

Texas Historical Commission Staff (JM and CW), 7/15/76
27" x 42" Official Texas Historical Marker with post
Gregg County (Order #4749) Location: S. Mobberly Ave., at entrance to LeTour-
neau College, Longview
SITE OF***

HARMON GENERAL HOSPITAL*

ESTABLISHED HERE BY THE UNITED STATES ARMY IN 1942,
HARMON GENERAL HOSPITAL WAS NAMED FOR COLONEL
DANIEL W. HARMON (1880-1940), A MEDICAL OFFICER IN THE
REGULAR ARMY. 220 BUILDINGS WERE RAPIDLY CONSTRUCTED
ON THE 156-ACRE SITE, AND THE HOSPITAL WAS ACTIVATED
ON NOV. 24, 1942, WITH COLONEL G. V. EMERSON AS THE FIRST
COMMANDING OFFICER. HARMON GENERAL HAD FACILITIES
FOR SURGERY, PHYSICAL THERAPY, LABORATORY ANALYSIS,
DENTAL CARE, AND MEDICAL TREATMENT. ASSOCIATED WITH
THE HOSPITAL WERE A POST EXCHANGE, CHAPEL, LIBRARY,
POST OFFICE, BANK, THEATER, GYMNASIUM, LAUNDRY, MESS
HALLS, BARRACKS, AND LIVING QUARTERS FOR THE NURSES
AND PHYSICIANS — ALL COMBINED TO MAKE THE FACILITY A
SELF-RELIANT COMMUNITY.

MAJOR M. K. MOULDING SUCCEEDED COLONEL EMERSON AS
COMMANDING OFFICER. 200 INMATES OF THE PRISONER OF
WAR CAMP AT FANNIN WERE ASSIGNED IN MAY 1945 TO
WORK AT THE HOSPITAL. THE FACILITY CLOSED WHEN THE
LAST OF THE 25,000 WARTIME PATIENTS LEFT IN DEC. 1945.

THE HOSPITAL ATTRACTED WIDE COMMUNITY SUPPORT. THE
GARDEN STUDY CLUB OF LONGVIEW LANDSCAPED MUCH OF
THE GROUNDS. THEIR PROJECTS INCLUDED AN "ALLEE OF CREPE
MYRTLE" PLANTED ALONG THE ORIGINAL MAIN ENTRANCE.

LeTOURNEAU COLLEGE NOW (1976) OCCUPIES THE SITE.**

*3/4 inch lettering

(1976)***

**1/2 inch lettering

***1/4 inch lettering

APPROVED
Truett Latimer
by *Baldwin* 8-23-76

Incise in base: SPONSORED BY GARDEN STUDY CLUB OF LONGVIEW, TEXAS
Permission granted by T.H.C. & Norman Beck DA to relocate
historical marker ins'd at entrance to University.
FILE COPY - DO NOT REMOVE
(date 1990s or early 1980s)

Harmon General Hospital was named by The War Department in honor of Colonel Daniel W. Harmon a distinguished Medical officer of the Regular Army. He was born in St. Louis, Mo., August 1, 1880, and died Nov. 8, 1940, while serving as commanding officer at the Army Navy Hospital, Hot Springs, Ark.

Harmon General Hospital was established and activated by the United States Army November 24, 1942, Col. G. V. Emerson commanding. A mobilization type construction was used for the 220 buildings which were located on this site of 156.224 acres. There were the following services: Administration, Surgery, Therapy, Laboratory, Dental, Various Clinical, Hospital Wards, Post Office, Chapel, Post Exchange, Nurses' and Doctors' Quarters, Four Mess Halls, Detachment Barracks, Utility Buildings, Supply Buildings, Warehouses. All of these comprised a fully self-reliant community where over 25,000 patient dispositions were completed and over 1,000,000 laboratory tests and treatments were administered during the operation of this renowned facility.

