



150 Years of Leadership:



The History of the North Carolina Medical Society's Pioneering Physician Leaders

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(courtesy History of the North Carolina State Board of Medical Examiners)

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(courtesy of the North Carolina Medical Journal)

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(courtesy Art & Medicine) www.artandmedicine.com

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(courtesy of the Mecklenburg County Medical Society)

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(courtesy of the Society for the Study of African-American History)

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The First North Carolina Medical Society 1799-1804

The North Carolina Medical Society first met in 1799. Through a charter from the North Carolina legislature, the Medical Society was formed as an incorporated body with the right to sue and be sued and the right to hold any property it may acquire. On April 16, 1800, the North Carolina Medical Society met to elect its officers. Richard Fenner, MD, was elected the first president of the newly formed Society and James Webb, MD, the vice president. Fenner (1758-1828), was a well-respected physician who was born in New Bern and had a career tied to the military. He was a first lieutenant during the American Revolution and was held as a prisoner of war in Charlotte. After the war, Fenner studied medicine and continued working as a medical officer with the armed services.



James Webb, MD

Webb took the groundbreaking step of providing free smallpox vaccinations, and he also provided free care to poor white and black patients.

The leadership at the second meeting of the Medical Society developed a Board of Censors to determine who was fit to practice medicine, a step that laid the groundwork for the formation of the Board of Medical Examiners in 1859. North Carolina was the first state in the Union to enact such laws.

Annual meetings of the Society were held from 1799-1804. In 1804, members resolved to hold the next meeting in Chapel Hill on July 5, 1805; however, no such gathering is recorded thereafter until the formation of the Medical Society of the State of North Carolina in 1849. Dr. James Webb was the only charter member of this new association who had also been a member of the Medical Society of 1799.

James Webb, MD (1774-1855), of Hillsborough, was a leading merchant, philanthropist, and physician in Orange County. Later in his career in 1822,

of this new association who had also been a member of the Medical Society of 1799.

December 17, 1799:
The NC Medical Society meets for the first time.

April 16, 1800: Richard Fenner is elected the first president of the North Carolina Medical Society.

1800: The Medical Society creates the Board of Censors; Charles Smith is the first physician to pass the examination before the Board.

1804: The Society has met annually to this point and agrees to meet in July of 1805; no record of a meeting is found after this 1804 date.

1790

1839

First President: Edmund Strudwick, MD, 1849

Edmund Strudwick was born on March 25, 1802, to Martha Sheppard and William Francis Strudwick, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and, later, the NC House of Representatives. In his early years, Edmund attended the Bingham School in Hillsborough where he trained under his mentor, Dr. James Webb (see previous page). He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1824.

Strudwick practiced all forms of medicine but specialized in surgery. His dedication to the profession was well known and best demonstrated on one evening in 1862. While traveling to a nearby town to perform surgery, he was thrown from his carriage, breaking his leg. Edmund lay on the freezing ground all night, but when help finally reached him, he insisted on traveling first to his patient's home, where he performed the surgery laying beside his patient on the bed. Once the operation was complete, he finally tended to his own injury.

In 1849, Strudwick became the first elected president of the newly formed State Medical Society. During his presidency, Strudwick suggested the need for "stiff requirements in general education and moral character for those seeking entrance in to medical schools." He also pushed the legislature to pass a law "compelling the registration of marriages, births, and deaths," and he stressed the importance of autopsies for educational purposes.

As the Civil War raged in 1862, Strudwick began caring for the wounded in his own home. By the end of the war, his large estate had diminished to nothing. He surrendered all of his possessions and worked for the rest of his life to pay off his debts. His efforts were cut short in 1879 due to an accidental overdose of atropine



Edmund Strudwick, MD

that led to his death.



May 8, 1861: With the threat of civil war looming, the Medical Society meets and elects J.J. Summerell president.

January 27, 1849: Several physician legislators call for a State Medical Convention.

April 17, 1849: The State Medical Society meets and Dr. Edmund Strudwick is elected president.



May 13, 1856: The Medical Society appropriates \$1,200 to establish the State Medical Journal.

