

MEDICAL SERVICE IN SERBIA BEFORE THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Ana Mandić, Milan Mandić

HEALTH CENTER SREMSKA MITROVICA, SREMSKA MITROVICA

Summary: Modern medicine in Serbia began to develop only after the liberation from the Turks in the Second Serbian Uprising of 1815. The first European-educated doctors came to Serbia in 1819, by order of Prince Milos. The military medical service, in charge of systematic treatment and care of wounded and sick Serbian soldiers, was founded in 1835. The first military doctors and chiefs of Serbian medicine were foreigners, Dr. Emerich Lindenmeier (1806-1884) and Dr. Carlo Belloni (1812-1878), who founded military hospitals in Belgrade, Čuprija and Paraćin. During the Serbian-Turkish wars (1876-1878), Serbia had only 19 military doctors for about 130,000 soldiers, the divisions had only dressing stations for first aid, and there was also a medical ship for the evacuation of the wounded. Foreign doctors were succeeded by Serbian doctors educated in Vienna, Dr. Vladan Djordjevic (Chief of Medical Services 1877-1884), Dr. Mihajlo Mika Markovic (Chief of Medical Services 1886-1903) and Dr. Lazar Gencic (Chief of Medical Services 1909-1915). By 1885 (Serbian-Bulgarian war), the number of military doctors was increased to one doctor per 1,000 soldiers, and each division (5,000 soldiers) received a field hospital with 200 beds and a medical company with 5 doctors and 100 paramedics. Before the Balkan War (1912), 5 permanent military hospitals with surgical wards were opened, and the medical companies of the divisions had 4 doctors and 450 paramedics, and 4 field hospitals for 400 wounded. For the first time, ambulance trains were used for evacuation and treatment of the wounded. The hygienic-epidemiological service was neglected, and dysentery, typhoid fever and malaria were frequent: in 1913, over 5,000 Serbian soldiers died of cholera alone.

Key words: history of medicine, military medicine, medical service, Serbian-Turkish wars, Balkan wars, war surgery, field hospital.

Origin and development of military medicine in Serbia

The military medical service, in terms of organized medical assistance to wounded and sick soldiers under the auspices of the state, developed in Serbia relatively late. While the organized medical service, with military doctors, surgeons and paramedics in all major units and military hospitals (permanent and temporary - Polish, on the battlefield) supported at the expense of the state, in Europe at the end of the 18th century existed in all developed countries. In Spain from 1551, in France from 1591, in Prussia from 1640, and in Russia from 1706), in Turkey, whose Serbia at that time was a pashaluq, the care of wounded and sick soldiers was at that time a private matter of the fighters themselves. the battlefield was taken care of spontaneously, without any organization, and then released to the houses to be treated at their own expense. It is known from Vuk Karadžić's writings that after the battles on Misara (1806), where he was severely wounded (with a sword in the forehead and right arm), the insurgent elder Luka Lazarević had to get out of the battles and bandage his own wounds; when he came to Karadjordj after the battles, the leader shouted: 'Go, pop Luko, go home and be treated ...' And pop Luka answered him: 'Don't' drive me home, God knows, all this will pass me by tomorrow. Mateja Nenadović states that Luka then washed the wounds with hot brandy, and that he kept rags full of brandy on the wounds all day and night, and in the morning the scabs were caught, which he then smeared with oil, but wore bandages for several more months. Vuk Karadžić also mentions that in 1807, during the conquest of Užice, the severely wounded Miloš Obrenović (a bullet hit him above the left nipple and came out through the shoulder) was transferred to Belgrade on a canvas crucified between pack horses by a certain Hećim Toma, who after 10-Healed in 12 weeks. [1] [2] Considering that even the most eminent elders, as wounded, were left to their own devices, we can conclude that ordinary fighters, who had neither a servant nor money for doctors, passed by. In his History of the Serbian Military Medical Service (1879), Dr. Vladan Djordjevic states that as early as 1804, Serbian insurgents had bandages or ambulances on the battlefield, where first aid was

provided to the wounded, who were then released from their homes to be treated at their own expense. [3]

