



Military Corner

Torney General Hospital Palm Springs, California

Torney General Hospital came into being during the summer of 1942 when the Army purchased the El Mirador Hotel in Palm Springs and converted it into a 1600-bed general hospital. During the war Torney specialized in general medicine, rheumatic fever and general and orthopedic surgery. During the summer of 1943, the Army transferred the hospital to the Army Air Forces. About 250 prisoners of war worked at the hospital. In November 1945, the facility was turned over to the Federal Works Administration.

The installation was named after George Henry Torney (June 1, 1850 - Dec. 27, 1913), Surgeon General, January 14, 1909 - December 27, 1913, born in Baltimore, Maryland. He actually started of his military career as an assistant Naval surgeon on November 1, 1871. But, because of intractable seasickness he resigned his commission on June 30, 1875. The following day, July 1, 1875, he accepted appointment as a first lieutenant and assistant surgeon in the medical department of the army.

He rose to Surgeon General on January 14, 1909. The Army Medical School was built up, department laboratories established, and sanitary measures improved. An act of Congress approved March 3, 1911, created the Dental Corps as part of the medical department. It was a time of activity in the tactical training of medical personnel with the beginning of the instruction of medical officers in field work and medical tactics at the Fort Leavenworth schools. The mobilization of a maneuver division in Texas gave the medical department an opportunity to test the efficacy of the typhoid prophylaxis. In the Philippines the work of the medical research board was fruitful in the practical elimination of beri-beri from the native troops. General Torney's term of four years ended with a brilliant record of achievement in January 1913 and he was immediately reappointed on January 14. He died on December 27, 1913.

[<http://www.militarymuseum.org/TorneyGeneralHosp.html>]

