

1946 - 1949

In November 1945, the War Department converted Fort Sam Houston into the Army's principal medical training installation. It started with the transfer of the MFSS from Carlisle Barracks to Fort Sam Houston at the beginning of 1946. The MFSS arrived with the 32nd Medical Battalion, the 141st Medical Training Battalion, the 142nd Medical Training Battalion, the 323rd Army Band, and the schools of Neuropsychiatry and Roentgenology. On August 1946, the Army Forces Training Center (Infantry) at Fort Sam Houston was redesignated as the Army Service Forces Training Center (Medical). Training cadres were provided from the Medical Training Group, Army Service Forces Training Center at Camp Crowder, and the Medical Training Section, Fort Lewis.

MG William E. Shambora

As a colonel, MG Shambora was the first commandant of the AMSS and responsible for the transition from Carlisle Barracks to Fort Sam Houston.

(U.S. Army Photo, FSH Museum Photo Collection)



A New Home for MFSS

A pre-1949 aerial view of the 9th Infantry barracks quadrangle with field hospital tents set up on the parade ground.

(U.S. Army Photo, FSH Museum Photo Collection)



In early 1946, the Medical Field Service School closed its doors at Carlisle Barracks and moved to Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

(U.S. Army Photo, FSH Museum Photo Collection)



1947

On 15 January 1947, all independent schools operating under Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) were consolidated and absorbed by the AMSS, which was redesignated as the Medical Field Service School due to confusion between the Army School of Medicine at Walter Reed and the AMSS.

Field training at Camp Bullis was put on hold while a commission from the United States Department of Agriculture surveyed the area for a method to control a heavy infestation of Lone Star ticks, *Amblyomma Americanum* (L.), which carry Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tularemia (rabbit fever) and Bullis fever, a disease transmitted by ticks peculiar to the Bullis terrain.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, p 3)

The Mission Statement came out of the 1947 SOP for the MFSS. A whopping 41 pages long, the SOP covered everything from organization and structure to the nitty-gritty of syllabi formats.

Mission of the Medical Field Service School (1947)

The Medical Field Service School is a designated special service school of the Department of the Army's school system. Although it operates directly under the supervision of The Surgeon General, it conforms to the policies and requirements for all Army Service Schools.

Its mission is to provide systematic and progressive training in medical field services for Medical Department personnel to qualify them for duty with medical units of The Surgeon General, Army Field Forces, and Air Forces; specifically, to instruct and train Medical Department personnel of the Regular Army, National Guard, Reserve Corps, and Reserve Officers' Training Corps in professional and technical subjects that pertain to the Medical Department and that relate to the Medical, Dental, and Veterinary Services thereof. Emphasis is placed on medical support of tactical units in combat. Also, to act as an agency of The Surgeon General in the development of doctrine and progressive training methods for the medical service.



The Texas City Disaster

MFSS personnel and supplies deployed to assist with patient evacuation from the historic Texas City Disaster. Smoke billowed from the Texas City fires, caused by the explosion of 2,300 tons of ammonium nitrate.

(AMSS Annual Historical Report, 1947)

Texas City Disaster

MFSS doctors, nurses, and medical transportation personnel, as part of the Fourth Army Disaster Team, responded, along with the Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Reserve and Texas National Guard medical personnel, to the April 16-17 Texas City Disaster, the largest industrial accident in U.S. history. The disaster began on board the SS *Grandchamp*, a cargo vessel docked at the port of Texas City. The vessel, laden with 2,300 tons of ammonium nitrate (fertilizer), exploded, and the resulting chain of fires and explosions flattened most of Texas City and killed at least 581 people. Much of MFSS participation in the disaster relief was involved in the reactivation of the hospital at Fort Crockett Station, providing staff, supplies and transportation of the injured to Fort Crockett and supporting hospitals in Galveston; and providing first aid, food, water, and comfort to the remaining city residents until the Red Cross disaster operations could take over.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 9, p 4)

**Army Medical personnel
examined and transported
disaster victims.**

*(Photos from AMSS Annual
Historical Report, 1947)*



1947

The MFSS was housed in 285 buildings of all types, grouped in several locations around Fort Sam Houston.

“...in view of the present shortage of trained personnel throughout the Army, and the school in particular, it follows, ipso facto, that the school faculty and cadre are put to the unhappy task of maintaining liaison, training, police, and security of large and dispersed areas, a situation that would not be current were the school housed more compactly and adequately than at present.”

