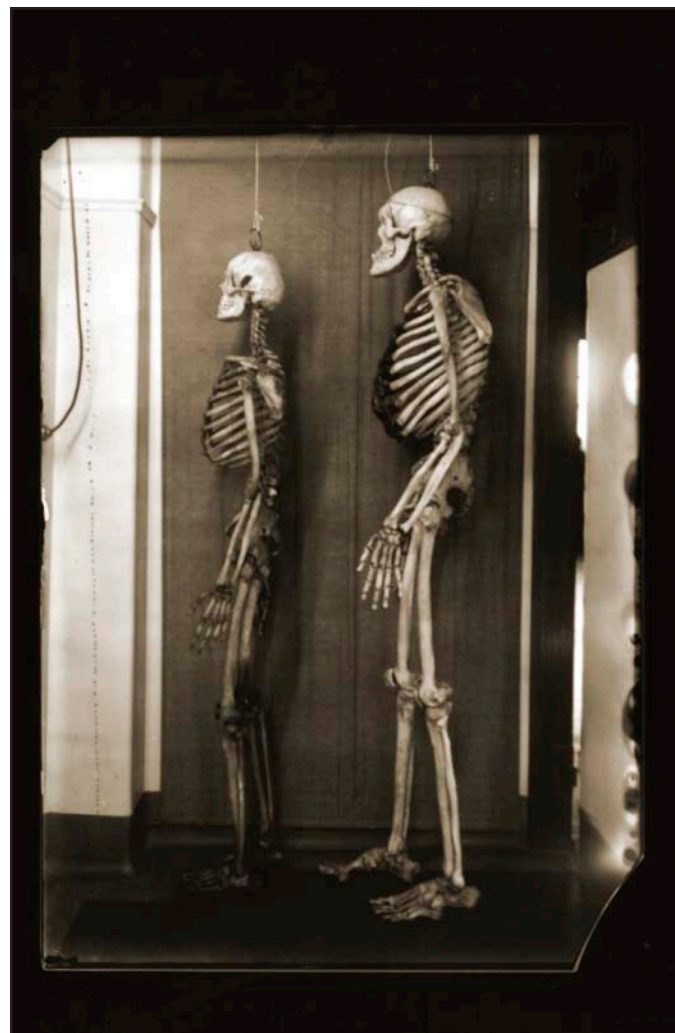


SECTION 7: WALL ALONG STAIR
1/2" = 1'-0"



A SELECTION OF IMAGES FROM THE COLLECTION







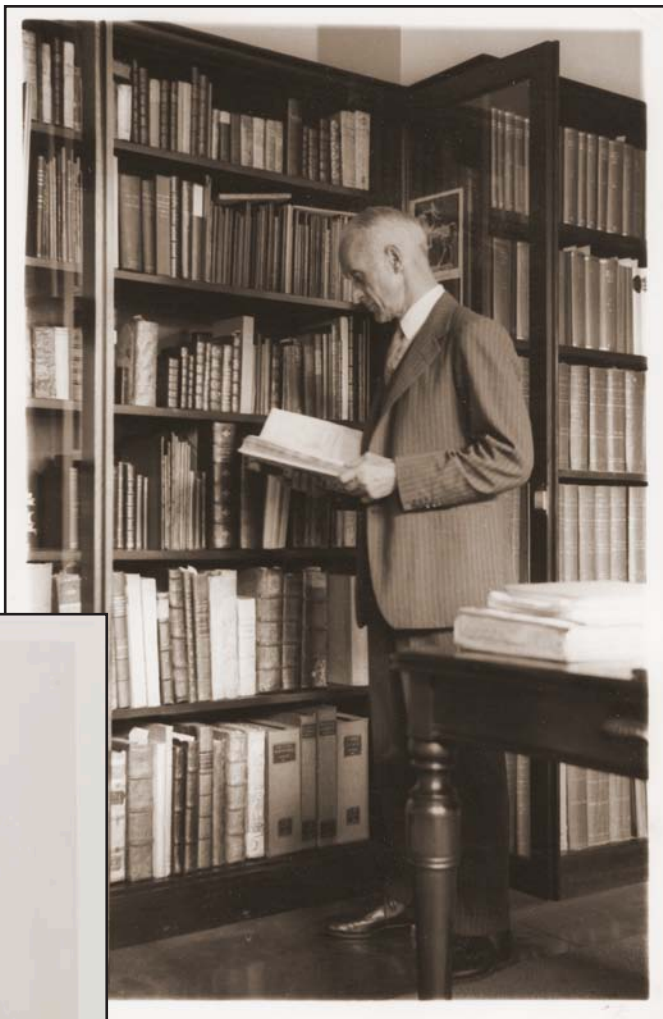
THIS PAGE: VIEWS OF THE BRAINS IN
THEIR CURRENT LOCATION IN A BASE-
MENT ROOM AT THE MEDICAL SCHOOL