At that time, only self-taught folk vidars and herbalists were available to Serbs, who were in every larger village (Father Mateja Nenadović mentions in his Memoirs as a gifted vidar the former hajduk Jovan Vrbica, who treated all the wounded in Topola and took bullets from the wounds. [4]), and a small number of Turkish and Greek city doctors-hechimi. Hechimi learned medicine and pharmacy through practice with older masters, without medical books, as well as other craftsmen of the time: their knowledge and abilities were small (they did not practice surgery at all, and wounds were treated conservatively, with bandages and ointments), and reputation in society at the level of simple craftsmen or servants. Vuk Karadzic states that all Serbs who had money moved to Austria for treatment: Prince Milos added the first educated doctors from Europe only in 1819, but only for himself and his family. Although Milos promised large salaries to learned doctors from Austria (600 thalers a month, more than all officials in Serbia), the response was initially weak, as the prince and other Serbian elders of the time treated even the most learned doctors as the simplest servants. . Thus, Prince Milos expected his doctor to dress him, put on his slippers and be with him from dawn to dusk, mostly on his feet, as well as other servants, while the doctor's wife was asked to serve at the table on significant occasions. Due to such a service, Dr. Alexandrida (of Greek origin) left him as early as 1821, and in 1832, Miloš's first doctor, Dr. Jovan Stejić, a native of Vojvodina. [5] However, the services of these doctors were limited to Miloš's court; Vuk's proposal to establish a free national hospital for venereal diseases in Kragujevac (during the great epidemic of 1829) at the expense of the state, was rudely rejected by the prince (with the words that when no one treated us, we will never). The first national hospital was founded only in 1832 in Požarevac. [6]

The development of modern medicine in Serbia, which was only officially liberated from the Turks in 1830 (although it received the legal status of a vassal principality in the Ottoman Empire in 1830, with the right to keep a small army and organize official state administration bodies), is relatively slow, in line with the modest material and political capabilities of the newly restored Serbian state. In Serbia, military medical care was organized only in 1835, when the military guardian (minister) was given the task of taking care of the health of soldiers. The first military hospital (Špitalj soldački) was formed in Belgrade in 1837, and according to the Constitution from 1838, a doctor was introduced into the official department of the General Staff of the Serbian Army. The first military doctor in the headquarters of the Serbian army was Dr. Emerich Lindenmeier (1806-1884), a German from Banat, who in 1854 was appointed head of the medical department in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. During his tenure, he founded the first Serbian military hospitals in Belgrade, Kragujevac and Čuprija, introduced quarantines at the borders and tried to introduce hygienic-epidemiological measures in the army. He also published the first history of the Serbian ambulance in German (1876). [9] In 1862, a military ambulance was formed within the Administrative Department of the Ministry of War. During the Turkish bombing of Belgrade in 1862 (after the incident at Čukur-česma), the Serbian army organized 4 bandages or surgical sites in the city. [3] The Law on the Organization of the Ministry of War from 1864 also regulated many issues of the Sanitary Service: hospitals were divided into permanent and temporary, stocks of hospital supplies and medicines were provided, and doctors, surgeons and pharmacists were provided within the Sanitary Service. Military doctors and pharmacists were given the rank of officer in 1875. [7] The first chief of the Serbian military ambulance (from 1858 to 1877) was Dr. Carlo Beloni (1812-1878), a Slovak doctor in the service of the Serbian army from 1836, who wrote the first medical textbook in Serbian for the needs of educating local staff - Teaching for nursing or medical corps (1866). [10] The chief pharmacist of the Serbian army at that time was Alojz Helich (1843-1902), of Czech origin, who joined the Serbian army in 1872 and reached the rank of major. [12]

