

**MEDICAL CENTER ARCHIVES
OF
NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN/WEILL CORNELL**

**1300 York Avenue #34
New York, NY 10065**

**Finding Aid To
THE RECORDS OF NINTH GENERAL HOSPITAL,
NEW YORK HOSPITAL**

**Dates of Papers:
1934-1981**

**27.5 Linear Inches
(6 Boxes)**

**Finding Aid Prepared By:
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Assistant Archivist
9/21/2010**

PROVENANCE:

There is very little provenance information for the collection. According to one of the catalog records for the collection, some of the records were removed from the Preston Wade, MD Papers and combined to form the Ninth General Hospital Records. There is no date suggesting when this happened.

ADMINISTRATIVE/BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

The Ninth General Hospital unit was formed by New York Hospital and Cornell University Medical College during World War II and served from 1943 through 1945 as a military hospital in the South Pacific. The majority of Ninth General Hospital doctors and nurses hailed from New York Hospital, though qualified medical professionals from other hospitals and medical colleges also joined the unit. Though the unit's official formation followed a conversation in October 1940 between Henry Lewis Stimson, the United States Secretary of War, and Dr. George Heuer of New York Hospital regarding the possibility of providing qualified medical attendants for overseas action, it was not called to active duty until two years later on July 15, 1942.

Female members of the Ninth General Hospital, among whom were nurses, physical therapists, dieticians, and Red Cross workers, were sent to Fort Devens, Massachusetts. Male volunteers, primarily doctors and administrators, were sent to Fort Banks, Massachusetts and from there to Fort Andrews on Peddock's Island in Boston Harbor. According to Dr. Stewart Wolf, Jr., a member of the Ninth General Hospital whose history of the unit provides a first person narrative account, during their time on the island the Ninth General Hospital personnel trained new recruits as hospital orderlies, nurses aides, and technicians.

On July 18, 1943, just over one year after their call to active duty, the Ninth General Hospital personnel on Peddock's Island were transferred to Boston where they were met by the women of Fort Devens. By train, the Ninth General Hospital unit traveled to Camp Stoneman near San Francisco, California where they remained for less than a week before boarding the S.S. David Shanks, an army transport ship headed for the South Pacific. Within eighteen days they arrived in Brisbane, Australia.

The unit's stay in Australia was short-lived. The newly erected hospital in Brisbane was soon transferred over from the Ninth General to the 42nd General Hospital, a similar unit formed by medical professionals from the University of Maryland who had been stationed in a nearby convent for over a year. On October 18, over 500 doctors, officers, and hospital administrators of the Ninth General Hospital unit boarded the "Black Dog," a Dutch freighter bound for Goodenough Island off the southeastern coast of New Guinea. The nurses and female personnel remained in Brisbane. The freighter arrived ten days later, bringing with it the first general hospital unit stationed in the South Pacific's combat zone. Few structures had yet been erected at the proposed site of the

hospital, a grassy clearing in the midst of the jungle. With little outside help, the Ninth General Hospital personnel on the island completed the construction and outfitting of the hospital wards, secured fresh water by piping it in from a dam over a mile away, and erected telephone poles to facilitate communication.

Within six weeks of their arrival on Goodenough Island, the Ninth General Hospital began admitting its first patients, soldiers convalescing at an overcrowded station hospital in the area. However, an outbreak of scrub typhus or Japanese River Fever among the Ninth General personnel sent dozens of members of the unit to that same overcrowded station hospital for lack of sufficient supplies and help at their own hospital. Thirty members of the Ninth General unit were struck with the disease, among whom eight died. A handful of nurses were transferred from Brisbane to Goodenough Island to better aid the doctors there. While still combating and coping with the outbreak of typhus, a monsoon struck the island in January 1944, destroying some of the hospital wards and inundating the site with rain and mud.

Once the weather calmed and the outbreak of typhus disappeared, new wards were constructed and the hospital once again returned to patient care. However, changes in battle plans and a shift in military operations lessened the need for an army hospital on the island and the Ninth General Hospital personnel were once again transferred, this time to Biak, an island northwest of New Guinea. When they arrived at Biak in August 1944, the anticipated site of the hospital was then occupied by the Japanese. By the middle of September, the island was under Allied control. Ninth General personnel began the task of constructing the hospital and by October 20, the unit began admitting its first patients. Stationed closer to the combat zone than the site at Biak, the hospital often operated significantly over capacity, periodically treating upwards of 2500 patients when capacity capped at 1500. By July 1945, the Ninth General Hospital had treated roughly 23,000 patients.

As military operations shifted and an invasion of Japan was expected to occur soon, the Ninth General Hospital was called to duty at Luzon in the Philippine Islands near the town of San Fernando. The first group of Ninth General personnel arrived on August 14, coinciding with the Japanese surrender. Plans to set up a hospital in Luzon were discontinued. The rest of the unit still on Biak was then sent to Manila where the Ninth General Hospital was disbanded. Within sixty days all members of the Ninth General Hospital had either returned home or had joined other units and organizations. The Ninth General Hospital name was offered to an army unit in Okinawa and lived on, though no longer affiliated with New York Hospital or Cornell University Medical College. On October 6, 1945, the Ninth General Hospital received the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Wolf, Stewart Jr. *The Completed Saga of the 9th General Hospital*.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE:

The collection is divided into four series: Correspondence (1942-1979); Administrative Records and Official Reports (1934-1946); Publications and Speeches (1941-1981); and Additional Published Materials (1943-1945).