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, p 4)

MFSS mission coverage was extended to endeavors far different from its original purpose. By the end of 1947, it offered 15 training courses for commissioned officers and 17 technical courses for enlisted personnel. The Medical Department Officers' Basic Course, a 40-week training program, opened to eligible members of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Its scope of instruction was in leadership; Army and medical administration; Army dental service; field medicine and surgery; military neuropsychiatry; nursing service; preventive medicine; tactics, techniques and logistics, and the Army veterinary service. The Medical Department Officers'

Associate Basic Course, an eight-week training program, explained the duties and functions of the Medical Department to officers of the regular Army, Reserve Corps, National Guard and other U.S. military branches.

One of the most notable courses founded in 1947 was the Hospital Administration Course. In 1951, it became the Army-Baylor University Program in Hospital Administration. The concept for the course stemmed from BG Martin's experience as a surgeon serving the Fifth Army in Italy. In that post, BG Martin saw the necessity of better trained ancillary personnel so that physicians could focus on patient care and not resource management.

A sanitary demonstration area was constructed along the Salado Creek to represent a basic set-up to teach the rudiments of field sanitation from the standpoints of expediency and improvisation. Special emphasis was placed on basic construction, location and minimizing special materials and equipment.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 3)

Mess kit cleaning demonstration

(Photos from AMSS Annual Historical Report, 1947, Inclusion 3)



A field shower constructed from fuel drums

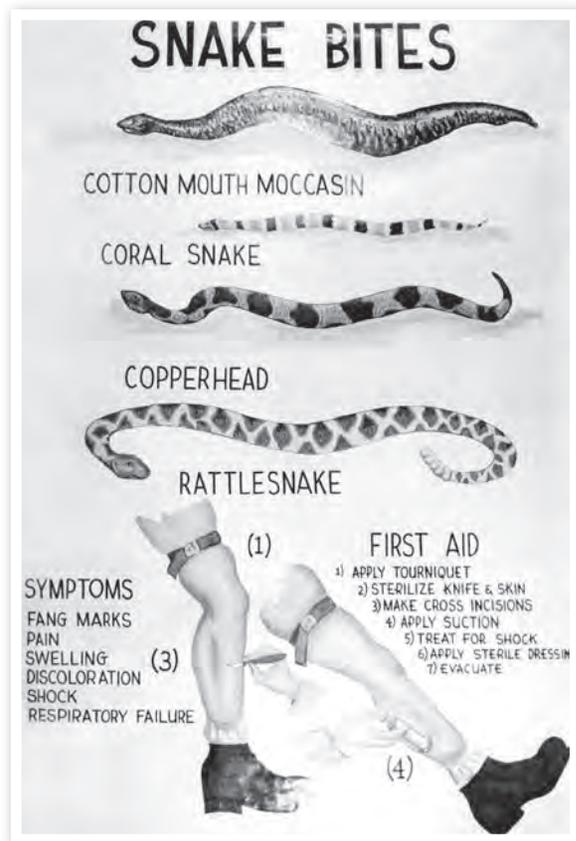


A basic four-hole-deep pit latrine

1947

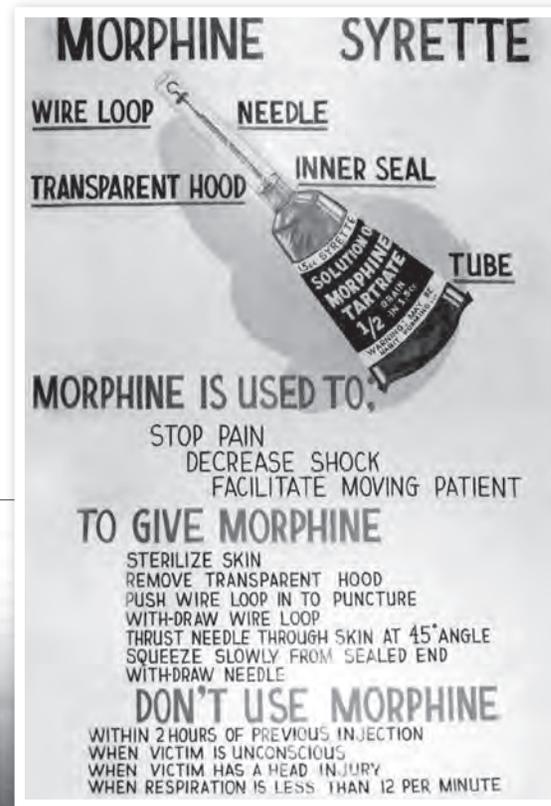
The four art departments on Post were combined in November 1946 to create the Visual Aids Section of the MFSS. Staffed with one officer, three enlisted personnel and five civilian artists, the Visual Aids Section created all artwork required throughout BAMC. The section's most important job of 1947 was the Army Week Exhibit and drawings for training manuals compiled by the Department of Training Doctrine.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 5)