OPPOSITE: IMAGES FROM THE CUSHING
COLLECTION

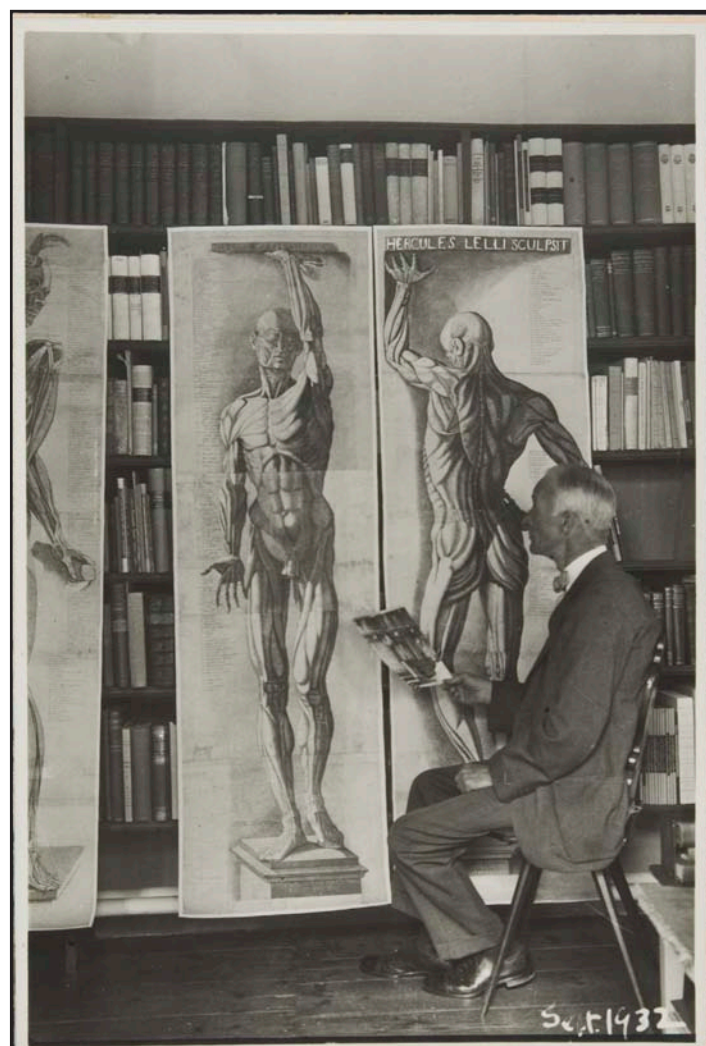
OVERLEAF: MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS IN
THE CUSHING COLLECTION; EXCERPTS
FROM CUSHING'S JOURNALS AND
PATIENT RECORDS







BIOGRAPHICAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF
DR. HARVEY CUSHING