Series I: Correspondence, 1942-1979 (Box 1)

This series contains correspondence written to and from Ninth General Hospital staff, New York Hospital employees, government officials, and military personnel. The most frequent correspondent within the collection is Marie Troup, head nurse of the Ninth General Hospital. Much of her correspondence, as well as correspondence between other members of the Ninth General Hospital staff includes information regarding administration of the hospital, expected arrivals of new recruits, requirements for physicians, surgeons, and nurses, and medical procedures and preparation.

Such correspondence also includes updates from the home front, thank you notes, congratulatory letters, birth announcements and obituaries, Christmas and New Years cards, poems, and personal notes from family members and friends. Correspondence includes Flora Jo Bergstrom's "V Diary," the running update Ms. Bergstrom, a New York Hospital nurse, sent to members of the Ninth General Hospital while they were stationed in the South Pacific. Ms. Bergstrom's "V Diary" captured national news highlights, New York Hospital updates, and personal interest stories the Ninth General Hospital staffers might otherwise miss while stationed abroad. Likewise, this series also includes updates on hospital activity, wartime efforts, and general news regarding life in the South Pacific from Ninth General Hospital nurses and doctors to family, friends, and colleagues back in the United States.

This series also contains correspondence written following the end of the war and upon the Ninth General Hospital's dissolution and includes documentation regarding the unit's newsletter, upcoming reunions, and a proposed archive of Ninth General Hospital materials and records.

The series is arranged alphabetically by correspondent. Folders with multiple correspondents are instead filed alphabetically by subject.

Series II: Administrative Records and Official Reports, 1934-1946 (Boxes 2-3)

Series II includes the bulk of the administrative records and official reports documenting the creation and activity of the Ninth General Hospital. These reports include outlines of the expectations of officers by rank, information regarding appointments, promotions, and leave, descriptions of the prior training and continued education necessary for medical work in a field hospital abroad, and guidelines for appropriate medical treatment and administration. Passenger rosters and notices regarding preparation for overseas deployment are also included, as are night and illness reports documenting the doctors

and nurses on duty, the patients treated, and their conditions. Account books, expense reports, and identification cards are also included in the series. In addition to official administrative records and reports, this series also includes invitations to costume parties, dances, and socials hosted by the Ninth General Hospital personnel while stationed abroad, announcements of nurses' engagements, poems, and personal letters.

The series is arranged alphabetically by subject with one folder of miscellaneous documents filed at the end. Three stacks of notecards are located in the front of Box 3.

Series III: Publications and Speeches, 1941-1981 (Boxes 4-5)

Series III includes publications produced by the Ninth General Hospital and New York Hospital as well as a speech presented by Dr. Heuer regarding the unit. Box 4, the first box of the series, contains a running publication of *New York Times* headlines entitled "All the News That's Fit to Print," which was sent to the members of the Ninth General Hospital while abroad. Along with the headlines are a variety of publications written and printed by Ninth General personnel while on active duty, histories of the Ninth General Hospital written after the unit's dissolution and the questionnaires sent out to former members to gather information, and a speech by Dr. Heuer regarding the unit. Box 4 also contains newspaper clippings referring to the Ninth General Hospital and military operations in the South Pacific.

Box 5, the second box of the series, is composed of Ninth General Hospital newsletters published by New York Hospital after the dissolution of the unit and distributed to former members as a means of staying in contact. These newsletters include updates of births, deaths, marriages, engagements and other items of interest. In order to accumulate this information, questionnaires were sent to former members of the unit. Several folders of questionnaires are located in Box 5 of the collection.

Each of the boxes is arranged alphabetically by subject. Box 4 contains publications printed by or about the Ninth General Hospital, while Box 5 contains the unit's post-war newsletters and questionnaires.

Series IV: Additional Published Materials, 1943-1945 (Boxes 5-6)

This series includes a collection of books, newspaper articles and maps published in or about Australia, New Guinea, and the Philippines and document the landscape, the history, and the environment of the South Pacific where the Ninth General Hospital was stationed.

The newspapers and map are located in Box 5 in the first three folders of the series, followed by books on Australia, New Guinea and the Philippines in Box 6.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS:

This collection is open to researchers.

PREFERRED CITATION:

Item Name or Identification; Box #, Folder #: Ninth General Hospital, New York Hospital Records, 1934-1981 (Medical Center Archives of NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell, New York, NY).

RELATED MATERIAL:

For additional information on the Ninth General Hospital and its staff, please consult the Marie Troup, RN (1903-1985) Papers and the Flora Joe Bergstrom (1900-1988) Papers.

