



**DR. ANITA
NEWCOMB MCGEE**

Spanish-American War

Birth: November 4th, 1864,
Washington, D.C.

Death: October 5th, 1940,
Washington, D.C.

Interment: Arlington National
Cemetery

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE

- Parents supported her education
- Studied in England and Switzerland
- Married geologist and anthropologist W.J. McGee
- Mother of 3: daughter Klothe, son Donald, and son Eric.
Donald died of meningitis at 9 months

CAREER

- Studied medicine at Columbian College and practiced in Washington, D.C.
- Prepared volunteer nurses for the Army and Navy during the Spanish-American War
- Petitioned Army Surgeon General to only allow qualified nurses to be stationed at base hospitals
- Appointed Acting Assistant Surgeon of the U.S. Army

LEGACY

- Only woman permitted to wear an officer's uniform during the Spanish-American War
- Raised the standards for nursing in the military and helped create the U.S. Army Nurse Corps
- Defied social norms and paved the way for future female doctors and nurses



**CLARA LOUISE
MAASS**

Spanish-American War

Birth: June 28th, 1876
East Orange, NJ

Death: August 24th, 1901, Cuba

Interment: Fairmount Cemetery,
Newark, NJ

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE

- Oldest of nine children born to German immigrants
- Took a variety of jobs to help provide for her family, including working as a mother's helper
- Graduated from the Christina Tefz Training School for Nurses at Newark German Hospital at age 19

CAREER

- Worked as a nurse at German Hospital where she was soon promoted to head nurse and supervised younger students
- Served as a contract nurse during the Spanish-American War
- 1899: Volunteered to work in Manila, Philippines
- 1900: Returned to Cuba as part of a yellow fever study
- June, 1901: Bitten by a mosquito that carried yellow fever, quickly recovered
- August 1901: To test for immunity, she was bitten again
- Contracted yellow fever and died 10 days later

LEGACY

- Government experiments were halted after her death
- Sacrificed her life for the advancement of medical science
- Honored by Cuban and American governments on postage stamps



ANNA "ANITA" H. CAMPOS

Spanish-American War

Birth: September 8th, 1859,
Cumberland County, NJ

Death: September 2nd, 1899, Cuba

Interment: Arlington National
Cemetery

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE

- Appears on some records as Anna H. Campos
- Born to farmer Andrew J. and Elizabeth Long
- Married Charles V. Campos, a Cuban native employed in the cigar trade, by 1880
- Relocated to Cuba where son Carlos Manuel Campos was born in 1881
- Returned to the U.S. before enlisting as a nurse

CAREER

- Enlisted as a contract nurse during the Spanish-American War
- No information about her nurse training
- Served in Cuba
- Died from malaria in 1899 in Cuba

LEGACY

- First nurse to be buried in Section 21 at Arlington Cemetery
- Section 21 is now known as the "Nurses Section"
- Along with other prominent women, she strengthened the field of nursing within the military



NAMAHYOKE "NAMAH" CURTIS

Spanish-American War

Birth: 1861

Death: November 25th, 1935

Interment: Arlington National
Cemetery

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE

- Born in 1861 to Hamilton Sockum, an Acoma Pueblo, and an unknown mother
- Attended schools in San Francisco
- Graduated from the Snell Seminary in 1888
- Married Dr. Austin Maurice Curtis on May 5th, 1888

CAREER

- Active in politics in Washington, D.C., where her husband was surgeon-in-chief of Freedman's Hospital
- Assigned by Surgeon General to travel to southern cities and recruit 32 African American women to serve as nurses in Cuba during the Spanish-American War
- African Americans were believed to be naturally immune to yellow fever, which would allow them to safely care for the sick (Two of the recruited "immunes" died from disease in Cuba)
- Rewarded with a pension and commendation

LEGACY

- Traveled to disaster zones to care for sick and wounded throughout the latter part of her life
- Was a prominent and respected minority woman during a time of segregation and discrimination



ANNA MAXWELL:
"AMERICAN
FLORENCE
NIGHTINGALE"
Spanish-American War

Birth: March 14th, 1851, Bristol, NY

Death: January 2nd, 1929, New York, NY

Interment: Arlington National Cemetery

EARLY & PERSONAL LIFE

- Born to John Eglinton and Diantha Caroline Maxwell
- Relocated to Canada with her family as a young child
- Moved to Boston in 1874
- Entered the Boston City Hospital Training School for Nurses in 1878, graduating in 1880

CAREER

- Served as the superintendent of nurses at hospitals in Montreal, Boston and New York
- Created a new training school for nurses at Presbyterian Hospital in New York City
- Petitioned the Surgeon General to allow her and her nurses to station themselves in U.S. military hospitals and implement sanitation reforms

LEGACY

- Pioneered the nursing profession and its integration into U.S. military hospitals
- Increased public awareness about the nursing profession
- Referred to as the "American Florence Nightingale" for her service during the Spanish-American War (1898) and World War I (1917-1918)

1. Attitude Toward Female Nurses



“When you first arrived we did not know what to do with a contingent of women in the camp, now we are wondering what we should have done without you.”