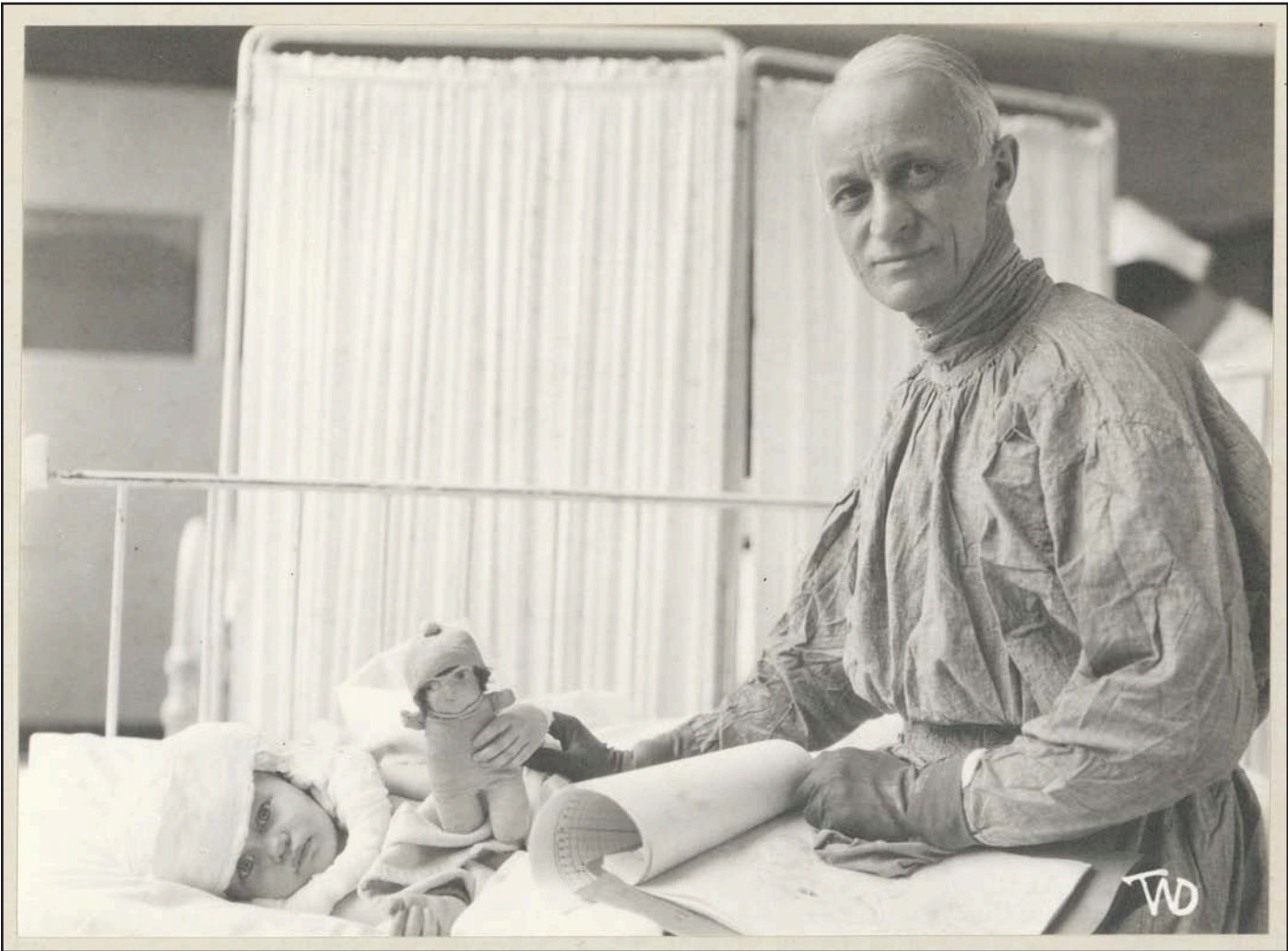
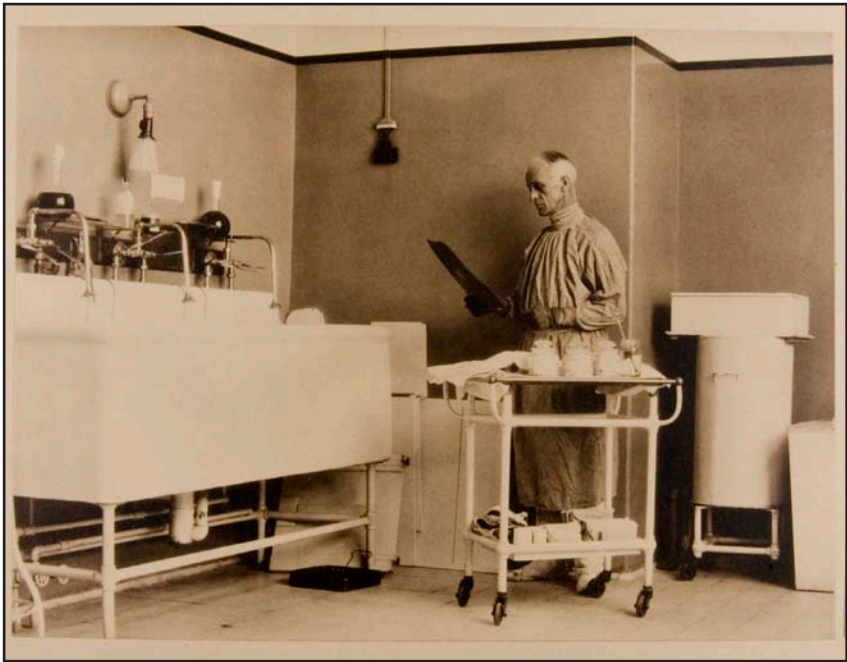


