Army Medical Practices during the Civil War


[This publication was included in the bibliography of Freemon, Microbes and Minie Balls.]


Adams investigates the field of medical science during the time of the Civil War for two purposes: he shares information about medicine as it was used in the war and highlights existing problems in the field. Adams posits that current issues, such as the relationship between doctors in the same hospitals, originated during the Civil War.

[I found this book after following the link for “United States History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Medical Care” on the detail page for Rutkow, Bleeding Blue and Gray.]


[I found this article through America: History and Life by searching for the keywords “United States,” “Civil War,” and “medicine.”]


[This article is included in the bibliography of Freemon, Microbes and Minie Balls.]


In this article, Bollet discusses the perception that Civil War surgery consisted of nothing but amputations. He talks about surgical practices before the war and debunks popular myths about surgery during the war, including the use of anesthesia and the frequency of amputations.

[I found this article in the History Reference Center by searching for the keywords “surgery” and “Civil War.”]

[I found this book by searching “medicine,” “Civil War,” and “19th Century” as keywords in the WorldCat database.]


[Footnote in Rutkow, *Bleeding Blue and Gray*.]


[I found this book in the WorldCat database under the keywords “medicine,” “United States,” and “Civil War.”]


[This article is listed in the bibliography of Schroeder-Lein, *Confederate Hospitals on the Move*.]


[I found this book by searching for the keywords “medicine,” “Civil War,” and “19th Century” in the WorldCat database.]


[This book is included in the bibliography of Freemon, *Microbes and Minie Balls*.]


[I found this book using the WorldCat database by entering the keywords “medicine” and “Civil War.”]

In this article, Frasier examines reports of the treatment that President Lincoln received following his shooting. He claims that the doctors’ treatments were as much to blame for Lincoln’s death as Booth’s bullet. Frasier compares how Lincoln would be treated today versus how he was treated in 1865 and discusses what the doctors would have known about medicine at that time.

[I found this article in the History Reference Center by searching for the keywords “Civil War,” “medicine,” and “treatment.”]


[I found this book through the WorldCat database by searching “medicine,” “Civil War,” and “19th Century” as keywords.]


[I found this book after searching the library catalog under the keywords “Civil War” and “medicine.”]


[Footnote in Hawk, “An Ambulating Hospital.”]


[I found this article by searching for “Civil War” and “medicine” in the History Reference Center database and following the links to search “Military,” and “Medical.”]


[I found this article in the America: History and Life database by searching for the keywords “Civil War” and “medicine.”]

Hawk explains the changes in the transportation of wounded soldiers from the battlefields of the Civil War to hospitals. Because of the large scale of the war, surgeons quickly had
to adapt the organization of their hospitals and transportation. Hawk argues that the Army trains that developed out of the inadequate and antiquated system used at the beginning of the war are the foundation for modern methods of transporting wounded soldiers.


[library catalog]


[I found this book in the library catalog after searching the keywords “medicine” and “19th century.”]


[I found this book in the library catalog after following the suggested link to search “United States History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Medical Care” under the details for Rutkow, *Bleeding Blue and Gray*.]


[I found this book by following the link to search “United States History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Health Aspects” under the details of Rutkow, *Bleeding Blue and Gray* in the library catalog.]


Maxwell presents a favorable argument in his history of the creation of the united States Sanitary Commission. He portrays the organization, the ancestor of the American Red Cross, as a commission that helped to greatly lessen the suffering of injured soldiers during the Civil War. The book should be helpful in detailing conditions in military hospitals and how the government viewed the wounded in the war.


Rutkow seeks to understand the terrible realities of the Civil War through a study of medical practices used in the battlefields. The book examines the economic, political, and military influences on medicine during the war and afterwards. Rutkow comes to the conclusion that, while there were no real medical advancements made during the Civil War, the improvements in organization and administration of the field were significant in later medical developments. This discipline, combined with intense field experience, led surgeons to a better understanding of health and medicine. Review: Breiger, Gert H., in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 81, no. 2 (2007): 458-60.


[I found this book on the shelf when I went to get Welsh, *Medical History of Confederate Generals*; I always check the surrounding titles to see if I missed anything in my catalog search.]


[I found this book when I followed the link to search keywords “United States History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Medical Care” under the details of Rutkow, *Bleeding Blue and Gray* in the library catalog.]


In his article Smith examines the impact of the Civil War on the field of medicine in the United States. He describes changes made to the medical practice and to hospitals during the war.

[I found this article through the History Reference Center by searching “Civil War” and “medicine” in the subject fields.]


This photograph shows a surgeon working in a tent that has been made into an impromptu hospital following the siege of Charleston in 1863. It is a good visual aid to my research on medical practices during the Civil War.

[I found this book in the library catalog after searching “Civil War” and “photographs” in the subject fields. This particular photograph was listed in the index under “Hospitals.”]

United States Sanitary Commission. *Bulletin, 1863-1865*. 973.77 U58b, Archives and Special Collections, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA.

[library catalog]


In this article summarizes some of the advancements made in medicine during the Civil War and discusses the conditions of wounded soldiers, especially amputee victims. The
article also contains information on differences between the medical experiences of the Union Army versus the Confederate Army.

[I found this article in the History Reference Center by searching for the keywords “United States,” “Civil War,” and “medicine.”]


[library catalog]


As a physician, Welsh is interested in the different types of injuries sustained during the Civil War and the sparse reports of them. He presents information on the war injuries of several Confederate generals with information about the medical care that they received from military doctors. He hopes to show the general attitudes towards injuries and illness at the time. His research will hopefully provide a detailed account of the type of medical care available to soldiers injured on the battlefield.

[I found this book after searching in the library catalog under the keywords “Civil War” and “Medicine.”]

I was very fortunate that the library had a number of books on medical practices during the Civil War. I found cross-referencing subject listings to be extremely helpful. After I found *Bleeding Blue and Gray*, I clicked on the subject listing for “United States History – Civil War, 1861-1865 – Medical Care” and was able to find over ten books on my topic. Articles were a bit more difficult to find because I had to sift through book reviews and other materials, but I found the History Reference Center to be very helpful. I also used Frank R. Freemon’s annotated bibliography of Civil War medicine, *Microbes and Minie Balls*. That was a goldmine of information. I was able to find a great deal of good information, but the entire process was much more time-consuming than I originally expected.