

LEPROSY IN MILITARY SERVICE*

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This report is based on the case histories of members of the armed forces of the United States and allied countries in World War II who have been admitted to the National Leprosarium since January 1942. It includes the records of 14 war veterans of the U. S. Army, and of 3 merchant seamen who were exposed to the hardships of war, 2 of them on United States vessels and 1 in the allied merchant marine.

This monograph supplements a previous paper by Hasseltine (1) on Spanish-American War veterans and World War I veterans who were admitted to the National Leprosarium. Hasseltine reported that practically all the Spanish War veterans came from non-endemic states, and presumably contracted the disease while in military service from exposure in foreign countries where leprosy was prevalent, such as the Philippines and Cuba. On the contrary, the World War I veterans who developed leprosy were enlisted from endemic areas in the United States, which suggested that they probably were infected with leprosy prior to entrance into military service. In general there was a much shorter period between the date of entry into military service and the appearance of symptoms in the World War I group than in the Spanish War group.

Admissions of World War II veterans to date, like those of World War I, are from states and countries where leprosy is endemic. For men in the present armed forces of the United States a sufficiently long time has not elapsed for leprosy contracted in foreign fields to have manifested itself. It is safe to predict, however, since many of the battle fields of the present war are in tropical countries where leprosy is prevalent, that the experience of the Spanish War will be repeated. With the lapse of the long period of incubation of the disease it can be expected that at least a small number of World War II veterans will become the victims of leprosy contracted on foreign soil.

The accompanying table shows that in 7 of the patients of the World War II group there were manifestations of leprosy prior to enlistment which might have been detected by an alert physician. The other 10 were in apparently good health when inducted into the service. In some of the latter it is probable that the hardships of war life were a contributory factor in the devel-

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opment of a latent leprosy into a clinical disease. It should be noted that, although each of the merchant seamen in the above group was under enemy fire, only one soldier, the last admission, saw combat service on the war front. The longest period between induction into the armed forces and appearance of the first symptoms, a period of less than 4 years, was also in this last case.

REFERENCES

- (1) HASSELTINE, H. E. Leprosy in men who served in United States military service. *Internat. J. Leprosy.* 8 (1940) 501-508.