1840

1865

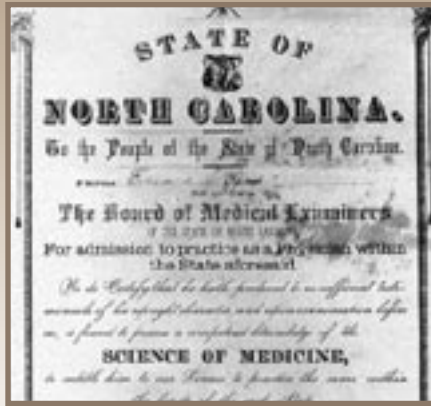
The State Board of Medical Examiners, 1859

Like the NC Medical Society created in 1799, the members of the later Medical Society of the State of North Carolina felt that there was a need for regulation of medical practice in the state. A committee that had helped in the formation of the Society appealed to other physicians in the state, "for every physician in the state acknowledges with deepest regret that under the combined operations of corrupt influences our honorable profession has been injured in its standing..."

For 30 years prior to the organization of the Board, frequent attempts had been made to pass legislation regulating the practice of medicine in the state. In 1818, Boon Felton, the State Senator from Hertford County, introduced a bill that would have required a physician to have a diploma in order to practice. Unfortunately, the bill was referred to a joint committee where it failed to move forward. More

attempts were made in 1820, 1821, 1825, and 1826. In May of 1858, the Society appointed a committee of five to petition the General Assembly. The committee was successful. In 1859, the state passed a bill that called for the organization of a Board of Medical Examiners, although the laws were not sufficiently strict. On May 11, 1859, the Society moved to adopt the bill and proceeded to elect seven members to the Board. North Carolina was the first state in the Union to pass such legislation. Provisions allowed for physicians with a medical diploma and those swearing under oath that they had practiced medicine prior to the bill to register to practice within their county of residence.

It was not until 1921 that the law was amended to allow only physicians who were licensed by the Board permission to practice medicine in the state.



May 1858: The Society appoints a committee to petition the General Assembly for regulation of the medical profession.

May 1859: The Society announces the passage of legislation and moves to adopt. The first seven-member Board is elected.

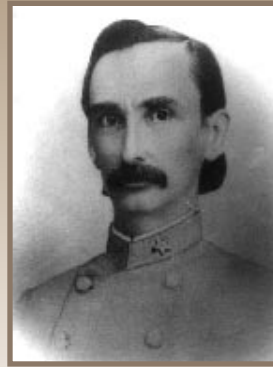
1921: The General Assembly amends the laws to only allow physicians licensed by the Board of Medical Examiners to practice medicine.

1850

1930

The Civil War and the Medical Society

The Medical Society of the State of North Carolina did not meet during the years of 1862-1866 due to the Civil War. Although the Medical Society was not active during this time, there were several key figures of the Society who played integral parts in helping fallen soldiers. Edmund Strudwick, MD, the first president of the Society, was so dedicated to his profession that he wrote a cousin who had formed a regiment and instructed him to send any wounded soldiers to him. He cared for the steady stream of soldiers who came to him with bullet wounds, shattered limbs, and disease. At the end of the war, his estate had diminished, and he was advised to declare bankruptcy and take advantage of the laws that could help him. He refused and worked up to his death to pay his debts.



Edmund Burke Haywood, MD

in treating soldiers during the war. Haywood was born on January 15, 1825, in Raleigh, North Carolina. He attended the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and graduated from medical school at the University of Pennsylvania. Upon graduation, he returned to Raleigh to practice medicine. In 1861 he enlisted as a private in the Raleigh Light Infantry and soon after was chosen as surgeon to the company. Haywood organized the first military hospitals in the state, and in August of 1862, he was appointed as surgeon of the North Carolina state troops. At the end of the war, Haywood was in charge of Pettigrew Hospital in Raleigh. After the discharge of the last soldier, he returned to his private practice. Just a few

years later in 1869, Haywood served as President of the Medical Society of the State of North Carolina.



Haywood in his later years.