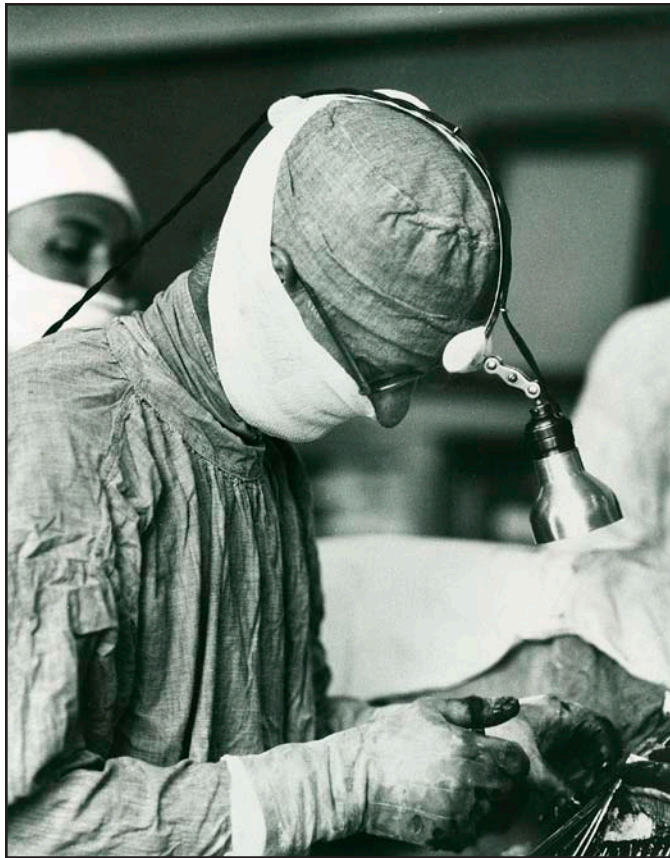




THIS PAGE: CUSHING AT WORK AND WITH PATIENTS

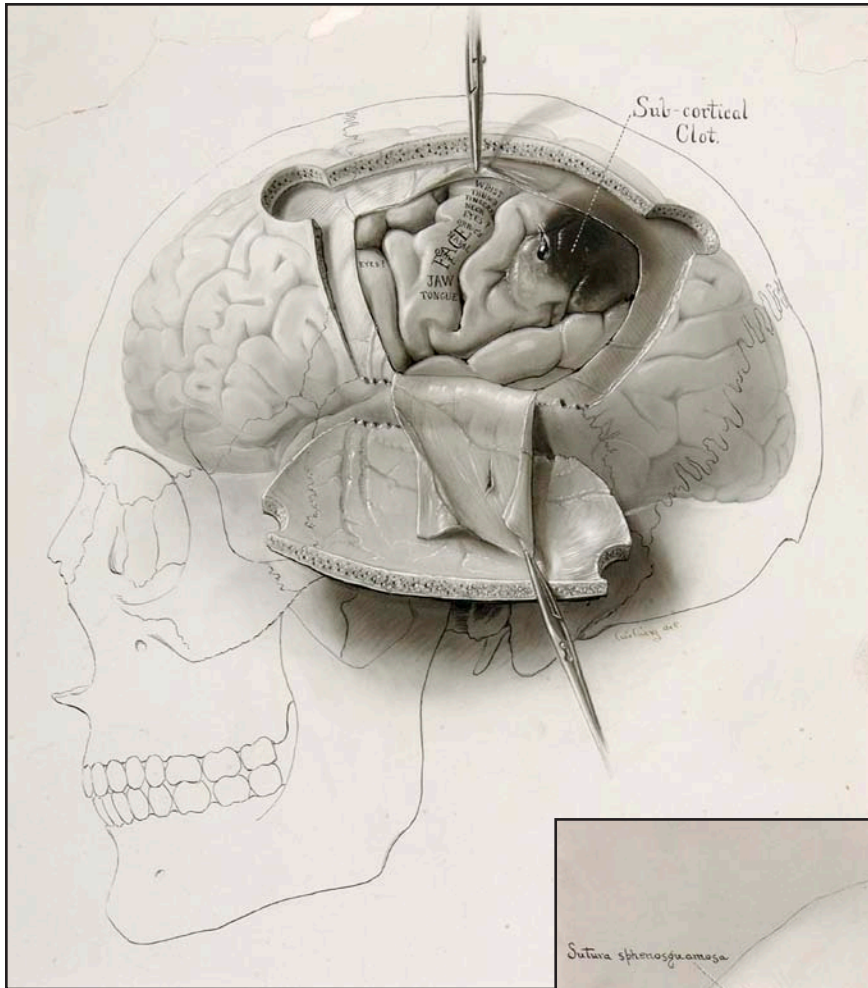