HISTORY OF WORLD WAR II VETERANS ADMITTED TO THE NATIONAL LEPROSARIUM, CARVILLE, LOUISIANA

Record number, date of admission	Age, marital status, birthplace	Service branch, date of enlistment, history	Condition on enlistment	Family history	First symptoms, with date	Diagnosis:* date place	Type of leprosy
1496 1/13/42	32 S Mexico	Army, Apr. 1941 Army camps and hosp. Pa., Wash., D.C.	No signs of leprosy	Neg.	Aug. 1941: Painless burn on left index finger	Dec. 1941 Walter Reed Hosp., Wash., D. C.	Tuberculoid
1505 3/30/42	29 S California**	Army, Mar. 1941 Army camps and hosp. Cal., Wash., Tex.	No signs of leprosy	Neg.	June 1941: Painless burn on left hand	Dec. 1941 Beaumont Gen. Hosp., Tex.	Neural
1542 10/2/42	36 S Philippine Islands	Red Cross Service Dec. 1941, in P. I. and Australia, caring for wounded soldiers evacuated from P. I. to Australia	No signs of leprosy	Neg.	June 1942: Macules on face and limbs	July 1942 Australia	Neural
1549 10/27/42	30 S Louisiana	Army, July 1942 Army camps and hosp. La., Tex.	Nodules on arms and legs	Parents died of leprosy	May 1942 Nodules on face and arms	Oct. 1942. Camp Maxy, Tex.	Lepromatous
1550 11/4/42	20 S Dutch Guiana	Dutch Merchant Marine, Jan. 1938. Torpedoed in Atlantic, Mar. 1942,—one week exposure in life-boat	No signs of leprosy	Neg.	Mar. 1942: Eruption on face, body, limbs	April 1942. Kingston Ave. Hosp., N. Y.	Lepromatous
1574 4/8/43	24 S Texas	Army, Sept. 1940. Army camps, Tex., La., Wis., Wash., D. C.	No signs of leprosy	Neg.	Sept. 1941: Fever, nodular eruption on legs and face	Mar. 1943. Walter Reed Hosp., Wash., D. C.	Lepromatous
1581 4/29/43	22 S California	Army, Jan. 1943 Army camps, Kan., N. J.	Clawing left hand. Macules and nodules on face and legs	Father died of leprosy	Oct. 1937: Anesthesia and contraction of left hand	Mar. 1943. Tilton Gen. Hosp., N. J.	Mixed
1582 5/1/43	28 S Puerto Rico	Army, Nov. 1942 Army camps, Col.	Fading leprides of legs	Neg.	Sept. 1942: Red macules on legs	Feb. 1943. Fitzsimmons Gen. Hosp., Col.	Lepromatous
1587 1/26/43	35 S Louisiana	Army, Aug. 1942 Army camps, La., Fla.	Leprous macules and nodules on both legs	Neg.	Jan. 1942: Red macules and nodules on legs	Jan. 1943. Camp Blanding Hosp., Fla.	Mixed
1596 9/10/43	30 S Philippine Islands	Army, Aug. 1942 Army camps, Cal.	Macules on face and body. Numbness rt. hand and rt. ankle	Neg.	Aug. 1941: Macules on face and body	Jan. 1943. Tulare County Hosp., Cal.	Neural
1597 9/30/43	36 D Philippine Islands	Army, Mar. 1942 Army camps, Cal.	Claw hand, left. Anesthetic macules on legs. Discharged, arrested, Nat. Leprosarium, Feb. 1941	Neg.	Sept. 1939: Contraction of left hand	May 1942. Discharged to Tulare County Hosp., Cal.	Neural
1613 12/4/43	23 S Texas	Army, Aug. 1942 Army camps, Tex.	No signs of leprosy	Neg.	Mar. 1943: Macules on rt. thigh, then face and arm	Sept. 1943. Vet. Admin. Hosp., Dallas. Discharged Army, Mar. 1943. Diagnosed Tuberculosis cutis	Tuberculoid
1632 3/25/44	21 M Texas	Army, Nov. 1942 Army camps, Tex.	Large anesthetic macule on left arm. Enlarged left ulnar nerve	Neg.	In 1934: Anesthetic macule on rt. arm increasing in size	Aug. 1943. Health Board Nueces County, Tex. Discharged Army, Apr. 1943	Tuberculoid
1635 4/1/44	34 M Mexico	Army, Mar. 1944 Army camps, La.	Leprous lesions on face, arms, and legs	Neg.	In 1941: Leprous macules on face and limb	Mar. 1944 Camp Livingstone, La.	Lepromatous
1636 4/11/44	24 M California**	Army Sept. 1941 Army camps, Cal., Kan.	No signs of leprosy	Neg.	Feb. 1943: Macules on buttock	Jan. 1944. Winter Gen. Hosp., Kan.	Tuberculoid
1641 5/12/44	28 S Norway	U. S. Merchant Marine 1940. Lend-lease Service, Murmansk, Russia; stranded there 1942-43 on restricted food	No signs of leprosy	Neg.	Dec. 1942: Macules and nodules on body and leg	Apr. 1944. U.S. Marine Hosp., Baltimore, Md.	Lepromatous
1658 8/13/44	25 M Texas	Army, Nov. 1940. U.S., Africa, Italy. Went overseas Apr. 1943. Combat service, Africa, Italy	No signs of leprosy	Neg.	Apr. 1944: Chr. nasal catarrh. Macules on face and limbs	June 1944. Army Hosp., Italy, and Stark Gen. Hosp. Charleston, S. C.	Lepromatous

*All cases were admitted from place of diagnosis except case No. 1542 which was admitted from California

**Japanese parentage