Another Society president, Edmund Burke Haywood, MD, had an active role

1861: The Medical Society holds its last meeting before the Civil War.

1862: Edmund Burke Haywood, MD, enlists and is chosen surgeon for his company.

August 1862: Haywood is appointed surgeon of the NC State troops.

1865: The last Confederate troops in North Carolina surrender.

1867: The Medical Society resumes its annual meetings.

July 4, 1868: North Carolina is readmitted into the Union.

1869: Edmund Burke Haywood is elected President of the Medical Society.

1860

1870

Women in the Medical Society

In 1872, when female physicians were met with much scrutiny, the Medical Society of the State of North Carolina admitted its first female member. Susan Dimock, MD, was born in Washington, North Carolina, in the spring of 1847. After her father, Henry, was killed by invading troops during the Civil War, she and her mother left North Carolina to live with family in Massachusetts. It was there that Susan began to study medicine feverishly. After applying to Harvard and being refused twice, the family of Susan's best friend, Elizabeth Greene, helped to send her to medical school in Switzerland. In 1871, Dimock received her medical degree with honors from the University of Zurich.



Susan Dimock, MD

Shortly after her graduation, she returned to the United States and the New England Hospital where she first began her studies. There she helped pioneer the first institutional learning program for nurses. In 1872, Dr. Dimock's name was presented for membership to the Medical Society in North Carolina by Dr. Solomon Samson Satchwell, an old friend. At the annual meeting of the Society that year in New Bern, Susan Dimock became the first female physician admitted for membership. Tragically, Dr. Dimock's burgeoning career was cut short in 1875 when she and two friends were among the 311 passengers who drowned after their European-bound vessel struck a reef and sank.

1871: Susan Dimock, MD, a North Carolina native, receives her medical degree from the University of Zurich.

1872: Susan Dimock's name is submitted and accepted into membership with the North Carolina Medical Society.

May 7, 1875: Dr. Dimock perishes on her way to Europe when her vessel, the *S.S. Schiller*, strikes a reef during thick fog.



Susan Dimock, MD

1870

1879

Another impressive woman to break through gender barriers in the field of medicine was Dr. Annie Lowrie Alexander. She was born January 10, 1864, in Mecklenburg County, NC, to parents Dr. John Brevard Alexander and Ann Wall Lowrie Alexander.

Alexander graduated from Woman's Medical College in Philadelphia in 1884 and gained her membership with the North Carolina Medical Society in 1885. She returned to North Carolina in 1887, becoming one of the first woman to practice medicine in the South.

She rose in esteem among her male peers and in 1909 was elected to her first of several terms as president of the Mecklenburg County Medical Society. During World War I, Alexander continued her remarkable career, serving as a first lieutenant in the army as an acting assisting surgeon at

Camp Greene in Charlotte. For 23 years, she also worked as a physician at the Presbyterian College for Women (now Queens College). Alexander passed away in 1929 after contracting pneumonia from a patient.

These strong female physicians helped to pave the way for later physicians to lead the Medical Society. In 1982, Josephine Newell, MD, was elected as the first female president of the North Carolina Medical Society, and two other physicians, Elizabeth Kanof, MD, and Carolyn Feree, MD, were later elected president in 1994 and 1997 respectively. Darlyne Menscer, MD, has led the House of Delegates as the first female Speaker since 2001. Today there are nearly 3,000 women members of the Medical Society.



Josephine Newell, MD

1884: Annie Lowrie Alexander earns her medical degree from Woman's Medical College in Philadelphia.

1885: Annie Lowrie Alexander, MD, becomes a member of the Medical Society.



Annie Lowrie Alexander, MD

1887: Dr. Alexander moves back to North Carolina, becoming the first practicing female physician in the South.

1909: Dr. Alexander becomes the first female to be elected president of the Mecklenburg County Medical Society.