OPPOSITE PAGE: CUSHING IN 1931
OPERATING ON HIS 2000TH
VERIFIED BRAIN TUMOR



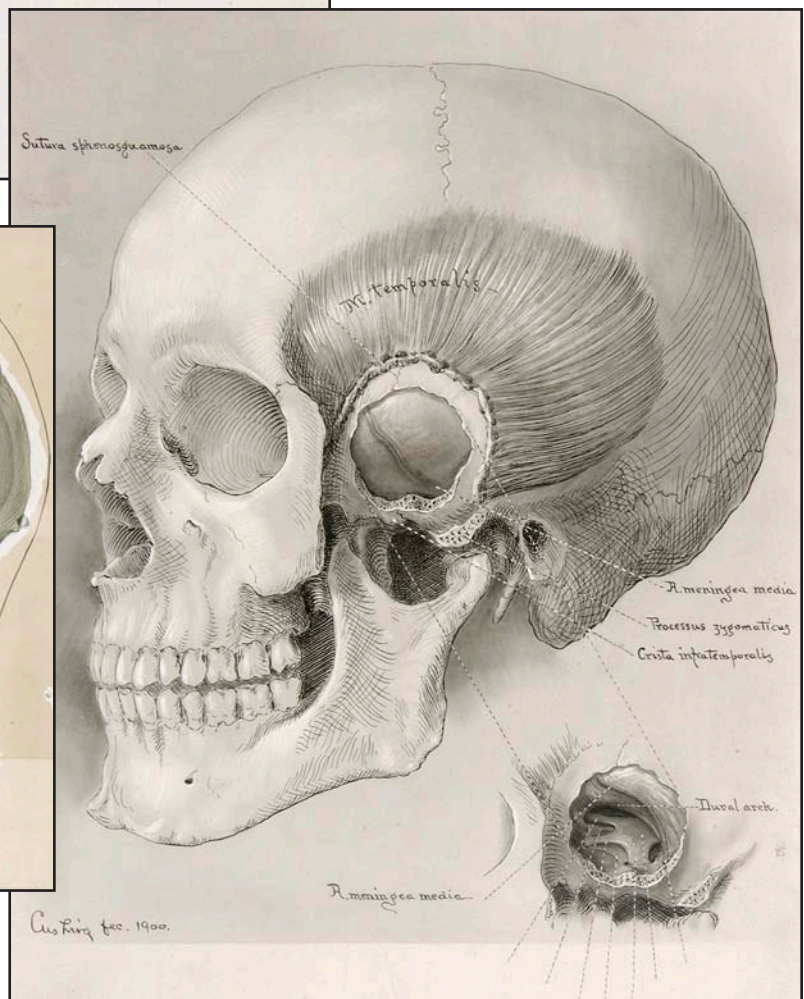
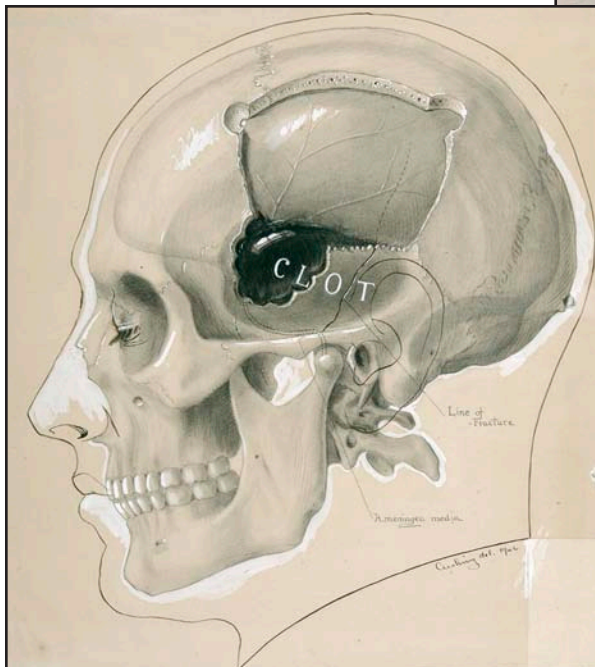