Instructional boards created by the Visual Aids Section in 1947

(AMSS Annual Historical Report, 1947, Inclusion 5)



A civilian employee of the Visual Aids Section

(AMSS Annual Historical Report, 1947, Inclusion 5)



The Stenographic Pool of the Department of Training Doctrine

(AMSS Annual Historical Report, 1947, Inclusion 5)



A sampling of Programs of Instruction manuals published by the MFSS in 1947

(AMSS Annual Historical Report, 1947, Inclusion 5)

1947

Army Week, celebrated 6-12 April 1947, was a public affairs event, when the mess halls, library, classrooms, and other facilities, as well as a large display of vehicles and equipment, were open to the general public. Parades, ceremonies, the Jodie Team's expert drill, exhibits and a realistic "amputation" operation were demonstrated twice daily.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 10)



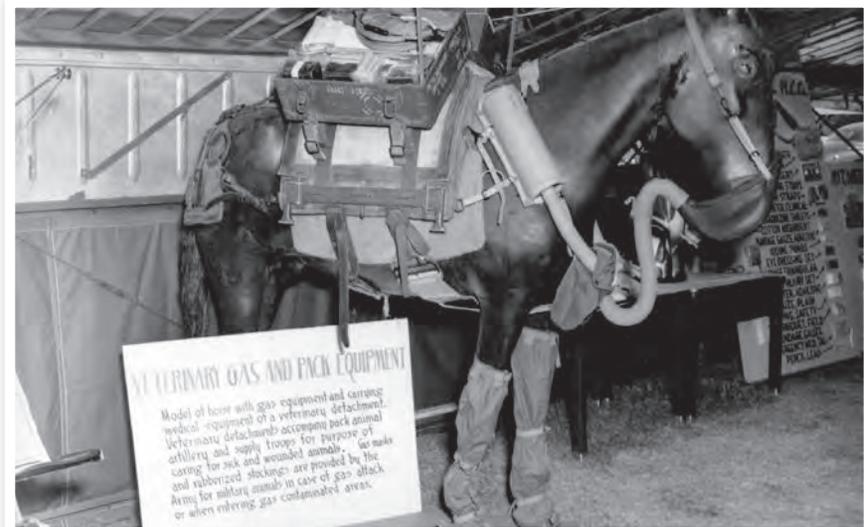
Army Surgeons conduct a realistic amputation twice daily during Army Week

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 10)



The X-Ray Technician School's exhibit during Army Week

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 10)



Veterinary Gas and Pack Equipment

Gas masks and rubberized boots were provided to Army animals when entering a gas contaminated area.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 10)



Medical Equipment Repair

Repair and maintenance training extended from medical equipment to include instruction on the proper maintenance of MFSS medical facilities.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 10)



Officer, NCO and Private medical kit displays

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 10)



Officer, NCO and Private medical kit displays

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 10)

1947



Medical Technicians Course

The Medical Technicians Course trained students in the use of weighted traction.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947)



Electroencephalography Technician Course

The Electroencephalography (EEG) Technicians Course taught soldiers the first line method for the diagnosis of tumors, stroke and epilepsy.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947)



Surgical Technician Course

Surgical Technician Course students demonstrate their training with mannequins during Army Week.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947)

The X-Ray Technicians Course demonstrates its field X-ray equipment in 1947.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947)



1947

The library, operated under the direct supervision of the School Secretary, was considered one of the most valuable adjuncts to the MFSS and was the source of daily information, reference material, and collateral reading.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 7)



School Supplies

The library had a small counter that sold school supplies

(AMSS Annual Historical Report, Inclusion 7)

Library

The MFSS Library, 1947

(AMSS Annual Historical Report, Inclusion 7)

