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# News

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\*\*Rare book traveled long road to reach UTHSCD library.

DALLAS--A 400-year-old book with a 30-word title has found a new home in the University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas library.

Written in 1576, the book still has its original binding and is in excellent condition. Giovanni Fillippo Ingrassia (1510-1580), a physician in Palermo, Italy, wrote several books about diseases and medical ailments common to the 16th Century. Jean Miller, director of the Library, explained that in this particular book Ingrassia explored the symptoms and diagnoses of fevers and plagues.

Informatione del pestifero, et contagioso morbo, il quale afflige et have afflitto questa città di Palermo & molte altre città, e terre di questo regno di Sicilia, nell'anno 1575 et 1576 was purchased with a donation from a retired faculty member. The gift was made with the specific intent that it be used by the Friends of the Library. This organization has raised money enabling the Library to add to its History of Medicine collection and to purchase rare materials.

"Such rare books make many contributions to the understanding of the history of the profession. It is very fascinating to see how concepts have developed, what the thinking was at the time, and therapeutic measures used," said Miller. "There have even been instances where certain books lay dormant for a number of years and then someone will begin reading them and discover that they contain knowledge and principles that will advance modern-day medicine." She gave as an example Gregor Mendel's recordings of his early work with sweet peas. His 19th century experiments are considered to have laid the foundation for modern principles of genetics.

Informatione del pestifero will be part of the collection in the new rare book room which will open in the spring. At present there are approximately 800 volumes that will be housed in the environmentally-controlled room in the History of Health Sciences. Other volumes in this collection include materials with a pre-1913 publication date. The health science center follows the guidelines set by the National Library of Medicine in selecting materials for this area in the library.