

Collection #
P 0647

**METHODIST HOSPITAL PHOTOGRAPHS
CA. EARLY 1920S**

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 folder of black-and-white photographs

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. early 1920s

PROVENANCE: Gift from Verle and Betty Maxwell of Martinsville, Indiana, 2003

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2003.0573X

NOTES: *See also: Mary Darnell Booth Collection (P 0072)*

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The planning of the creation of Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis began in 1899. It wasn't until 25 October 1905 that the cornerstone for the Methodist Episcopal Hospital and Deaconess Home was laid at Capitol Avenue and Sixteenth Street. The hospital opened on 26 April 1908 with 65 beds, 37 private rooms, four large wards, and three smaller wards. To take care of the growing demand for patient services, a new pavilion was opened in 1913 that increased the hospital's capacity to 155 beds, and another pavilion opened in 1916 to increase the number to 250 beds, making Methodist the largest hospital in Indiana. On 20 April 1915, the name of the hospital was shortened to the Methodist Episcopal Hospital of Indiana, and in the 1930s it was shortened further, to Methodist Hospital of Indiana.

The 1920s photographs in this collection show that there were segregated wards for men and women as well as for "colored" and "white" patients.

The hospital's school of nursing also opened in 1908. Two young women were the first graduates in 1909. Five students graduated in 1910, fourteen in 1911, and by 1919 there were 206 students in training there. Student nurses were housed in cottages scattered around the hospital area. Early students of the School of Nursing not only received their room and board, but also a monthly paycheck; in 1911 the monthly pay was six dollars. (Nursing students were not required to pay tuition until 1932.) Students sewed their own uniforms. In the early years, nurses worked in the hospital from 7 a.m. till 7 p.m., and then attended evening classes. In 1917 the day was shortened to eight hours of clinical work plus classes. Nurses' duties also included mopping floors and dusting.

The first yearbook of the School of Nursing was published in 1915. It shows that nursing supervisors taught such subjects as practical nursing, surgical nursing, dietetics, and massage. Hospital physicians taught courses in anatomy, bacteriology, obstetrics, gynecology, infectious diseases, children's diseases, nervous diseases, and other medical subjects.

In the 1920s, Methodist Hospital played an important role in the treatment of diabetes with insulin. After experimental use of insulin proved successful in January 1922, Eli Lilly and Company in Indianapolis committed to mass produce it. After first being administered in a Boston hospital, Methodist Hospital was the next to give patients the first units of Lilly-manufactured insulin in August 1922.

Methodist Hospital built three other hospitals in other Indiana towns: in 1918 one opened in Princeton; in 1923 hospitals opened in Gary and in Fort Wayne. Indianapolis' Methodist Hospital supervised the operation of these three hospitals until the 1940s, when they became autonomous.

Source:

Reed, Kenneth E. and Edward A. Leary. *A Mission of Compassionate Health Care: The History of Methodist Hospital of Indiana Inc.* Indianapolis: Methodist Health Foundation, 1984. General Collection: [RA982.I55 M487 1984](#)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of twenty-one black-and-white photographs of Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis, ca. early 1920s. There is one exterior scene; the rest show interiors of various parts of the hospital with unidentified staff and patients. Brief captions are handwritten at the bottom of all but one of the photographs. The photographs were removed from an album that belonged to a member of the donors' family, possibly to Surrelda Maxwell Lake (1899–1965).

In one photograph identified as "Supt. Pool's Office," the man shown seated at the desk may be Dr. Richard Ambrose Poole (1879–1938). The calendar on the wall in his office is turned to the page for November 1921.

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Nurses' Home: photograph of architectural drawing of exterior.

Office Workers and Clients: five women, two men, and a child on one man's lap in an office setting.

"Children's Contagious Ward" -- four women and one man in a ward with beds and chairs and several children, including both girls and boys and black and white.

"Surgery" -- nine men in a raised area watch five men and three women as surgery is being performed.

"Interns" -- sixteen men dressed in white and one man in a dark suit surround a large dark vehicle (probably used as an ambulance) with a driver inside. Three of the men are sitting on the roof of the vehicle.

"Babies Ward" -- a room with several baby-sized beds. A man in white is standing between two beds with babies in them; a woman stands at the back of the room; another woman is weighing a black baby. Paintings of scenes with children are on the back wall.

Bandaging Class: twenty-seven women and one man in a room; some of the women are wrapping bandages around other women's arms, heads, etc.

"Diet Kitchen" -- three white women and one black woman are standing, preparing food. Two other women are seated at a desk in the background.

"Colored Women's Ward" -- a room with at least two dozen beds. Two white women dressed as nurses stand by beds; black women are seated in chairs or lying in beds. Paintings of women are on the walls in the background

CONTAINER

Photographs, Folder 1 of 1

Photographs, Folder 1 of 1

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- "White Men's Medical Ward"** -- a room with about two dozen beds. Two white women dressed as nurses stand by beds; men are seated or lying in beds. One patient appears to have a male visitor. Paintings on the walls in the background appear to be landscapes. Photographs, Folder 1 of 1
- "Nurses' Dining Room"** -- twenty-six women seated around four tables for a meal. Most are wearing white caps and nurse uniforms, but a few are not. Photographs, Folder 1 of 1
- "Babies Contagious Ward"** -- babies and toddlers are seen in four beds, with a nurse standing by each. A doctor is using a stethoscope on one of the patients. Photographs, Folder 1 of 1
- "Laboratory"** -- a man and two women are seated at a table in the center of the room, with the women looking through microscopes. In the background is a man seated performing a task with his mouth at a tube while another man stands behind him. A cabinet of bottles is against the back wall. Equipment, drawers, and sinks are also seen in the room. Photographs, Folder 1 of 1
- "White Women's Surgical Ward"** -- a room with at least two dozen beds. Two nurses are standing by beds; one is consulting with a doctor. Patients are seated or lying in beds; some appear to have visitors. Paintings are on the walls. Photographs, Folder 1 of 1
- "Drug Room"** -- a man in a white coat is standing and appears to be pouring something from a bottle. The room has shelves full of bottles and other supplies, a desk, and tables. Photographs, Folder 1 of 1
- "Supt. Pool's Office"** -- this is probably the office of superintendent Dr. Richard A. Poole. A man is seated at a desk consulting with a woman who is also seated and appears to be writing. The calendar on the wall is turned to the page for November 1921. Photographs, Folder 1 of 1
- "Nurses Infirmary"** -- a room with a few beds, two rocking chairs, and a table with plants on it. Two women are lying in beds, with a nurse or nurse's aide tending to each. Photographs, Folder 1 of 1
- "Children's Ward"** -- a room with about two dozen beds. Children are in chairs or beds, with two nurses in attendance. Paintings are on the walls. Photographs, Folder 1 of 1

"Admitting Room" -- a nurse stands by as a doctor listens with a stethoscope to a black male patient who is lying on a bed. There is a "No Smoking" sign on a wall and a towel hangs by a sink. A window is open. The room does not appear to be very clean or in the best condition.

Photographs, Folder 1 of 1

"Main Office" -- three white women working in an office; one appears to be a switchboard operator. A black man is standing and holding a package.

Photographs, Folder 1 of 1

"Tonsil Room" -- four women are gathered around the surgeon as he appears to be operating on a young patient on an operating table. Shelves hold linens and a cabinet holds bottles. The room does not appear to be in the best condition.

Photographs, Folder 1 of 1