- Colonel John Van Rensseler Hoff, chief field surgeon at Camp Thomas to Anna Maxwell, a nurse



2. Attitude Toward Female Nurses



“I believe, as a rule, that the female nurse should never be employed in military hospitals, except under conditions, such as existed during the Spanish-American War, when an enormous army was placed in the field, and overwhelmed with sickness, there being at the time scarcely sufficient trained hospital corps men in service to attend to the needs of one army corps.”

- Major L. M. Maus, surgeon in charge of the U.S. Hospital at Fort Hamilton, New York, in a letter to Surgeon General Sternberg (June 3, 1899)



3. Attitude Toward Female Nurses



“In my opinion this would be very unwise legislation. Trained female nurses are out of place as regular attendants of sick and wounded soldiers in the ward of a general hospital. They may be very useful for certain cases and especially in preparation and serving of special diet, etc. It is my intention to employ trained female nurses to such an extent as may be necessary and desirable, but the passage of this bill greatly embarrass [sic] me in the administration of our general hospitals.”

- George Miller Sternberg, Army Hospitals Surgeon General



4. Attitude Toward Female Nurses



“The corps of Army surgeons in charge were men of ability, and it is only fair to say that they worked hard, and gave their skill and attention as far as they were able. But the physicians themselves have said that without the nurses, the record would have contained many more fatalities, and the mortality might have reached as high as 30 or 40 per cent. This seems almost incredible, but it is true. [...] Everywhere the nurses gave evidence of a womanly sympathy in connection with their professional skill, and possibly the effect of these restoratives, if they can be called such, assisted in the ultimate recovery of many cases considered hopeless.”

- Report on the employment of nurses, Ft Monroe, Virginia



5. Attitude Toward Female Nurses



“I am sorry to trouble you again. Your nurses arrived and are hard at work. Owing to the large percentage of sickness among the nurses I felt obliged to keep all six that arrived here. Unless some are able to return to duty I shall be obliged to telegraph on Sunday morning for six or perhaps 10 more. [...] These nurses are very zealous—they over-work themselves from the highest and best motives and many of them take it awfully to heart when they are stopped and to be invalided is very bitter to them.”

- Surgeon E.C. Carter of Camp Thomas, Georgia, from a letter to Dr. McGee



6. Attitude Toward Female Nurses



“During the hearings, the value and ability of women nurses and the quality of care they provided was generally testified. Dr. McGee was asked by the Commission why women nurses had not been contracted earlier and in greater numbers. She referred the Commission to the field surgeons who simply did not ask for women nurses and explained that ‘the Surgeon-General, believing that the surgeons in charge of the hospitals knew the situation better than he did, in most cases delayed sending nurses until these surgeons asked for them.’”

- Author Ingrid Gessner quoting Dr. Anita Newcomb McGee



1. Conditions in the Army Camps/Hospitals



“Our beds were filled with typhoid cases, and all desperately sick. Carrying ice and nourishment up and down the hillside. Rain failed to dampen our ardor if it did our uniforms and frequently left us soaked all day. How grateful the boys were for these services. It made no difference to us that we were 40 to 50 in a shack when off duty, just room enough to stand between the cots. One lantern banging in the middle of the building for light.”

- Barbara U. Austin, Sternberg Field Hospital, Fort Thomas, Georgia



2. Conditions in the Army Camps/Hospitals



“Miss Dunrise the nurse I recommended arrived this A.M. much to our delight & I am much obliged for sending her so promptly. We are in terrible distress for nurses and cant [sic] understand the delay in sending them—there ought to be 50 good nurses in Washington willing & glad to come here. We have now in the hospital 150 cases of typhoid fever & and six trained nurses to take care of these & and there are 100 more cases waiting to come. We need 30 trained nurses & cannot do with less. I understand from the Surgeon General that the matter has been turned over to you & I trust you will at once relieve our distress.”