The Garden Study Club of Longview landscaped much of the grounds and planted the "Allee of Crepe Myrtle" which borders the first main entrance and is still standing and beautiful. Social, religious and recreational activities were introduced through carefully planned programs and were exercised with expertise by a well trained staff and local agencies: The Red Cross, Gray Ladies and others from the Longview, Kilgore, Gladewater, Marshall and various surrounding areas. They provided thousands of hours of music, games, picnics and transportation. Harmon General Hospital made great progress from its beginning and promulgated very warm goodwill and friendship plus enthusiastic cooperation from all of the surrounding community. All operated together with great pride and it was accepted as an integral part of Longview with the local Chambers of Commerce, both Longview and East Texas, cooperating in every possible way.

Col. G. V. Emerson was succeeded as commanding officer by Major M. K. Moulder and on May 3, 1945, a Prisoner of War Camp/^{of Camp}Fannin, Texas, established a branch camp here where about 200 Prisoners of War were assigned "Post and Army Work". This Prisoner of War branch was inactivated

-January 20, 1946.

The last patient had left Harmon General December 6, 1945, and the Hospital was transferred to the District Engineer, Galveston, Texas, January 31, 1946, presumably the closing date of the facility.

Some additional data in re Harmon General Hospital:

In addition to the above listed facilities were Officers' Club, two Post Bands, Chaplains at the service of the men at all times; the Chapel was equipped with a Hammond electric organ, and a Post Theater was active. Mail service being an important phase of moral^{ef} building, the Post Office was conveniently located near the Post Exchange. The "Harmonizer" was the official publication and was printed weekly by the staff of the hospital and was distributed free every Thursday morning.

The Post Library contained 7,080 books covering all subjects.

A branch bank was located in the Post Office building, and usual banking facilities are offered by the First National Bank of Longview.

The ~~most recent~~ ^{final} addition to facilities at Harmon was the department which fashioned artificial eyes. These eyes ~~were~~ ^{were} made of acrylic ~~and~~ hand made and carefully matched and add much to the morale of the wearer. The "Hand Wand" ^{- another prosthetic device provided there -} was a novel and unique way of meeting the reconditioning problem of patients with hand and wrist damage.

In every way Harmon General Hospital of Longview was an outstanding facility.

Deed Rec. 399, Pg. 529 et seq. Gregg County, Texas.
Federal Works Agency of U.S.A. under Surplus Property Act of 1944
156.22 ac. for \$1.00 to The LeTourneau Foundation.

Signed: Dec. 31, 1946 Recorded: Feb. 16, 1953

The above was compiled by Paul B. Belding, a member of the Historical Commission of Gregg County from voluminous material compiled by Mrs. Doris Anderson, Librarian of He Tourneau College of Longview. This material has been bound and placed in the College Library and titled ANNUAL REPORTS OF HARMON GENERAL HOSPITAL, LONGVIEW, Texas. 1942-1945. Ref. D 807 U62 148. (240 pages)

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

HARMON GENERAL HOSPITAL

1942-1946

In Longview, Gregg County, Texas, April 1942, an official announcement was received from Washington that would change the course of history and a way of life for this small East Texas town. For nestled among the towering pine trees some one and one half miles south of Longview, an Army General Hospital would be built. Here many an American boy who would storm the beaches of the Islands of the Pacific or face Nazi fire at Bizerte, Salerno, or at the Siegfried Line, would recuperate from battle wounds. The contract for construction of the hospital was awarded the following month and clearing of the one hundred and fifty six acre site began. At this time, the hospital was referred to as the Longview General Hospital.

On June 24, 1942, the name of the hospital was changed to Harmon General Hospital, and construction began in July, 1942. Two hundred and twenty buildings, nearly all connected by enclosed ramps, were erected very rapidly allowing the hospital to be activated on November 24, 1942. Dedication was held December 15, 1942.