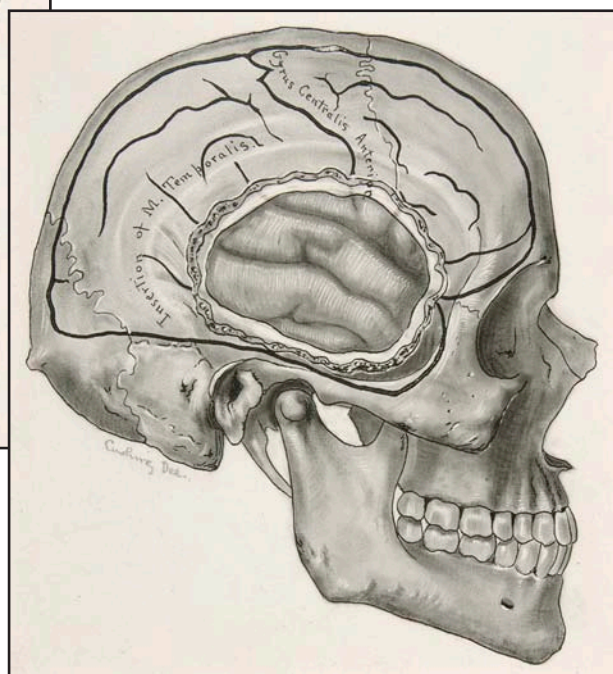
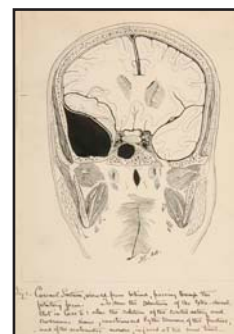
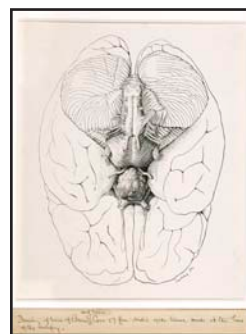
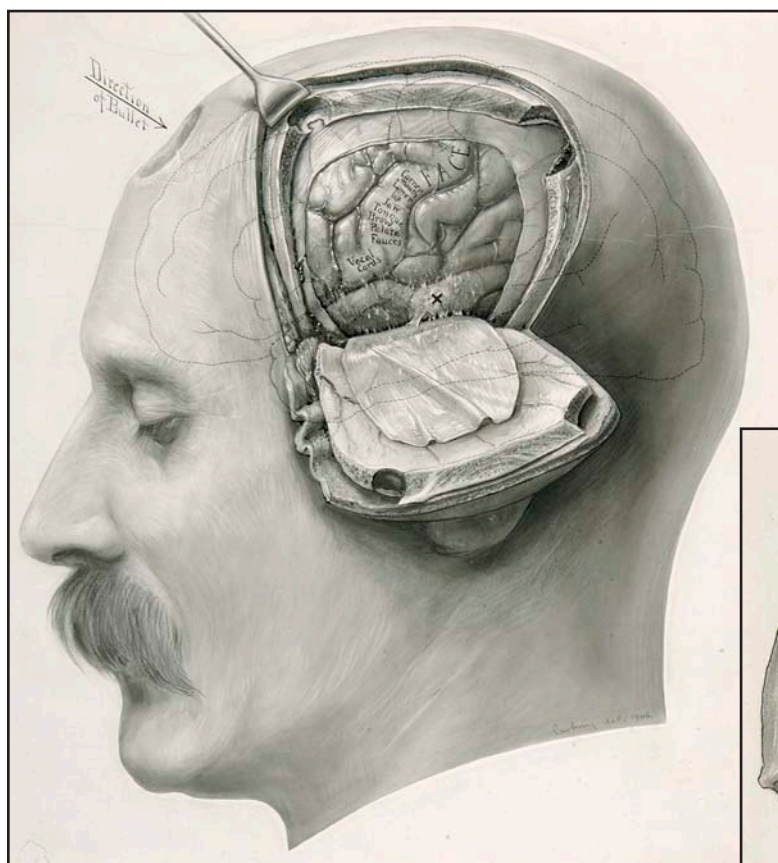
