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## **A History of the Clinical Hospital Dubrava 1781 – 1991**

Published by the Clinical Hospital Dubrava and  
the Academy of Medical Sciences of Croatia,  
November 2014.

The work is an 186 page history of military medicine in Croatia. It contains, I Introduction, II . Military hospitals in Zagreb 1781 – 1991; III . New Hospital in Zagreb 1988 – 1991; IV.A history of urology at the Clinical Hospital Dubrava 1930 to 1998; V. the story of colonel Alfred Nick MD, and VI. Conclusion. The book contains 22 pictures, 16 graphic representations, 7 layouts and 16 photocopies of important documents. The editor collected all relevant works concerning military medicine and military hospitals in Zagreb.

This collection of essays covers the history and activity of military hospitals and military medicine in Croatia from 1781 until 1991. In 1781 there were two military hospitals in Zagreb at Nova Ves. There was the Garrison Imperial-Royal Hospital and the Royal Croato-Hungarian Infantry hospital. In 1862 the Garrison Hospital moves into a newly completed building at Vlaška Street. In 1911 the Croato-Hungarian Infantry Hospital moves to a new building at Kuniščak. In 1918 both hospitals are combined in the Permanent Military Hospital of the Fourth army district of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. In 1941 the hospital is taken over by armed forces of Croatia (NDH). In 1945 a military hospital is established in the building of archdiocesan school for young men, at Voćarska Street. In 1945 civilians are admitted to the hospital; in 1953 the hospital joins emergency services. In 1986 the hospital develops its research department. In 1988 the hospital is moved to a newly completed facility in Dubrava.

It is useful to compare the growth and development of our military medicine with medical services of Great Britain, for instance. Regular armed services in Great Britain were established in 1660. Medical officers were attached to units. It is only during Napoleonic wars that a properly constituted medical service becomes part of the armed forces. After the disasters of the Crimean War The Medical Staff Corps

comes into being, (composed of «men able to read and write of regular habits and good temper and of kindly disposition»), but it will only be in 1898 that Queen Victoria establishes by decree Royal Army Medical Corps. Compared to the history of British military medicine, it seems that we have not done badly at all.

Considering the available histories of development of military medicine one can expect that this particular form of medicine ought to meet the following needs:

1. As a speciality, both preventive and clinical, it ought to meet the needs of armed services.
2. In the field of battle it ought to plan and execute surgical intervention in cases of massive wounding and organise ambulatory care.
3. In peace, it ought to provide medical care to members of armed forces and their families.
4. It must continue research in the field of military medicine.

Our Military Hospital in Zagreb meets all the above requirements.

The book under review is rich in articles and documents from a variety of sources. It is especially useful because it provides relevant sources accompanied by graphs, pictures, tables, layouts and photocopies of important documents.

It is important to mention two monographs: „Klinička bolnica Dubrava 1991-2001“ published in 2001 on the 10th anniversary of the „take over“ of the Military Hospital Zagreb, and „Klinička bolnica Dubrava 2001-2011“, published in 2011. The book under review contains works already published in „Acta historica medicinae, pharmaciae, veterinae“ (1964), and several works published in „Vojnosanitetski preglad“ (1975 and later). Detailed accounts of the development of military medicine and the military hospitals in Zagreb 1781-1945 by Alfred Nick, MD, and of the period 1945-1991 by Slava Blažević, MD, are significantly informative.

The story of how the Military Hospital in Zagreb was taken over painlessly and bloodlessly by the armed forces of the Republic of Croatia is interesting. It was the result of a conspirative action code named Dubrava. The crisis staff of the hospital was constituted by several department heads. The government of the Republic of Croatia appointed colonel Ivo Vučković, MD, head of the urology department, member of the professional group and chairman of the research council of the Military hospital. They managed to maintain the hospital fully functional, all equipment in order, and almost 85% of the staff on duty. The crisis group and 1100 loyal staff managed to take over the hospital from Yugoslav army (YPA). On the 16th of December Croatia took over the hospital and integrated it into the civilian system of

health care. The fate of the Military Hospital in Ljubljana, devastated when its staff left it, was avoided. During the Domovinski war more than 2000 severely wounded soldiers were treated in the hospital and more than 60 mobile surgical teams were in action.

The history of our medicine frequently gives military medicine short shrift. This work will remedy some of the deficiencies in our opus. It is good that we now have a sensible and accurate history of this particular segment of medical history.

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