

WALTER REED
ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

Centennial

A Pictorial History
1909-2009

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Source: Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Directorate of Public Works Archives.

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Standing on the walk in front of Walter Reed's main entrance Homer Greenfield smilingly recalls that he was the hospital's 1st, though unofficial, patient. He had been hunting strawberries and cut his finger rather badly on some barbed wire. Running to the hospital for help, he collapsed near the front steps. A hospital corpsman took him into the freshly prepared operating room and repaired his finger. At that time the hospital had not been officially opened. He was a patient a second time, this time officially, when he returned from France with shell fragments in his leg and suffering from poison gas effects. Later on, he spent a short time as head of the Quartermaster Commissary. (Original caption)
Source: Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Directorate of Public Works Archives.

Acknowledgments

This assemblage of images depicting Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) was compiled from resources at the National Archives and Records Administration, the National Museum of Health and Medicine, the editorial office of WRAMC's newspaper *Stripe*, the WRAMC Public Affairs Office, the WRAMC History Office, the WRAMC Department of Public Works, WRAMC Medical Library (*Borden's Dream*), Library of Congress, OTSG - Office of Medical History, and several private collections. The images presented here — pictures, newspaper clippings and memorabilia — were selected to highlight ten decades at the medical center. While this book does not provide a detailed or comprehensive history of WRAMC, its personnel, or its patients, we believe it captures the essence and spirit of the WRAMC campus through the years.

As with any publication, this work would not be possible without the work of numerous contributors. We are sincerely grateful to all those who supported this publication. Dr. John Greenwood, former Chief Historian to the US Army Surgeon General, proposed a photographic history of Walter Reed Hospital in time for its 100th anniversary and has provided valuable input in reviewing the manuscript. Many photographs and Kodachrome slides were made available by Don Chory, Master Planner, in the WRAMC Directorate of Public Works. The slides were scanned and preserved by Donna Rose and Lori Hamrick of Information Manufacturing Company. Sherman Fleek, Command Historian for the North Atlantic Regional Medical Command and WRAMC, provided access to many files with photographs that were ultimately incorporated in the book. Bernard Little, Editor; Craig Coleman, Assistant Editor; and *Stripe* staff writers Kristin Ellis and Sharon Taylor-Conway were very generous with their time and resources. We are also grateful for image research assistance from WRAMC Public Affairs Officer Chuck Dasey, Deputy Public Affairs Officer Terry Goodman, and Community Relations Officer Thom Cuddy. We are eternally indebted to WRAMC staff and the thousands of patients and their families. Without them, there would be no history of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center.



Major Walter Reed

Foreword

On May 1, 1909, Walter Reed General Hospital opened its doors, with ten patients treated on that first day. The original hospital, Building 1, expanded over the decades to provide care for thousands of service members during World War I, World War II, and the Korean and Vietnam wars. On September 26, 1977, the current Walter Reed Army Medical Center inpatient facility opened. Today, more than 600,000 outpatients and 13,000 inpatients per year receive care at Walter Reed.

In 2009, Walter Reed Army Medical Center's centennial year, we commemorate the hospital center's legacy of medical care and innovation. As we celebrate the expert healthcare provided by the physicians, nurses, and allied staff who have served before us, we also take pride in our continued excellence in clinical medicine, advances in knowledge and techniques, and implementation of leading-edge rehabilitation services.

Our ability to provide advanced care for service members injured at home or during deployment has endured nearly 100 years, and has earned this hospital its reputation as the world's premier military medical facility. Ultimately, the character of Walter Reed Army Medical Center is a testament to the men and women who strive (to paraphrase Abraham Lincoln) to care for those who have borne the battle and for their dependents. During this centennial, as you relive this hospital's past through the images presented here, it is my hope that this book will serve as a tribute to the accomplishments of Walter Reed's dedicated team of healthcare providers throughout its 100-year legacy. We are Walter Reed!

Carla Hawley-Bowland
Major General, US Army
Commander, North Atlantic Regional Medical Command
and Walter Reed Army Medical Center

Washington, DC
March 2009



Lt. Colonel William Cline Borden

Preface

As I reflect upon the history of this great health care organization I can not help but wonder what Major (later Lt Colonel) William Borden, who first envisioned a hospital complex named for Walter Reed, and Colonel (later Brigadier General) William Arthur, the first commander, would think today when looking across the 113 acres of buildings, across the top of Building 1, the original Walter Reed General Hospital, to that great grey edifice that is Building 2, the Heaton Pavilion, and the home of the current hospital. I wonder what they, and other former commanders, many now members of that ghostly assemblage, would think of the changes that have occurred throughout the years and across the wars, the advances in the practice of medicine, the thousands of research protocols conducted, the addition of family member care, and of the creation of residency training programs and fellowships, and not all just for physicians, but for nurses, administrators, technicians, and chaplains as well. I think that he, and the others, would say simply, “Well done; after all, we are Walter Reed!”

When completed in December 1908, the hospital was state of the art for the time, and, in essence, defined “world class” for military facilities. This is the true legacy of Walter Reed, the organization, for we are still, to this day, helping to define what it means to be world class. We are, and have always been, leaders in military medicine, and in medicine in general. We continue to serve as a medical education powerhouse, graduating some of the best physicians and health care professionals in America. We continue to serve as a research powerhouse, with some 800+ protocols on-going at any time. We continue to serve as an innovator in military medicine through the creation of the Warrior Transition Unit, the Warrior Clinic, the Military Advanced Training Center, our numerous Centers of Excellence, our one-of-a-kind Executive Medicine Service, and our renewed focus on Healthcare Hospitality and Customer Service. In short, our motto sums it all up, for at Walter Reed, we are warrior care.