- Major J.W. Bayne, M.D., thanks Dr. McGee for sending a nurse and describes the conditions at Camp Thomas, Georgia and the need for additional nurses



3. Conditions in the Army Camps/Hospitals



“We had no disinfectant whatsoever to use. There was not even one wash basin in these wards for the nurses to wash their hands. At one time when there was a shortage of water for several days, we were requested “not wash at all.” The three toilets which were supposed to be adequate for the needs of the 200 nurses, were over 500 feet away from their sleeping quarters. Every one of the nurses had contracted dysentery and under these fearfully unsanitary conditions, consider how inevitable it was, that the majority of the nurses left Sternberg Hospital Service with an intestinal condition which soon became chronic and which we shall suffer from the effects of, until the end of our life.”

- Nurses Helen B. Schuler and Florence M. Kelly on the conditions at Sternberg Field Hospital at Fort Thomas, Georgia



4. Conditions in the Army Camps/Hospitals



"[After being assigned to the Army hospital at Montauk Point, Long Island, New York] we had to hustle to . . . get into uniform then we returned to the Colonel's tent and were ordered to line up outside and a group of doctors were told to choose the nurse each wanted. It was positively funny and yet humiliating to stand there and wonder who would choose you. I don't know how they sized us up. . . We worked from 5 o'clock until about 8 o'clock without food of any kind, and when we went to breakfast we would get black coffee and some kind of mush, Indian meal or oat meal, then back to work [until 8 p.m.]. I remember one dinner I went to where there was nothing but boiled cabbage and black coffee."

- Rose M. Heavren, a nurse, from a speech about her experiences at a reunion of Spanish-American War Nurses, March 28, 1950.



1. Nursing Requirements & Compensation



Typical letter of reply to nursing volunteer application:

Dear Madam:

Your application of recent date has been received. All applications from women for hospital positions, whether addressed to the Surgeon-General or to the director of the DAR hospital corps, are placed on file in this office. The reserve list is composed, however, only of those who have had hospital training and who answer satisfactorily to the inclosed questions. Nurses who receive appointment in the army must be between 30 and 50 years of age. They will be paid railroad fare to the place of duty and \$30 a month with board. If practicable, lodging will be given, but other expenses must be met by the nurse. Women may later be appointed to shore duty in the Navy, but no provision has yet been made therefor. Indorsements as to good character and general ability should accompany the application, and it is requested that, if possible, such indorsements [sic] should include one from some Daughter of the American Revolution.

- Anita Newcomb McGee, M.D., *Vice-president General,
D.A.R. Hospital Corps*



2. Nursing Requirements & Compensation



“I will only point out that there were 1,700 women, [...] who served as nurses in the Spanish War period. Of that number [...] only 184 are drawing pension. [...] Hundreds of nurses are not eligible because they served only in the greatest emergency: hence less than 90 days. Of course, many have died. The Spanish War nurses are veterans in every sense of the word. [...] They fought the enemy of disease, which was the real enemy in the Spanish-American War, and they took the medicine of death and illness, just as the soldiers did. Thirteen of my nurses died in the service.”

- Dr. Anita Newcomb McGee in 1926 testimony to Congress about the need for additional support for Spanish American War veteran nurses. Legislation passed in 1922 required nurses to have served for a minimum of 90 days to collect benefits and many nurses were excluded.



Image 1: Spanish American War Nurses



View of nursing nuns seated in front of tents in 1898. US Army 3rd Division Hospital, 7th Army Corps. (NIH: U.S. National Library of Medicine).

Image 2: Spanish American War Nurses



View of contract nurses in uniform; second group to leave New York in 1898. (NIH: U.S. National Library of Medicine)

Image 3: Spanish American War Nurses



Details unknown. (NIH: U.S. National Library of Medicine)

Image 4: Spanish American War Nurses Monument

Back of Monument



Front of Monument



Spanish American War Nurses Monument in Arlington National Cemetery. Built by the Society of Spanish American War Nurses in 1905. (Left: LOC/Carol M. Highsmith, ca. 1980-2006; Right: ANC Education/Leah Baer, 2019)

Image 5: Ward Tent, Sternberg General Hospital, Manila, Philippines



Nurses and Army personnel in hospital ward tent in Manila, Philippines. (NIH: U.S. National Library of Medicine)

Image 6: Transporting Wounded, Spanish-American War



Wounded soldiers are transported on stretchers and in horse-drawn ambulances during the Spanish American War. (NIH: U.S. National Library of Medicine)

Image 7: Nurses' Dormitory



"Dormitory C" at Sternberg General Hospital, Camp Thomas, Chickamauga, Georgia during the Spanish American War. (U.S. Army)

Image 8: Hospital Ward



"Pavilion D" Hospital Ward, Sternberg General Hospital, Camp Thomas, Chickamauga, Georgia during the Spanish American War. (U.S. Army)