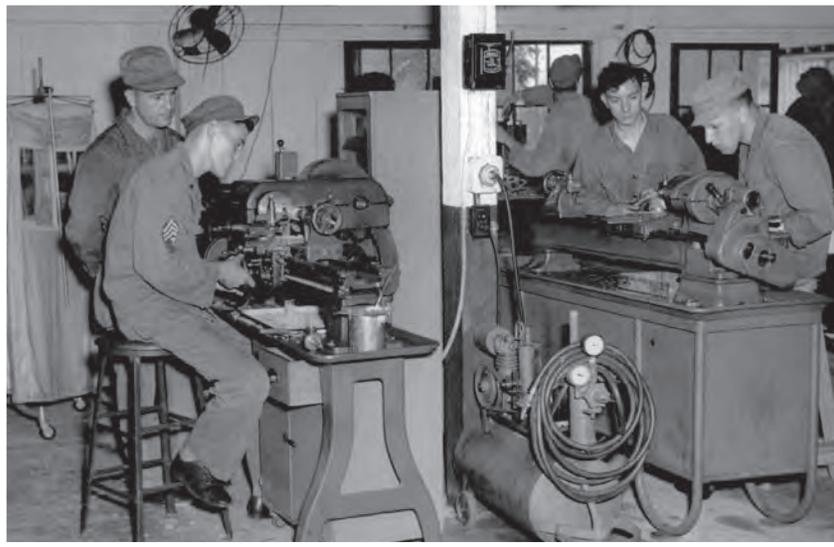


Visit from the Surgeon General

MG Norman T. Kirk (center), Surgeon General of the Army, discusses the merits of MFSS training with a soldier during his April 1947 visit.

(AM 55 Annual Report, 1947)

1947



The Medical Equipment Maintenance Technicians Course



The Student Officers' Club contained a lounge, game room, tap room, bowling alley, billiards and ping-pong tables, check-cashing service, and refreshment counter.



The Pharmacy Technicians Course

(Photos from AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 13)

In January 1947, MAJ Stanley J. Weidenkopf, Sanitary Corps, Department of Preventive Medicine, MFSS, observed operations during Task Force FRIGID and Task Force WILLIWAW in and near Fairbanks, Alaska. His observations, included in the 1947 Annual Historical Report, highlighted the medical-related effects of cold weather on personnel, motor vehicles, armament and equipment involved in medical operations.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 14)



“Specially equipped helicopters were employed for air evacuation of wounded... a standard machine equipped with a coffin-like capsule on either side of the fuselage, each carrying one litter case. Greatest disadvantage: planes are not flown at temperatures below minus 40 degrees F...short daylight hours low visibility due to frozen fog, etc.”

(AMSS Annual Report, 1947, Inclusion 14)



Headquarters Building for Army Ground Forces Task Force FRIGID

(Photos from AMSS Annual Historical Report, 1947, Inclusion 14)



1948

The gradual expansion of training activities during the year saw a huge increase in administrative work handled by the Adjunct's Office. It logged approximately 11,000 pieces of incoming correspondence and 15,000 pieces of outgoing mail, in addition to numerous routine boards, special orders, and memoranda in 1948. The school was unable to hire competent clerk-typists because compensation was not sufficient to entice or retain qualified personnel. This shortcoming was mentioned not once, but five times within the 1948 Annual Report.

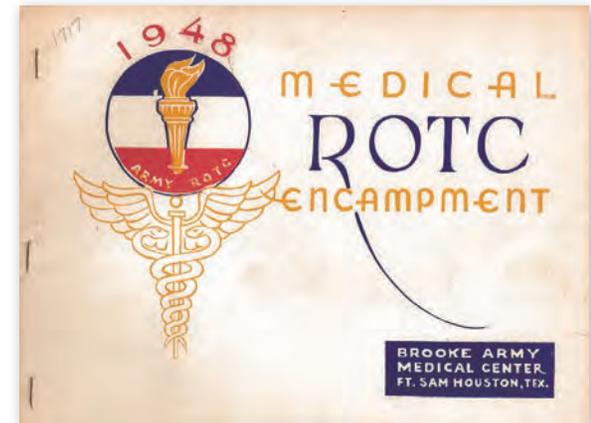
(AMSS Annual Report, 1948, pg 4)

“The construction of a centralized modern school building, as recommended in the Technical Report for Fiscal Year 1947, would not only eliminate these training obstacles, but also provide optimum training conditions for instructors and students alike.”

(AMSS Annual Report, 1948, p 2)

While there were an adequate number of vehicles in the motor pool, the school suffered from a shortage of trained drivers to transport students from Post to Randolph Field, Camp Bullis, and Salado Creek.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1948, pg 3)



The 1948 Medical ROTC encampment at BAMC was the largest single service summer camp ever held in the nation at that point in time. The training was held under the guidance of the MFSS who trained some 585 cadet personnel that summer.

(Stimson Library Special Collections)



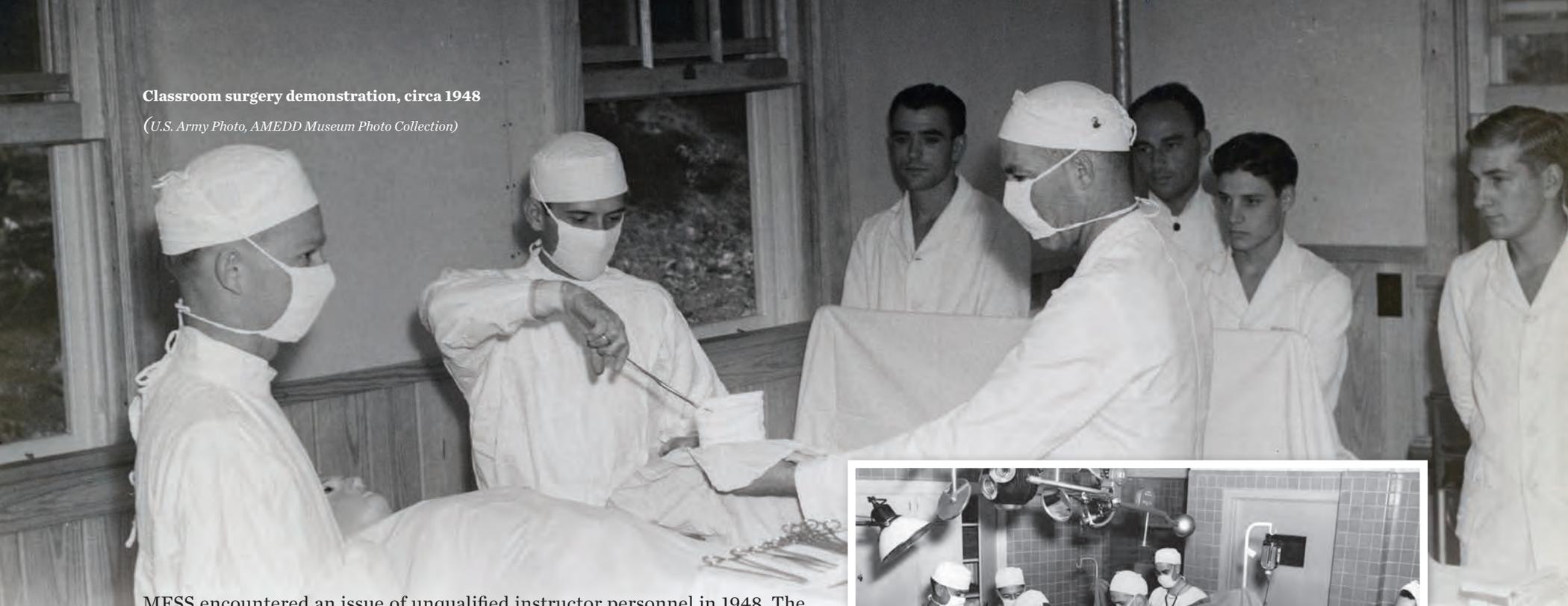
Student soldiers learned on “Matilda the Model.”

(Stimson Library Special Collections)

Anatomy and Physiology class, circa 1948

Classroom surgery demonstration, circa 1948

(U.S. Army Photo, AMEDD Museum Photo Collection)



MFSS encountered an issue of unqualified instructor personnel in 1948. The final recommendation of MG Martin, MFSS Commandant, in the 1948 Annual Report was that “..whenever possible personnel assigned to the Medical Field Service School for duty as instructors should be experienced, qualified, and desirous of performing duty as instructors. It is further recommended that these instructors be assured, insofar as is consistent with current personnel policies, of a tour of duty of at least two years.”

(AMSS Annual Report, 1948, p 41)

The 323rd Army Band, 187th Malaria Control Detachment, 188th Malaria Control Detachment, and 212th Malaria Survey Detachment assisted the MFSS with its general mission.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1948, p 4)

The Personnel Branch focused its efforts on properly designating primary occupational specialties for military personnel and implementing the Army Career Guidance Plan for warrant officers and enlisted personnel in 1948.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1948, p 6)



General instructs students

MG John M. Willis (fourth from left) and a surgical team demonstrate operation techniques for MFSS students on 8 Jan 1948. MG Willis was the eighth Commandant of the Army Medical Field Service School, and first Commander of BAMC.

