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47th General Hospital

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The Peace-time Training Program
of a General Hospital

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"Aside from actual battle or service functions, the training of the units of the Medical Department, individually and collectively, is the most important of all activities. This is true not only for such organizations as medical regiments, but also for all medical establishments extending from the combat zone back into the zone of the interior. Whatever the special function of the unit may be, its efficiency and the efficiency of its component elements will depend largely on the character and thoroughness of its training."--Principles and Methods of Military Training (Medical Department).

This statement of the importance and purpose of medical military training is very pertinent to the training program of the 47th General Hospital for the year 1939-40. It indicates (1) that the training function of a unit is next in importance to its service function, (2) that the training of a General Hospital (Zone of Communications) is as important as that of a medical regiment, and (3) that the efficiency of the unit collectively and of its personnel individually will depend upon the character and thoroughness of its training.

In reviewing the situation, the peace-time objectives of training for this unit as established about four years ago, may be stated as follows:

- (1) That its personnel have a basically sound conception as to the purpose, the organization and administration of a General Hospital while in active service.
- (2) That its personnel have a clear understanding of its professional service.
- (3) That its personnel be well trained in basic military matters so that they may clearly comprehend their duties and responsibilities as officers in the Army of the United States.
- (4) That a carefully prepared system of regulations be made available so that the administrative and professional service of the unit can proceed without delay on call to active service.
- (5) That a well planned training program be prepared so that the unit can begin the training of its newly assigned officer as well as its enlisted personnel immediately upon reaching its training rendezvous.
- (6) That the key men of the unit be fully prepared to assume at once their mobilization functions on M-day. And finally,
- (7) That the unit be so trained that it will be possible to fulfill the functions of the next higher command--that of a Hospital Center.

At this time, the beginning of a new training year, it is well to review what has been accomplished thus far and what the prospects are for the future. Our first objective was reached at the end of our first year of unit training (1937-38) during which year a series of problems was presented covering the important phases of the organization and administration of a General Hospital. This year of training was planned in anticipation of a tour of active duty at Letterman General Hospital and the efforts put forth were amply rewarded in the facility with which the officers on this tour fitted into the active duty schedule.

The second objective was reached during the past training year (1938-39) when a series of problems of a professional nature--the care of the sick and wounded on the various services and sections of the Hospital--were completed. In this those fortunate enough to be at the Letterman General Hospital were aided by the impressions gained during their tour of duty in that institution.

Meanwhile, the officers who have shown an active interest in the Medical Cadet Corps have had ample opportunity to secure additional military experience and thereby assisted the unit in attaining its third objective, that of a basic military education. This side of a reserve officer's training is never completed, but as a whole the unit compares well with any other in the district.

Our fourth objective is well on its way to completion. At the suggestion of Col. Robert McDonald, Executive Officer at the Letterman General Hospital, a series of regulations for our unit so written as to be of service in event of call to active duty is being prepared against M-day next. Every effort will be made to push this series of regulations to completion within the next few months. This responsibility will be placed in the hands of Lieut. Clement E. Counter.

Our fifth objective is the subject of training for the present year 1939-40 and will be under the immediate supervision of the Plans and Training Officer, Captain Elmer Gilbert. The training schedule including dates, subjects and instructors is appended herewith. It will be noted that this objective is the attainment of a definite plan of training, particularly adapted to enlisted personnel so that the unit can function in this regard immediately on reaching its training rendezvous. If sufficient civilian volunteers are available next year, this schedule will be tried out in a practical way, following the general scheme followed in the Medical Cadet Corps.

The training program as approved by the 9th Corps Area is as follows:

Method of Training: Applicatory -- Unit school.

Objective: Adequately perform its professional service on call to active duty.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Instructors</u>
Oct. 11, 1939.	Principles of Military Training Applied to a General Hospital.	Major Cyril B. Courville Med-Res.
Nov. 8, 1939.	Selection of Enlisted Men for Detailed Functions of Administration and Professional and Supply Services.	Lt. Walter E. Macpherson Med-Res. Lt. Fred E. Norwood Med-Res.
Dec. 13, 1939.	Instruction on General Nursing Procedure--Training of Ward Men.	Major Daniel D. Comstock, Med-Res. Lt. Wm. Bradbury, Med-Res.
Jan. 10, 1939.	Training of Technical Specialists (enlisted men) in the: a. Orthopedic Service b. Surgical Service c. Pathology Service d. Genito-Urinary Service	Lt. G. Mosser Taylor, Med-Res. Lt. E. J. Joergensen, Med-Res. Lt. Carrol Small, Med-Res. Lt. R. Theo. Bergman, Med-Res.

Feb. 14, 1940.	Training of Enlisted Men for Headquarters Service.	Lt. C. E. Counter, Med-Res. Lt. Virgil Jackson, MA-Res.
Mar. 13, 1940.	Training of Non-Commissioned Officers. Promotion of Non-Commissioned Officers.	Lt. Herbert G. Childs, Med-Res. Lt. Lloyd K. Rosenvold, Med-Res.
Apr. 10, 1940.	Maintenance of Morale Amongst Officers and Enlisted Men in a General Hospital. Further Training of Sub-standard Medical and Dental Officers.	Maj. Ben E. Grant, Med-Res. Lt. Chas. B. Coggin, Med-Res.
May 8, 1939.	Training Schedule for a General Hospital.	Capt. Elmer W. Gilbert, Med-Res.

Prospects for a Training School, for the 47th General Hospital.

Our sixth objective concerns the proposed active duty training of the unit at Letterman General Hospital this coming summer. At that time it is hoped that our key men will have the opportunity to be under the direct personnel tutelage of the corresponding officer at Letterman, learning at first hand how to deal with the problems of a hospital as they arise. This applies to men in professional as well as administrative positions.

The seventh and last objective is one that is in full accord with military policy for every officer--that he should be prepared to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the next higher rank. Your commanding officer is definitely of the opinion that this unit and its officers should be so familiar with the organization, administration and professional services of a Hospital Center that, if the situation demands, it could step in and take full charge of this larger unit. This is an objective that should challenge the spirit of every officer in the unit. Plans are now being laid to carry out this objective in the training year 1940-41. If there is evidence in the trend of national events that this country will become involved in international affairs, our training schedule for the current year will be intensified and this additional series of studies will begin on short notice!

In conclusion, let it be remembered that the reputation of the 47th General Hospital has achieved for accomplishing what it sets out to do is due to the spirit of the unit and its loyal officers. Only those officers who are so motivated can hope to have any very active part in future unit activities.