



War Surgery 1914-18

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The Great War, 1914-1918 resulted in enormous numbers of casualties who had sustained filthy contaminated wounds from high explosive shellfire, bomb and mortar blast, and from rifle and machine gun bullet. Such wounds were frequently multiple, severe, and almost invariably became infected. Surgical experience from previous conflicts was of little value, and it became quickly apparent that early surgical intervention with radical removal of all dead and devitalized tissue was absolutely vital to help reduce the chances of infections, especially the lethal gas gangrene, from developing.

"War Surgery 1914-1918" explains how medical services responded to deal with the casualties. It discusses the evacuation pathway, and explains how facilities, particularly casualty clearing stations, evolved to cope with major, multiple wounds to help reduce their mortality. There are chapters dealing with the advances made in anesthesia, resuscitation and blood transfusion, the pathology and microbiology of wounding, and diagnostic radiology. There are also chapters dealing with the development of orthopedic surgery, both on the Western Front and in the United Kingdom, the treatment of abdominal wounds, chest wounds, wounds of the skull and brain, and the development of plastic and reconstructive surgery for those with terribly mutilating facial wounds.

Major advances took place in the surgical management of casualties with all types of wound. Initially, abdominal wounds were treated by "expectant treatment". Observations by brilliant clinicians working in a logical and methodical way resulted in early surgical intervention with significant improvements in survival. Management of chest wounds became more aggressive as confidence and experience grew. Major exposure of combined chest and abdominal wounds through an incision opening both the chest and the abdomen became standard practice and these experiences laid the foundations for how these wounds are managed today. Similarly, application of basic surgical principles to the vast numbers of soldiers with head injuries saw an active policy for management of wounds of the skull and brain develop, with a concomitant improvement in survival, while huge numbers of facial wounds resulted in the development of plastic and reconstructive surgery, with complex methods of facial reconstruction being successfully developed.

There is no doubt, however, that the evolution of orthopedic surgery was one of the most important developments during the Great War. Described by one of the most important and influential surgeons of this era, Lord Moynihan, as "a war of Orthopedic Surgery", because so many casualties had wounds with serious fractures, in the early stages of the war the poverty and neglect of Orthopedic training in surgery before 1914 was all too apparent. The vision and action of Moynihan's surgical colleague, Sir Robert Jones, in establishing the principles of segregation of patients with orthopedic wounds, unity of control and continuity of treatment became one of the outstanding chapters of British surgery in the twentieth century.

This book is firmly aimed at all those with a passion for the history of this period. While it will be of interest to those in healthcare professions the editors have ensured that the essays are accessible and of interest to a non-medical readership.

War Surgery 1914-18 contributes greatly to our understanding of the surgery of warfare. Surgeons working in Casualty Clearing Stations during the years 1914-1918 laid the foundations for modern war surgery as practiced today in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

REVIEWS

“This is a brilliant book. Considering that the editors and contributors are medical professionals, it reads incredibly well as a history book – much more readable than many a military history text! I recommend it wholeheartedly to any historian of the Great War who wishes to develop a broader understanding of battlefield medicine. It has certainly helped me to broaden mine, and I must confess, I now think that researching casualties of war without looking at surgery in war is simply inadequate. ”

James Daly, Daly History Blog

"....A most interesting book, both from a World War I historical perspective and from the major changes in medicine that are so well outlined."

British Journal of Surgery

"A most valuable addition to our knowledge of the war it is also a tribute to the pioneers of many aspects of surgery - the evacuation may now be by helicopter and the modern equivalent of the Casualty Clearing Station full of high-tech equipment, but the basic principles established in the Great War for the treatment of wounds are just as valid today and are still helping to save British soldiers' lives in Afghanistan.

Bulletin of the Military Historical Society

The writing is clear, concise, expertly suited to those lacking medical knowledge, yet not passé to the expert. The book's many well-chosen illustrations are greatly aided by printing on high quality coated paper. Although it is far too early to name my Great War book of the year, I have little doubt that War Surgery 1914-18 will be a major contender. Very highly recommended.

Stand To! Journal of the Western Front Association

"...an excellent, well presented and well illustrated book, printed on good quality paper... very highly recommended."

Mars & Clio -Newsletter of the British Commission for Military History

"...important reading for anyone involved in war and conflict injuries."

Journal of Plastic, Reconstructive & Aesthetic Surgery

"The production value of this book is very high and the quality of maps, text and photography extremely good. Many of the treatments and protocols that we take for granted now developed out of the trial and error of the wartime period. I recommend this book most highly for those interested in developing a deeper appreciation of the complexity and development of both treatment as well as medical logistics during a time of conflict."

Royal Canadian Air Force Journal

“ ... an important contribution to both the history of the Great War and the history of medicine ... a superb reference text, the value of which cannot be over stated ...

Laurier Centre for Military Strategic and Disarmament Studies"

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“ ... an enormous contribution to Great War historiography in a field that, to date, has not received the attention it so deserves.” International History Review

“I found the book interesting and educational, and easy to read. I would recommend this book not only to anyone interested in the history of military medicine and this period, but also to anyone interested in understanding how we got to where we are now. We believe we have made great advances in the current conflict in Afghanistan, but having read this book, it appears as if we have, to a great extent, merely rediscovered or developed ideas of the past. This book illustrates how many of these ideas originally arose from the treatment of the wounded from the trenches of the Great War.” Journal of the Royal Army Medical Corps

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A lot of people always spent all their free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them loved ones or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent many people free time just watching TV, or maybe playing video games all day long. If you want to try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read a book. It is really fun for yourself. If you enjoy the book that you simply read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a book. The book War Surgery 1914-18 it doesn't matter what good to read. There are a lot of individuals who recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. When you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore quickly to read this book through your smart phone. The price is not very costly but this book provides high quality.

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