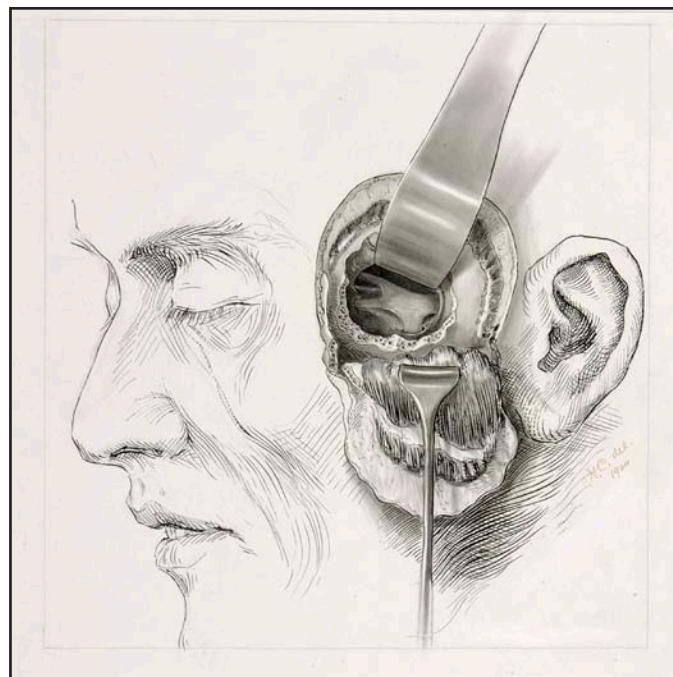
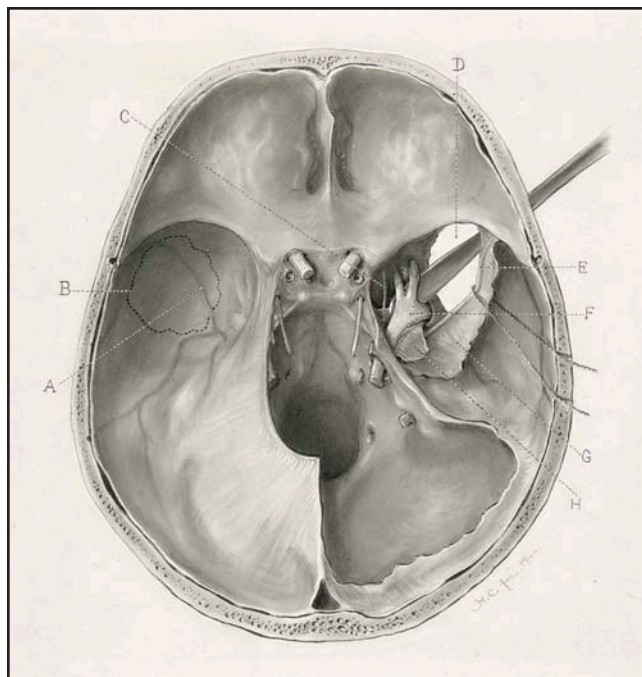
*Doctor Cushing
The 2000th Verified Brain Tumor Operation, 15 April, 1931.*