From serbian-turkish to Balkan wars

Before the Serbian-Turkish war (1876-1878), the Sanitary Department was formed within the Economic Department of the Ministry of War, and medical departments in the brigades and divisions of the People's Army; in addition, several Polish hospitals were established. [7] Dr. Vladan Djordjevic (1844-1930), later politician and prime minister of the last Obrenovics (1897-1900), a military surgeon educated in Vienna (received his doctorate in 1869), was appointed head of the Serbian military ambulance in 1877. He immediately accepted the most necessary reforms, including writing the first medical textbooks in the Serbian language - Principles of Military Hygiene (1874), Sanitary Service on the Battlefield (1875) and

Landsberger's War Surgical Technique (1887), the first two of which were published before the war. He founded the Serbian Medical Association in 1872 and started the magazine Serbian Archives for All Medicine, and in 1876 he founded the Serbian Red Cross Society. [11]

In the war of 1876, Serbia mobilized a total of 124,000 soldiers, along with another 5,000 Russian volunteers. The Serbian medical service had 19 military doctors, 5 medical assistants, a military pharmacist, 4 pharmacy assistants and the necessary medical staff. The divisions, with a strength of about 5,000 soldiers, had a bandage (dressing room), where general medical and first surgical assistance was provided to the wounded, and corps of 3 Polish hospitals (on the battlefield itself), where the seriously wounded were taken care of before transport to military hospitals in Belgrade, Kragujevac and the Parish. During 1877, medical departments, 2-6 field hospitals (18 in total) and a corps medical depot were formed in the corps. In larger places in Serbia, 23 reserve and 3 permanent hospitals were formed. [7] The number of military medical personnel in Serbia at that time is best seen by the fact that there were about 130,000 fighters in only 19 military doctors - in other words, one doctor per 7,000 soldiers. Despite the insufficient number of health workers and the shortage of medicines and bandages, the Serbian ambulance took care of about 5,410 wounded soldiers and officers during the war. [8]

Serbian-Turkish War 1876-1878. he clearly showed the material and organizational shortcomings of military ambulance and health care of the army and population in Serbia at that time, so reforms and investments in the development of the medical service were accelerated. According to the Law on the Organization of the Army from 1883, the medical service gained autonomy: a special medical department was formed at the Ministry of War, and medical officers were introduced in the divisional headquarters. In order to further develop the medical service in the army, a medical military committee was formed in 1884. [7]

In the Serbian-Bulgarian war of 1885, the divisions had a medical department and one medical company each, with a total of 5 doctors, a pharmacist, a commissioner (intendant) and 80-100 paramedics, for about 5,000 soldiers. Each division also had a special hospital with 200 beds, which was served by 3 doctors, 2 assistants, two pharmacists, a treasurer, three ambulances (with a horse-drawn carriage) and a large number of mobilized peasant carts for the evacuation of the wounded. [7] The total Serbian losses in the short-lived war amounted to about 750 killed and 4,600 wounded. [8] Progress was palpable: in just 7 years, from 1878 to 1885, the number of available doctors in the Serbian army increased from 1 to 7,000, to 1 per 1,000 soldiers, reflecting a much higher percentage of wounded, who fully recovered. .

During the Serbian-Turkish wars of 1876-1878. the river motor boat Deligrad was adapted into an ambulance for the transport of lightly wounded of the Serbian army, and a stretcher with holders for the transport of seriously wounded was mounted on the barge number 4. Preserved documents from the 15th century show that despot Đurađ Branković (1427-1456) had light boats (šajke) on the Danube for transporting and caring for the wounded to the hospital in Smederevo. [7]