Colonel Daniel W. Harmon, for whom the hospital was named, was a distinguished Medical Officer of the Regular Army. At his death on November 8, 1940, he was commanding officer of the Army and Navy General Hospital, Hot Springs, Arkansas. Colonel Harmon was born in St. Louis, Missouri on August 1, 1880. The family moved to Tennessee where he spent his boyhood. Following graduation from the Medical Department of the University of Virginia in 1903, he practiced for a short time in Virginia and then entered the service of the Panama Canal Commission. He was appointed Contract Surgeon in the Army, and after attending Army Medical School, was appointed First Lieutenant in the Medical Corp. The highlights of his army career consisted of two years of service in Alaska, a tour of duty in the Canal Zone, service at a base hospital in France in World War I, received the Purple Heart, and was recommended

for the Distinguished Service Medal. After the war he served at Fort Sam Houston, Letterman General Hospital, the Army Medical School, and assumed command of Army and Navy General Hospital in 1919.

Colonel Gouverneur V. Emerson of the Medical Corp was appointed Commander of the Post, and began his services on October 3, 1942. Colonel Emerson was a veteran of twenty-seven years of army service, completing assignments with Walter Reed General Hospital, Washington, D.C; Sternberg General Hospital, Manila, P.I.; William Beaumont General Hospital, El Paso, Texas; Army and Navy General Hospital, Hot Springs, Arkansas; and Letterman General Hospital, San Francisco, California. Because of his unusual medical abilities, he became one of the outstanding surgeons in the U.S. Army.

Other key personnel who served on the staff at Harmon were Lt. Col. Archibald T. Deval of the Dental Corps; Lt. Col. Arthur T. Colley of the Neuro-psychiatric Section; Lt. Col. Henry M. Bare, the Quartermaster Corp; Lt. Col. Mort D. Pelz, Acting Chief of Surgical Services; Lt. Col. Randal A. Boyer, Chief of X-ray Services; Lt. Col. Clifford M. Hanson, Executive Officer and Chief of Professional Services; Lt. Col. Stuart Lippincott of the Laboratory Services; Lt. Col. Walter S. Thomas, Chaplain; Major Walter J. Cullinane, Personnel Officer; Major Robert E. Farguhar, Post Engineer, Major Flores Masbach, Chief Nurse, and Captain John D. Medwed, Post Adjutant.

In addition to the department heads, there was a large corp of military and civilain personnel to handle the many responsibilities of the institution.

There was only one standard at Harmon, the best. To speed the recovery of the patients, every effort was made to secure the best medical facilities, nursing care, and physical requirements. The excellent care given to the patients and the high standards of the hospital were evidenced in the almost unbelievable progress of the Post. An original allotment of 1718 beds

increased to 2218 beds by 1945, plus 300 for reconditioning. The hospital grew larger organically and functionally with a continuous addition of buildings and facilities. At the height of the war and according to the Harmon General Hospital Annual Report for calendar year 1944, there were 7,765 admissions for the year with an average of 1,247 patients per month.

The primary functions of Harmon General Hospital were the care of the sick and wounded and the training of personnel. Varied specialized services were available to the patients such as dental, X-ray, laboratory, nose-throat section, N.P. section, malaria section, communicable diseases section, genito-urinary section, cardio-vascular renal section, dermatology section, V.D. section and ~~Physical~~ ^P ~~therapy~~ ^T section.

The Reconditioning Section was an important phase of the hospital. Reconditioning, being a new term in World War II, concentrated on putting soldiers back to normal. Reconditioning consisted of three phases - physical, educational and occupational. All patients in Harmon General Hospital, were included in the program except those seriously ill. The bed patient was given orientation and education in addition to physical bed exercises or occupational bed handicraft. As he increased to a ward ambulant stage these activities were intensified. The program was progressive through all stages of convalescence and balanced so that no one phase was over emphasized.

Perhaps the most unique addition to the facilities at Harmon was the department which fashioned artificial eyes. Harmon was designated as one of several general hospitals in this country at which the new acrylic eyes were made as replacements for veterans who had lost their eyesight in combat or otherwise. The eyes, handmade and matched, added greatly to the appearance of those who had lost one or both eyes. The eyes were of the shell type,

the material was a phenol compound which was well adapted to contact with human tissue and created little or no irritation. This perfected artificial eyes and was of great moral benefit to patients despite the inability to help the owner's sight.