(U.S. Army Photo, AMEDD Museum Photo Collections)

1948

In November 1948, the position of civilian coordinator for the school was abolished, and an Employee Utilization Section at Headquarters, Brooke Army Medical Center, was organized to administer civilian affairs.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1948, p 8)

The Food Service Section operated between three and five messes, serving almost a million meals during the calendar year. It received a superior rating when inspected by Major MacDonald of the Food Service Section, Office of the Quartermaster General, Washington, D.C.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1948, pp 8-9)

An eight-week course of instruction in physical reconditioning was conducted at the Medical Field Service School, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, beginning 26 April 1948. The purpose of the course was to qualify officers to activate, organize, and administer programs of physical reconditioning.

(Bulletin, March 1948, p 185)

In response to the Randolph Act, enacted by Congress in 1946 to provide a preventive medicine program to Federal employees, the Army began to train a cadre of preventive medicine specialists through civilian schools of public health. A practical course in field aspects of preventive medicine was offered by the MFSS in 1948, and by May of that year, the Army Medical Department Research and Graduate School announced plans to introduce a course in preventive medicine comparable to a master's degree in public health.

(Bulletin, May 1948, p 346)



Classroom casting instruction, circa 1948

(U.S. Army Photo, AMEDD Museum Photo Collection)



Learning to assemble a hospital bed, circa 1948

(U.S. Army Photo, AMEDD Museum Photo Collection)

Drivers and convoy training course, circa 1948

(U.S. Army Photo, AMEDD Museum Photo Collection)

In September 1948, the MFSS began the two-month Basic Medical Department Female Officers Course, a prerequisite for acceptance into a twelve-month physical therapy training program. The course consisted of a well-integrated program of six months of didactic instruction at BAMC and then a six-month applicatory phase at select general hospitals. Women accepted into the program had to apply for and accept a commission in the Women's Medical Specialist Corps section of the Officers' Reserve Corps and request an active duty extension of two years. The criteria for applicants was very narrow — applicants had to be between 21 and 26 years of age; a U.S. citizen; single, widowed, or divorced; without dependents under 14 years of age; possess high moral character and personal qualifications; and meet physical qualifications as set forth in Army regulations, as well as have a degree in physical education from an accredited school or university.

(Bulletin, August 1948, p 595)

Six complete extension course series were available to Reserve nurses through the MFSS in October of 1948. The courses counted toward eligibility for promotion and retirement and applied to all Reserve nurses.

(Bulletin, Oct 1948, p 821)



Demonstration of proper instrument sterilization technique, 1948

(U.S. Army Photo, AMEDD Museum Photo Collection)



Learning to read lab slides, circa 1948

(U.S. Army Photo, AMEDD Museum Photo Collection)



Removing specimen from a test tube holder, circa 1948

(U.S. Army Photo, AMEDD Museum Photo Collection)

1949

No major changes were made in the grounds and facilities available to the MFSS in 1949. The barracks continued to be converted into classrooms, but were found inadequate as instructional facilities, even after extensive remodeling.

(Army Medical Service School (AMSS) Annual Report, 1949, p 2)

The Department of Nursing was established as the number of women increased in the Female Officer Basic Course, Medical Department Officer Advance Course, and Hospital Administration. The increase also required additional supervision for the technical aspect of the Enlisted Hospital Course.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 2)

The Women's Auxiliary Corps (WAC) Student Detachment was organized 23 March 1949 to provide administrative care and supervision for WAC students attending the Enlisted Technician Course. A cadre of two officers and six enlisted personnel, housing, a day room, lounge, and office facilities in Building 2266 were assigned to the detachment.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, pg 10)

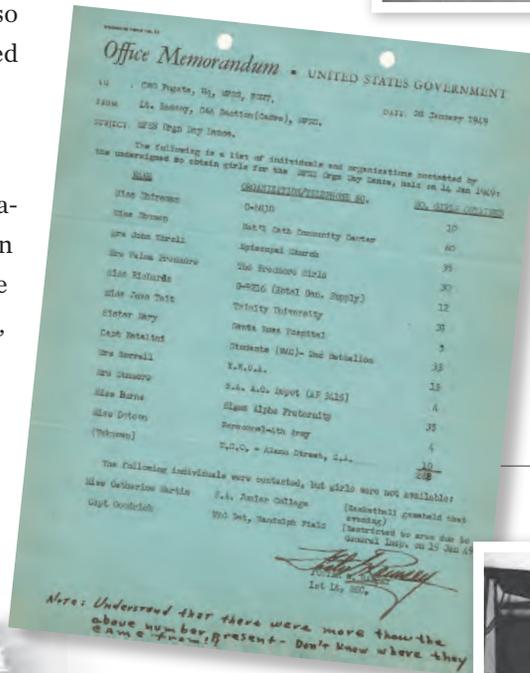
The WAC Student Detachment in formation

(AMSS Report, 1949, fig 3)



