



NAVY MEDICAL CORPS LEGENDS PLANKOWNERS OF 1871

ORIGIN OF THE MEDICAL CORPS

The passage of the Appropriations Act on **March 3, 1871** elevated the status of Navy physicians—granting them rank relative to their line counterparts, recognized the Medical Corps as an officer staff corps, and **established the title of Surgeon General** for the head of the Navy Medical Department.

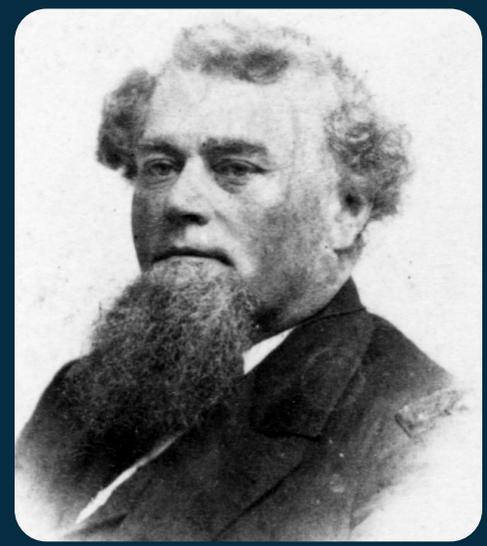
WHERE DID MEDICAL OFFICERS SERVE IN 1871?



Navy physicians of 1871 served aboard ships with **5** existing squadrons; at **4** rendezvous (recruiting stations); aboard **6** receiving ships; at **8** Navy yards; **10** naval hospitals; at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED); the U.S. Naval Academy; the Naval Medical Examining Board; the Naval Laboratory; and on special duty.

THE FIRST SURGEON GENERAL

Commodore **William Maxwell Wood**, the first Surgeon General, was commissioned an assistant surgeon in the Navy in 1829. After a career that included service in the Second Seminole War (1835-1842) and the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), Dr. Wood served as a fleet surgeon for the Western Gulf Blockading Squadron during the Civil War. President Grant appointed him Chief of BUMED in July 1869. Less than two years later he became the **Navy's first Surgeon General**.



Did you know?

Benjamin F. Gibbs	La
David Kindler	Ohio
William E. Taylor	Va
James McMaster	Penn
Chris. J. Cleborne	Penn
John C. Spear	Del
Charles H. Burbank	Maine
Henry C. Nelson	Md
Somerset Robinson	D. C
Archibald C. Rhoades	N. Y.
Michael Bradley	Penn
Adrian Hudson	N. Y.
Newton L. Bates	N. Y.
James H. Tinkham	N. Y.
Stephen D. Kennedy	Md
Frederick E. Potter	N. H
Edward S. Bogert	N. Y.
Walter K. Schofield	Conn
Aaron S. Oberly	Conn
Grove S. Beardsley	N. Y.
James S. Knight	Del
Henry M. Wells	Mass
Edward S. Matthews	D. C
John H. Clark	N. H
Adolph A. Hoehling	Pein
Benjamin H. Kidder	Mass
Wm. K. Van Reppen	N. J.
Thomas C. Walton	N. Y.
Theoron Woolverton	N. Y.
Thomas Hiland	N. H
Douglas R. Bannan	Penn
Charles H. White	Mass

There were **153** active physicians serving in the Navy on **March 3, 1871** when the Medical Corps was established. The plankowners included **11** future surgeons general who would lead Navy Medicine into the 20th century.





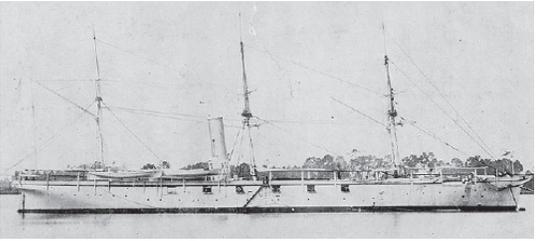
NAVY MEDICINE *FAST FACTS*



ANCHOR SICK AND INJURED ANCHOR

In 1871, there were **14,704 cases of disease and injury** treated by Navy physicians. The leading causes of hospitalization were **wounds and injuries, digestive diseases, and febrile diseases**. The leading causes of death were injuries (23) and respiratory diseases (17).

Did you know?



In 1871, the **USS Pawnee**, the Navy's lone hospital ship, operated under the dual mandate of medical care and military readiness. This unique vessel, while **tasked with attending to the sick and wounded, also maintained a full complement of weaponry**, including two 24-pound howitzers and thirty .50-caliber Remington carbines.

Medical Corps Rank

- Medical Director: Captain
- Medical Inspector: Commander
- Surgeon: Lieutenant Commander
- Passed Assistant Surgeon: Lieutenant
- Assistant Surgeon: Master / Ensign

**The Surgeon General held the equivalent rank of Commodore (1-star)



FOLTZ

ANCHOR AGE OF NAVAL HYGIENE ANCHOR

In the 1870s, the public health field was beginning to reshape medicine's understanding of disease and the means of prevention. Naval hygiene was every bit an offshoot of this movement and was specifically tailored to the issues of the fleet. The disciples of naval hygiene **sought to improve ship sick-bays, berthing spaces, ventilation, lighting, heating, means of obtaining distilled water, better refrigeration for food and protecting shipboard crews and landing parties when visiting "unhealthy localities."** Leading figures of the movement included Medical Director Albert Gihon, USN, author of the textbook, *Practical Suggestions in Naval Hygiene* (1871).



GIHON

ANCHOR COMMODORE JONATHAN FOLTZ THE SURGEON OF THE SEAS ANCHOR

Jonathan Messersmith Foltz was commissioned an assistant surgeon in the Navy in 1830. In a long and distinguished career, **Foltz took part in many bloody wars and skirmishes from the 1832 battle against the Malay pirates to service in the Mexican-American War and the Civil War.** His life was also colored by his numerous friendships, which included Edgar Allen Poe, Samuel F.B. Morse, and David Farragut for whom he served as **Fleet Surgeon during the Civil War.** In 1872, Foltz was appointed by President Grant as the Navy Surgeon General (becoming only the second person to hold this title). His life was later captured in the book, *Surgeon of the Seas: The Adventurous Life of Surgeon General Jonathan M. Foltz in the Days of Wooden Ships* by Charles Foltz (1931).