1880

1910

Diversity in the Medical Society

In 1950, the issue of memberships for physicians of all races was brought before the NCMS House of Delegates by President Westbrook Murphy, MD. He suggested the Society issue limited memberships like several other states had done. In April of 1951, the Old North State Medical Society, made up of African American physicians in North Carolina, requested that they either be admitted as a constituent to the American Medical Association separate from the NCMS or that the NCMS lift its racial barriers and admit black physicians to the Society. The AMA refused the request to include the Old North State as a constituent separate from the current Medical Society. The issue was raised again in 1954 when the Guilford County Medical Society passed a resolution that urged the NCMS to delete the word "white" from its bylaws. The House of Delegates refused. The House did, however, vote to allow each county society to admit black physicians as "scientific members."

Scientific members were allowed to attend all scientific and business sessions and had the right to vote and hold office, but they were not allowed to attend social functions. In January of 1955, at the annual meeting in Kinston, a resolution was brought forward that recommended that the NC Medical Society admit black physicians as scientific members with the same rights and stipulations as the county societies had placed on them. In May of that year, after much spirited discussion, the amendment passed by a vote of 104 to 37. In 1957, the first two black physicians, Joseph Gordon, MD, and Joseph Walker, Jr., MD, were admitted to the Society as scientific members.



Joseph Grover Gordon, MD

Dr. Joseph Grover Gordon was born in Jamaica but spent most of his early years in New York City. After attending St.

1950: President of the Medical Society, Westbrook Murphy, MD, brings the issue of providing memberships for all races before the House of Delegates. No action is taken at this time to amend the Constitution and Bylaws.

1955: A resolution is passed in the NCMS House of Delegates to admit black physicians as voting "scientific members," without social privileges.

1957: Doctors Joseph Gordon and Joseph Walker become the first African American members of the North Carolina Medical Society admitted under the "scientific member" status.

May 1965: The House of Delegates votes to remove the words "white" and "scientific members" from the Constitution and Bylaws, opening full membership to all physicians within the state.

1950

1965

Augustine's College in Raleigh, he was drafted into the US Army during World War II. Dr. Gordon then graduated from the University of Chicago and received his medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1948. During the Korean War, Dr. Gordon served in the medical corps, and upon returning to civilian life, he served as chief of the Department of Radiology at Kate Bitting Reynolds Memorial Hospital, where he developed the School of Radiologic Technology. In 1967, he became assistant professor of radiology at Wake Forest University's Bowman Gray Medical School, a position he held until his retirement in 1988. Dr. Gordon was also an active civic leader, becoming the first African American to be elected as a trustee of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation in 1970. The Foundation later created a scholarship program for Wake Forest minority undergraduates in his honor.



Joseph Monroe Walker, Jr., MD

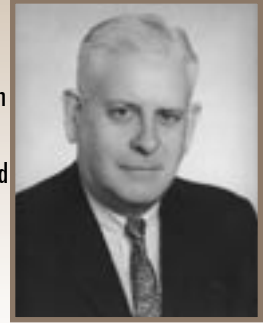
Dr. Joseph Monroe Walker, Jr., was born in Augusta, Georgia, graduated from Morehouse College in Atlanta, and received his bachelor of science degree from the University of Illinois. In 1933, he received his medical degree from the University of Illinois School of Medicine. Dr. Walker's career was marked with a number of firsts aside from his groundbreaking membership with the NC



Dr. Gordon at work

Medical Society. He was the first African American practicing surgeon in North Carolina to be named a fellow of the American College of Surgeons in 1951, and he was the first black physician named to the courtesy staff of the old City Hospital. He passed away at age 64, ending his esteemed run as president of the Kate Bitting Reynolds Memorial Hospital professional staff.

The Old North State Medical Society again requested full unrestricted membership for black physicians in 1961. In 1964, George Paschal, MD, asked the House to approve a Constitution and Bylaws change that would remove the words "white" and "scientific members." On May 2, 1965, the House voted 117 to 28 to allow all physicians equal membership. On June 17, 1989, Dr. Paschal was honored by the Old North State Medical Society with a plaque that read, "Dr. George Paschal, Jr., of Raleigh, in the face of strident criticism by his peers in the North Carolina Medical Society, was one of the few who openly aided these efforts. Dr. Paschal courageously broke the tradition of medical segregation during his presidency of the North Carolina Medical Society in 1964."