New students processing for Female Officer Basic Course

(AMSS report, 1949, fig 2)



Local San Antonio organizations received open invitations for female members to attend the Organization Day Dance. The handwritten post script on the bottom suggests that there was no shortage of young women in San Antonio interested in meeting eligible young men training at the MFSS.

(AMSS Organization Day File, 1949)

MG Joseph I. Martin at WAC Student Detachment Reception

(AMSS Report, 1949, fig 4)



Fort Sam Houston was considered “exceptionally well provided with diversified recreational and athletic facilities.” The swimming pools, located in the training battalion and Salado Creek (Officers’ Club), were great favorites with students and staff alike; more than 10,000 people visited them per month during the summer. Other activities included ping-pong, bowling, volleyball, basketball, baseball, horseshoe, and golf tournaments. Supervised tours were arranged through the Special Services Officer and the United Service Organizations (USO) Director. The USO conducted tours to Monterrey, Mexico, on long holiday weekends.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 12)

The Third Enlisted Training Battalion was inactivated and consolidated with the First Training Battalion. This move streamlined administrative coordination and functions and proved to provide substantial savings in overhead and personnel. Transfer of property and personnel was provided by General Order No. 19, 9 September 1949, Headquarters, MFSS.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 3)

Students enjoyed a competitive round of Bingo as part of Organization Day. Prizes ranged from television sets to beauty salon services.

(AMSS Organization Day File, 1949)



MG Martin calls the opening dance for the Organizational Day Dinner 14 January 1949.

(AMSS Organization Day File, 1949)



Organization Day

MG Martin and Mrs. Martin cut the Organization Day Cake.

(AMSS Organization Day File, 1949)



Army-wide Champs

The AMSS wins the Army-wide Basketball Championship.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, fig 5)



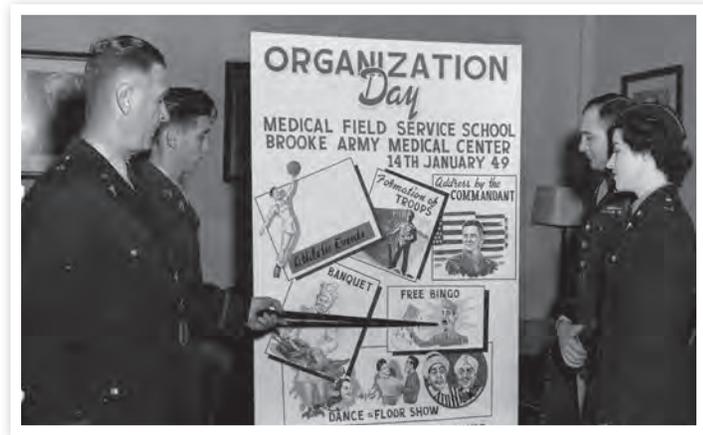
1949

As the MFSS became increasingly responsible for development of civilian training materials, a Civilian Component Section was created in the Secretary's Office in April of 1949. It provided a focal point for the editing, proof reading, printing, binding, and distribution of Civilian Component Headquarters subject schedules, lesson plans, and lectures.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 3)

The Liaison Section was given the status of a faculty department and redesignated the Department of Combined Arms as a greater emphasis was placed on unification and coordination between all armed forces services in both training and combat. In June 1949, an Air Force officer was assigned to the school as the official Air Force representative and subject matter instructor on Air Force affairs.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 3)



Organization Day was one of the largest events of the year with invitations, flyers and posters posted throughout the Post and the city.

(AMSS Organization Day File, 1949)

Information training in geopolitics

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, Figure 11)



Hand drawn flyer for the 1949 Organization Day

(AMSS Organization Day File, 1949)



The Commandant, Faculty and Staff Holiday Greeting Card

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, insert)



ROTC Graduation Parade

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, Fig 33)



1949 saw the movement of 124 enlisted men to the Medical Department of the Air Force. While the Technical Service Unit of the MFSS strength dropped, there was no loss in manpower as those who transferred were assigned to Section A of the 2206th Hospital Squadron at BAMC. While this prevented overnight depletion of key specialists, it caused problems in the oversight of pay, discipline, and promotions.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 5)

On 13 May 1949, the students in the Physical Therapy Training Course at the MFSS completed their first phase of training. The ten Reserve officers in the Women's Medical Specialist Corps were assigned to hospitals to receive the second six-month phase of training.