BOX AND FOLDER LIST:

Box 1: Series I, Correspondence, 1942-1979

Folder:	Description:
1	Flora Jo Bergstrom from Lt. Marjorie Agnew, 1943-1944
2	Marie Troup to/from Margaret (Peggy) Netsky, re: Ninth General Hospital Newsletter and Reunions, 1977-1979
3	Marie Troup from Ninth General Hospital Staff (A-L), 1944-1969
4	Marie Troup from Ninth General Hospital Staff (M-Z), 1944-1969, n.d.
5	Marie Troup from Non-Ninth General Hospital Personnel, re: Ninth General Hospital Administration and Personnel, 1942-1947
6	Ninth General Hospital/U.S. Government and Military Correspondence, re: Hospital Administration, 1942-1947
7	Ninth General Hospital Staff Correspondence, 1942-1945
8	Ninth General Hospital Staff Correspondence, re: Archive and Sidney Weintraub Memorial, 1957, 1964
9	Ninth General Hospital 1964 Reunion, 1964-1965
10	"V Diary" edited by Flora Jo Bergstrom, June – September 1944
11	"V Diary" edited by Flora Jo Bergstrom, October 1944 – June 1945

Box 2: Series II, Administrative Records and Official Reports, 1934-1946

Folder:	Description:
1	Administration: Military Hospital, Re: Army Nurse Corps (first of three folders of materials originally found in separate binder), 1934-1943
2	Administration: Military Hospital, Re: Instructions for Ninth General Personnel (second of three folders of materials originally found in separate binder), 1943-1946
3	Administration: Military Hospital, Re: Teaching of Corpsmen (third of three folders of materials originally found in separate binder), 1943-1946
4	Embarkation Directives and Passenger Roster, 1942-1945
5	Expenses: Account Book, Miscellaneous Bills, 1942-1945
6	Fort Devens Station Hospital Holiday Booklets, 1942-1943
7	Hospital Regulations, 1944 (with amendment drafted 1945)
8	Illness Reports: Monthly Reports, Re: Nurses' Health, 1943-1945
9	Night Report for Ninth General Hospital, January-March 1944
10	Night Report for Ninth General Hospital, March 1944
11	Night Report for Ninth General Hospital, March-July 1944

Box 3: Series II, Administrative Records and Official Reports, 1934-1946

Folder:	Description:
1	Night Report for Ninth General Hospital, July 1944-August 1945
2	Nurses' Time Book, 1944-1945
3	Rosters of Female Personnel Assigned to Ninth General Hospital, 1942-1945
4	Staging Area Data (training schedule for nurses, memos), 1943-1944
5	Status Reports: Monthly Reports, Re: Nurses, 1943-1945
6	Ward Routines, Administration and Procedures, 1936-1946
7	Miscellaneous Administrative Documents: Announcements, Event Programs, Lighthearted Writings, 1943-1945

Also part of Series II and located in this box but not in folders are three stacks of notecards:

- Emergency Address Cards (Nurses)
- Identification/Military Record Cards (Nurses)
- Personal Address/Family Identification Cards (Nurses)

Box 4: Series III, Publications and Speeches, 1941-1981**Folder: Description:**

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| 1 | “All the News That’s Fit to Print” <i>New York Times</i> headlines, June – October 1944 |
| 2 | “All the News That’s Fit to Print” <i>New York Times</i> headlines, October-December 1944 |
| 3 | “All the News That’s Fit to Print” <i>New York Times</i> headlines, January – June 1945 |
| 4 | Newspaper Clippings and Military Memorabilia, 1941-1955 |
| 5 | New York Hospital Publications, re: Ninth General Hospital, 1942-1964 |
| 6 | Ninth General Hospital Publications, 1943-1945 |
| 7 | Ninth General Hospital Histories, n.d. |
| 8 | Questionnaire replies, re: Ninth General Hospital History (folder 1 of 2), 1970-1971 |
| 9 | Questionnaire replies, re: Ninth General Hospital History (folder 2 of 2), 1970 |
| 10 | Speech by Dr. Heuer, re: Ninth General Hospital, n.d. |

Box 5: Series III, Publications and Speeches, 1941-1981**Folder: Description:**

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| 1 | Newsletters: Ninth General Hospital, 1947-1969 |
| 2 | Newsletters: Ninth General Hospital, 1970-1981 |
| 3 | Questionnaire/Responses for 1950 Ninth General Hospital Newsletter, 1949 |
| 4 | Questionnaire/Responses for 1950 Ninth General Hospital Newsletter, 1949-1950 |
| 5 | Questionnaire/Responses for Ninth General Hospital Newsletters, 1949-1952 |

Box 5: Series IV, Additional Published Materials (re: Australia, New Guinea, Philippines), 1943-1945**Folder: Description:**

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|---|---|
| 6 | Australian-American Association Publications, 1943-1944 |
| 7 | <i>The Australian Women’s Weekly</i> Special Issue “Tribute to America” and Map of Australia and New Guinea, 1943 |
| 8 | <i>Yank</i> Vol. 4, No. 28, 1945 |

Box 6: Series IV, Additional Published Materials (re: Australia, New Guinea, Philippines), 1943-1945

Folder: Description:

The following books are not in folders:

Australia, 1945

New Guinea and Philippines, 1945