WOMEN AND NURSING: A TIMELINE



1861

American Civil War

Immediate need for large number of nurses without formal training

1898

Spanish-American War

1,500+ women serve as contract nurses in a quasi-military unit

1917

World War I

Women serve in variety of non-combat roles in addition to nursing

1922

Pension for Female Nurses

Only some women who served received pensions at this time

1948:

Armed Forces

Integrated

Racial segregation and quotas in the Army end

★ 1850

★ 1900

1950 ★

1873

New Nurse Certification Programs

3 new influential programs begin and more formal nurse training programs soon follow

1901

Army Nurse Corps created by Congress

Nurse Corps is a permanent corps in the Army

1919

19th Amendment Passed

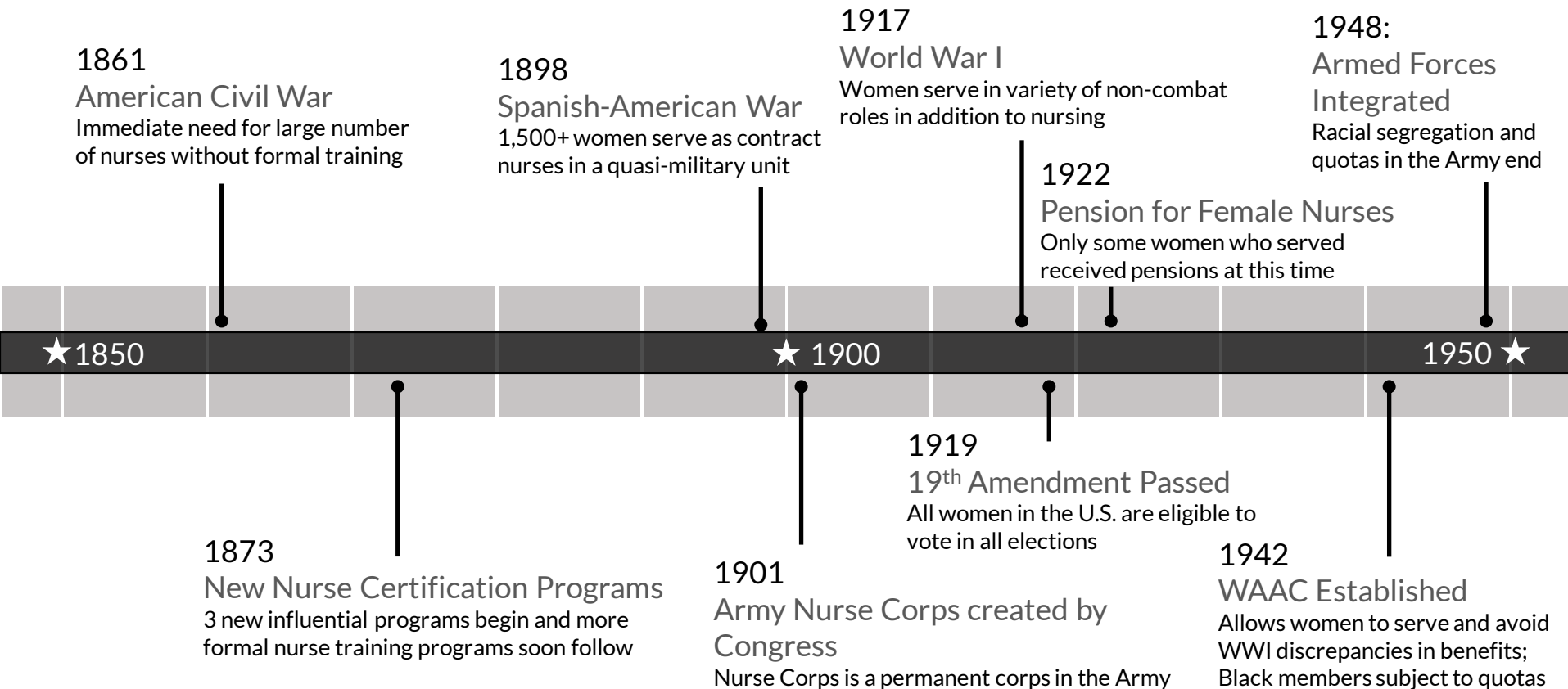
All women in the U.S. are eligible to vote in all elections

1942

WAAC Established

Allows women to serve and avoid WWI discrepancies in benefits; Black members subject to quotas

WOMEN AND NURSING: A TIMELINE



Opportunities for Women

Challenges of Nursing

Image

Is this progress?

Quotation

Opportunities for Women:

Challenges of Nursing:

Quotation:

Is this progress?

Image: