
MILITARY DERMATOLOGY



The Coat of Arms
1818
Medical Department of the Army

A 1976 etching by Vassil Ekimov of an
original color print that appeared in
The Military Surgeon, Vol XLI, No 2, 1917

The first line of medical defense in wartime is the combat medic. Although in ancient times medics carried the caduceus into battle to signify the neutral, humanitarian nature of their tasks, they have never been immune to the perils of war. They have made the highest sacrifices to save the lives of others, and their dedication to the wounded soldier is the foundation of military medical care.

Textbook of Military Medicine

Published by the

*Office of The Surgeon General
Department of the Army, United States of America*

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This World War II scene painted by Franklin Botts, titled *Jungle—Ally of the Enemy*, exemplifies Major General Sir W. G. Macpherson's insight regarding the profound toll that dermatologic problems can take during wartime:

*Diseases of the skin ... are generally regarded as lesser maladies, that is to say, conditions which as a rule neither threaten life nor seriously impair health. For the individual this is true, but in the case of an army the collective results of such minor affections may become of high importance because, for military purposes, a man incapacitated for duty is a loss to the fighting force whatever the extent or cause of his personal disability.*¹

—Major-General Sir W. G. Macpherson, K.C.M.G., C.B., L.L.D.

¹In: Macpherson WG, Horrocks WH, Beveridge WW, eds. Medical Services. Hygiene of the War. In: *History of the Great War*: Vol. 1. London, England: His Majesty's Stationery Office; 1923: 68.

Painting: Courtesy of the U.S. Army Center of Military History, Washington, D.C.

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1994

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Published by the Office of The Surgeon General at TMM Publications
Borden Institute
Walter Reed Army Medical Center
Washington, DC 20307-5001

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Military dermatology / specialty editor, William D. James.
p. cm. -- (Textbook of military medicine. Part III, Disease and the environment)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
1. Dermatology. 2. Medicine, Military. I. James, William D. (William Daniel), 1950- . II. Series.
[DNLM: 1. Skin Diseases. 2. Military Medicine. 3. Military Personnel. UH 390 T355 Pt. 3 1994]
RL72.M54 1994
616.5'008'80355--dc20
DNLM/DLC
for Library of Congress

94-24682
CIP

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

03, 02, 01, 00, 99, 98, 97, 96, 95,

5 4 3 2 1

Contents

Foreword by The Surgeon General	xi
Preface	xiii
Patient Flow in a Theater of Operations	xv
1. Historical Overview and Principles of Diagnosis	1
2. Cold-Induced Injury	21
3. Skin Diseases Associated with Excessive Heat, Humidity, and Sunlight	39
4. Immersion Foot Syndromes	55
5. Cutaneous Reactions to Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Warfare	69
6. Allergic and Irritant Contact Dermatitis	111
7. Cutaneous Trauma and its Treatment	143
8. Arthropod and Other Animal Bites	157
9. Arthropod Infestations and Vectors of Disease	183
10. Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers	197
11. Rickettsial Diseases	213
12. Tropical Parasitic Infections	255
13. Bacterial Skin Diseases	291
14. Leprosy	319
15. Cutaneous Tuberculosis	355
16. Atypical Mycobacterial Diseases	391
17. Superficial Fungal Skin Diseases	423
18. Deep Fungal Skin Diseases	453
19. Sexually Transmitted Diseases	493
20. Common Skin Diseases	549
Acronyms and Abbreviations	597
Index	599