There continued to be issues with obtaining qualified instructors. The importance of maintaining adequate and competent teaching staff was reiterated in the Annual Report.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 6)

The MFSS Headquarters Building circa 1949.

(Photo collection, Fort Sam Houston Museum)



Practical exercises in dental mechanics

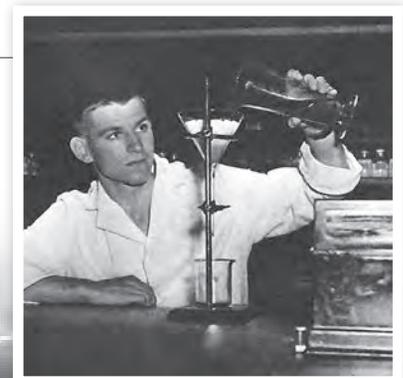
(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, fig. 28)



King Ranch

Students in the ROTC Veterinary Course receive instruction on the genetics of Santa Gertrudis cattle and observed cattle under range conditions at the King Ranch.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, Figure 35)



Laboratory equipment for pharmacy course.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, fig. 26)

1949

The chief source of enlisted instructors was the unassigned student body. An over-authorized allotment of enlisted personnel in the last quarter of 1949 made it difficult to properly assign personnel to duties related to their primary MOS. This created serious morale problems for both the soldiers and administrators attempting to place them in meaningful assignments.

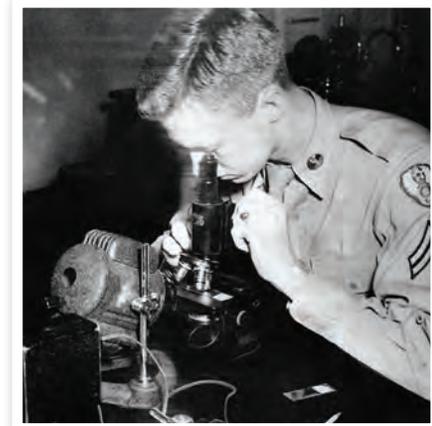
(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 7)

A four-hour course, "Techniques in Instruction," was conducted periodically for officers and enlisted personnel by the Department of Training, but was found inadequate. It was expanded to an eight-week course for officers only.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 26)

The first Army child guidance clinic to preserve and prevent mental health problems among young dependents of military personal was set up at the Brooke General Hospital. Enlisted and officer students enrolled in the School of Neuropsychiatry at the MFSS used the clinic for observation and training purposes. Therapeutic techniques such as group therapy, play therapy, and classic office interviews were tested.

(Bulletin, June 1949, pp 449-457)



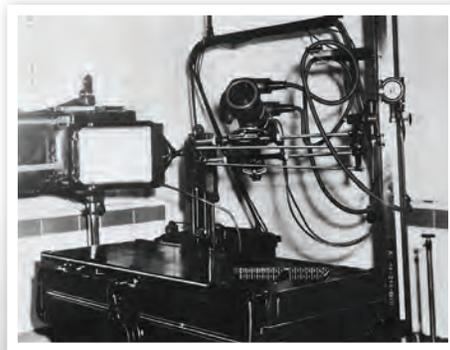
Practical application of medical laboratory procedures

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, fig 22 & 23)



Student nurses executing drill formations.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, fig 21)



X-ray procedure demonstration and equipment

(AMSS Report, 1949, figs 24 & 25)

The Extension Department was tasked with preparing and revising 78 correspondence sub-courses. It graded a total of 64,047 exams during the 1949 reporting period.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 18)

The entire second class of the Advance Medical Department Officer's Course and faculty members were transported by air to Ft. Benning, Georgia, to witness a realistic ground troop demonstration, and then to Eglin Field, Florida, for OPERATION COMBINE, an air evacuation exercise.

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, p 26)

Students receiving instruction in remedial reading techniques

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, figs 36, 37 & 38)



ROTC students demonstrating air evacuation techniques

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, fig 32)

A, B, and C Companies, 1st Battalion, MFSS, Armistice Day Parade, downtown San Antonio

(AMSS Annual Report, 1949, fig 17)



Headquarters of the Medical Field Service School

(AMSS Report, 1949, fig 1)