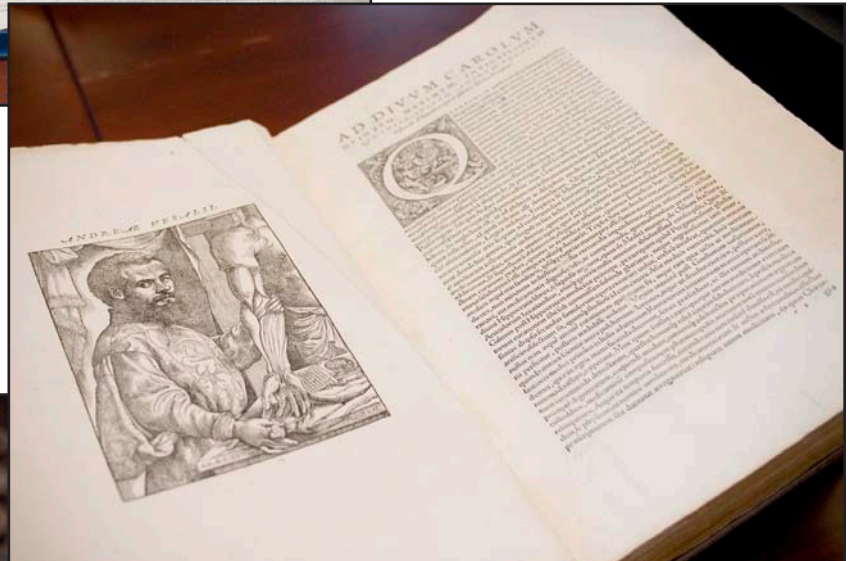
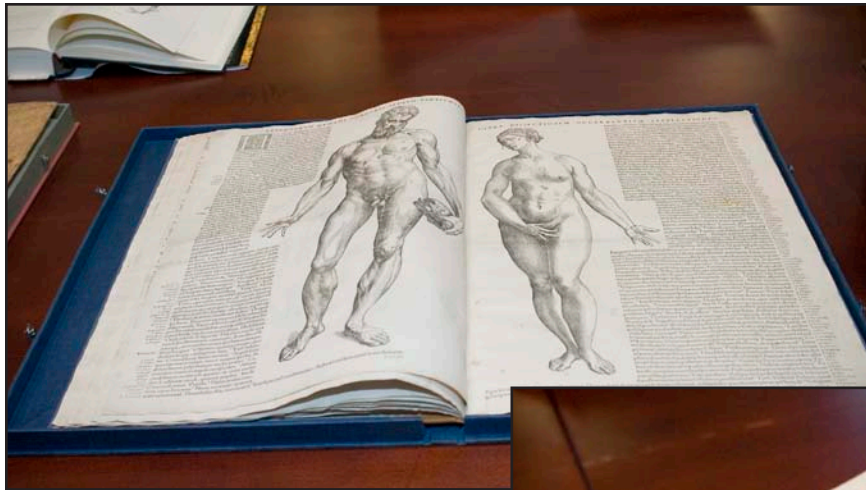
*Walter Willard Boyd M.D.
P.B. 12. 11, 1928-32
© WALTER WILLARD BOYD*



DETAILED DRAWINGS BY DR. CUSHING







VESALIUS VOLUMES COLLECTED BY
DR. CUSHING