George Paschal, Jr., MD

Physician Assistants and the North Carolina Medical Society

In 1965, Eugene Stead, MD, organized the first class of physician assistants through the Duke University Medical Center to expand the delivery of quality health care. He targeted navy corpsmen who had a considerable amount of medical training during their military service, but had no civilian training. He based the curriculum on his knowledge of the fast-track training for doctors during World War II. The idea quickly gained momentum, as today there are more than 130 accredited PA programs in the nation, including four in North Carolina, and over 50,000 PAs nationwide.

As physician assistants and physicians began working more closely, several doctors recognized the need for greater inclusion of physician assistants within organized medicine. In 1992, E. Harvey Estes, MD, and Dr. Stead proposed that physician assistants be invited to join the NC Medical Society, a measure



E. Harvey Estes, MD, and Eugene Stead, Jr., MD

that was supported by then NCMS President F. Maxton "Mac" Mauney. The resolution passed and in 1993 the NCMS Physician Assistant Section was created. More than ten years later, there are nearly 350 physician assistant members within the Medical Society.

NCMS PA Section Chair Bud Shelton, PA-C, was among the first physician assistants to join the Medical Society in 1993.

"Since the establishment of our profession," he relates, "we in North Carolina have enjoyed continued support and encouragement from the North Carolina Medical Society. We have achieved a status that is unequalled to any other state in the Union, with full membership opportunities in the Medical Society; a seat in the NCMS House of Delegates; and Medical Society support for PA participation on the Medical Board and within other health care arenas."

1965: Dr. Eugene Stead, Jr. organizes the first class of physician assistants at Duke University.



Dr. Stead

1969: American Medical Association (AMA) Council on Health Manpower explores PA concept and the AMA House of Delegates adopts "Guidelines for the Development of New Health Occupations."

1987: National PA Day, October 6th, is established, coinciding with the anniversary of the first graduating class of PAs from the Duke University PA Program 20 years earlier and, coincidentally, with the birthday of Dr. Eugene Stead, Jr.

1993: The North Carolina Medical Society adopts a resolution adding Physician Assistant members and the NCMS PA Section is created.

1965

1995

Shaping the Future of Medicine in North Carolina

The Community Practitioner Program (CPP) was created by the NC Medical Society Foundation with support from a one-time grant by the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation in 1989. The program was created to encourage primary care providers to practice in uninsured and underserved areas of the state by providing loan repayment and other incentives. The program also helps to supplement primary care systems throughout the state when federal and state funds are not available.

To date the CPP has helped patients in over 110 communities in 72 different counties receive an estimated \$35 million in free or reduced care. The program also boasts a success rate in retention of physicians after the initial

five year commitment: over 70% of practitioners remain in the communities they serve and more than 80% remain in North Carolina.

The North Carolina Medical Society Foundation's **Leadership College Program** was developed in 2002 to help orient and train the future leaders in organized medicine so that they are better equipped to tackle the pressing challenges faced by physicians and patients in North Carolina. Partially funded through the Past Presidents and Leadership Endowment, the Leadership College has helped 30 physicians and physician assistants thus far to gain greater insight into the philosophy, principles, and practice of leadership.



Some of the 30 Leadership Scholars from the classes of 2003 and 2004: (1st row) Philip M. Brown, Jr., MD; Dieter Bruno, MD; Jugta Kahai, MD; Douglas W. Miyazaki, MD; Douglas K. Holmes, MD; Monique A. Spillman, MD; Shiva Rao, MD. (2nd row) Charles R. Kays, MD; Leta Sue Lamb, MD; Russell M. Howerton, MD; Terry A. Icard, PA-C; Sarvesh R. Sathiraju, MD; Wesley B. Robinson, MD; Janice E. Huff-Ezzo, MD

Acknowledgements

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Wake Forest University Library Archives

Physician Assistant History Center, <http://www.pahx.org>

Forsyth-Stokes-Davie County Medical Society



On this page: NCMS Presidents from 1849-1938; On the back cover: NCMS Presidents from 1939-2004



NC  MS
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