The legacy of this great institution, and the people who have served in it, and have been treated by it, will live on as we move forward into the future with the creation of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda. The legacy of Major Walter Reed himself will live on; for just as he, through his landmark discovery of the transmission of yellow fever, lives on in the lives that have been saved from this disease, so too shall the legacy of Walter Reed Army Medical Center live on in the warriors and their family members whose lives it has touched.

Norvell Vandervall Coots, MD
COL, MC, US Army
Commander (2008–2011)
Walter Reed Health Care System
Walter Reed Army Medical Center



Regrouping of the Walter Reed General Hospital and the Army Medical School as the Army Medical Center resulted in the adoption of a shield, used for a number of years without a motto. The caduceus on the shield represented the Medical Department; the yearbook and flaming torch represents knowledge. The crest is the helmet of Minerva — patroness of medicine. The Medical Department colors, maroon and white, form the relief.

The motto was selected from suggestions of officers, nurses, aides, dieticians, and enlisted men of the troop command of the Army Medical Center. The one proposed by the late Lieutenant Colonel Henry J. Nichols, once a member of the Army Medical School faculty, was selected: “to the spirit of science and the instinct of service.”

The wise and beloved Jefferson Randolph Kean, Medical Department sage for over a half-century, suggested that “to the spirit of science and instinct of service” be revised to read “the spirit of science among arms.” — a dedication for a great military hospital responsible for the care and prevention of casualties of war.

Adapted from Mary Standlee’s *Borden’s Dream*

Introduction

The history of Walter Reed Army Medical Center begins in 1900, when Major Walter Reed led the US Army Yellow Fever Board in Havana, Cuba, in proving that yellow fever was transmitted by the common domestic mosquito. The results of this research were quickly applied by Major William C Gorgas, essentially ending yellow fever's centuries-long reign of terror. Within a short time of returning to the states, however, Major Reed died of appendicitis under the care of Major William C Borden, commander of the Army General Hospital in Washington, DC.

Devastated by Reed's death, Borden dedicated himself to honoring his friend. He worked for several years to get funds for a new hospital to replace the inadequate Army General Hospital, and to have this new hospital named for Walter Reed. In memorializing his friend, Borden honored Walter Reed in ways he could not have imagined.

Opened in May 1909 with 10 patients transferred from the Army General Hospital, Walter Reed General Hospital, the Army's first named permanent general hospital, was built for a capacity of about 80 patients. Within the hospital's first decade, World War I brought rapid growth as wounded soldiers poured in from the trenches of Europe, and the patient census swelled into the thousands. Temporary buildings were constructed to accommodate the new patients -- it was not until almost a decade after the war that significant permanent construction took place, when large wings were added to the east and west ends of the original building. Walter Reed hosted one venue of the Army School of Nursing, established in 1918 to meet the war needs. The school's first graduating class in 1921 of over 400 is reputed to be the largest graduating class of nursing students in US history.

When additional space was needed to handle World War II casualties, the Forest Glen Annex was purchased and converted into a patient care and convalescent area. Following the war, the introduction of physician residency training programs at Walter Reed mirrored the civilian physician education system to provide specialty training for military physicians.

In September 1951, to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Walter Reed, the name of the installation was changed to Walter Reed Army Medical Center. WRAMC became to internationally prominent under Major General Leonard Heaton during the 1950s, when national and world figures came to receive care and to visit the sick and wounded.

Following his command at Walter Reed, General Heaton became Surgeon General of the US Army. In 1967 Surgeon General Heaton procured funds from Congress to start planning for a new hospital facility. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held for a new WRAMC hospital facility in 1972. Five years later, on September 26, 1977, the new facility opened with 5,500 rooms, 28 acres of floor space, 1,280 patient beds, and 16 operating rooms. In 1994 the building was renamed the Heaton Pavilion. With the onset of the Global War on Terror, today's deployed intensive care

units and critical care air transport have made it possible for severely wounded soldiers to arrive at WRAMC within days of being injured.

Throughout its century of providing care, Walter Reed's patients have included presidents, vice-presidents, cabinet secretaries, senators, members of Congress, federal judges, Army generals and high ranking officers of all grades, Medal-of-Honor winners, former prisoners of war, and foreign heads of state. During the Vietnam War, a WRAMC orthopedic ward (known as "the snake pit") became the temporary home of many wounded soldiers, some of whom later became leaders in the Army (Generals Norman Schwartzkoff and Barry McCaffrey) and government (Senator Max Cleland). President Warren G Harding was the first sitting president to visit wounded warriors at Walter Reed. He began a tradition of paying respect and providing comfort to the wounded soldiers and their families continued today by former President George W Bush and President Barack Obama.

This book is not a definitive history of WRAMC; that book is yet to be written. Instead it is a pictorial narrative of this foundation of military medicine as it served the nation and thousands of patients during a century of extraordinary growth in medical knowledge, education, and research.

John R. Pierce, MD
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Walter Reed Society

Washington, DC
2009

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