Another specialized service peculiar to Harmon was the "Hand Ward", a particular way of meeting the problem of reconditioning patients with hand and wrist injuries. All patients with these types of injuries who reached the stage where some type of exercise was needed, were placed in one Ward which was in close proximity with the Physical and Occupational Therapy Departments. The "Hand Ward" itself was run entirely by the patients.

Other activities included the chapel, gymnasium, swimming pool, theatre, post exchanges, library, Red Cross recreational building, Officers' Club, N.C.O. Club, baseball team, softball team, post band and orchestra.

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The American Red Cross maintained a large staff headed by the Field Director. They worked in close cooperation with the military units and provided much in the way of entertainment and recreation for the patients. The work of the Red Cross Staff was supplemented by volunteer workers from the Red Cross Motor Corps, Grey Ladies, Canteen Workers, and Nurses Aides. Entertainment, such as ward movies, were taken to the wards for bed patients to enjoy.

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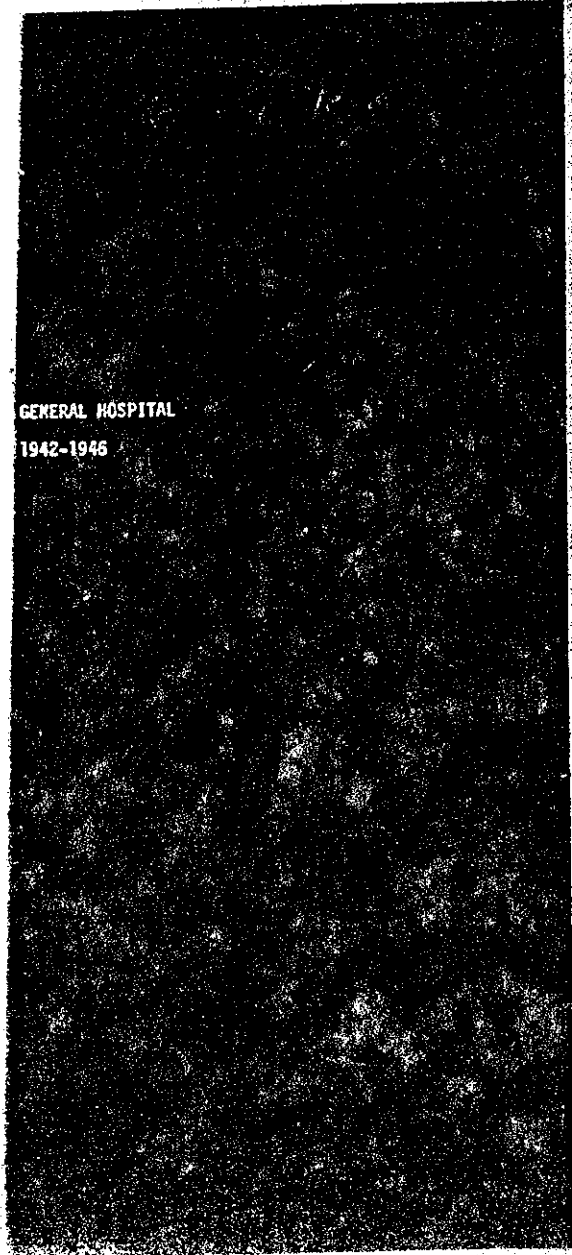
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☆

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GENERAL HOSPITAL
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Taken from microfilm of
TX Historical Commission (from Tex. St. Library)

☆ Not on file at THC

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HARMON GENERAL HOSPITAL

N↑

Water tower

H'quarters

Chapel

Closed psycho-therapy wards

Mobberly Ave

Swimming

tennis

Green St.

Attached units

POWS



To Jack and Martha Boston
Kindest regards
W. B. [unclear]
[unclear] 1944