From the Balkan wars to the First World War

In the last years of the 19th century, surgical wards were opened in divisional hospitals in Belgrade, Nis, Kragujevac, Valjevo and Zajecar, and the Pasteur Institute was built in Nis (1900), thanks to Dr. Mihailo Mike Markovic (1847-1911), who was the chief. military ambulance from 1886 to 1903. One of the most important organizers of the ambulance of the Serbian army until the First World War, published a discussion A few words about the causes of a large percentage of illness and death in our army (in the newspaper Ratnik, 2/1893) and the first Serbian War Medical Service Belgrade, 1890). [13] Before the Balkan wars, the chief of the military ambulance was Dr. Lazar Genčić (Zaječar, April 30, 1868 - Belgrade, September 30, 1942), a medical colonel of the Serbian army. After graduating from the Medical Faculty in Vienna in 1892 and specializing in surgery, he returned to Serbia and opened the First Surgical Department of the Military Hospital in Kragujevac. From 1909, he was the head of the medical department, and in the Balkan Wars and the First World War (until the end of 1915), he was the chief of medical services of the Supreme Command. In 1912, he founded the first sanatorium in Serbia in Belgrade - Vračar. [14]

Until the end of the First World War, Serbia did not have a Medical Faculty (the Medical Faculty in Belgrade was founded only in 1920), so all senior medical staff had to be educated abroad, mostly in Austria-Hungary (Vienna and Prague). Attempts to educate secondary medical professionals in Serbia were made only at the beginning of the 20th century. The first Military Medical School was organized in

1901 to prepare secondary medical staff. Young men aged 15-19 from the 4th grade of high school or high school were accepted. The schooling lasted 3 years. It ceased operations at the beginning of the First Balkan War in 1912. [12] In addition, following the French model, the Serbian army organized courses for the bearers of the wounded, and military hygiene courses for training doctors to work in recruitment commissions and to combat malaria. [7]

In the Balkan wars, the medical service of the Serbian army was organized on the model of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian war ambulance, [7] but the personnel and material possibilities of Serbia did not allow any system to be fully implemented. Of the medical staff, the regiments had 1-2 doctors, 56 paramedics (from the divisional company), and another 64 soldiers assisted in retrieving and carrying the wounded. The divisions had a medical company with 4 doctors, one pharmacist, one medic and 450 paramedics, of whom 56) were sent to each regiment) and 4 field hospitals equipped for 100 wounded and one tent for 14-16 beds. Battalion horse-drawn two-wheelers, large two-axle wounded wagons from the divisional medical column, and often peasant wagons were used to evacuate the wounded. For the first time in Serbia, ambulance trains were also used, with special wagons for operations and changing. However, the hygienic-epidemiological service was neglected, and the personal hygiene of the soldiers was weak, so dysentery, typhoid fever and malaria were frequent. More than 5,000 Serbian soldiers died of cholera in 1913 alone. [7]

Ambulance trains, equipped to evacuate and treat the wounded and sick, with medical staff and special ambulances with a pharmacy, kitchen and sickbeds, were first used in the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the American Civil War (1861-1865). Their use in Europe began in 1866 in Germany (the Austro-Prussian War of 1866), in 1870 in France (the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871), and in 1876 in Russia (the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-1878). The capacity of the ambulance train was 15-20 wagons, with 18 beds or 58-75 seats per wagon. The Serbian army first used ambulance trains in the First Balkan War (1912) - it had two ambulance trains on the Belgrade-Ristovac line and one on the Stalac-Uzice line. Of the staff, the ambulance train had a doctor-ambulance officer (also the train commander), a medical assistant, a pharmacist, a non-commissioned officer and 24 paramedics. The train could receive about 200-400 sitting and 180-200 lying wounded and sick. In October 1914, two more ambulance trains were formed. [7]

CONCLUSION

Serbia entered the First World War (1914) with a total of 450 doctors and the same organization of the medical service as in the Balkan wars. In the regiments there were regimental dressing rooms, in the divisions of the hospital company, divisional bandages and field hospitals, and in the background of the reserve and permanent military hospital. The evacuation of the wounded and sick was carried out by ambulance columns and ambulance trains. [7] It was a huge advance of the Serbian medical service, which in 1836 had only two doctors. The medical care available to wounded and sick soldiers during that time progressed from simple military dressings (where only basic first aid was provided to the wounded) to Polish and permanent military hospitals, where surgical wards existed until 1912. In 1878, there were only three permanent and 23 reserve military hospitals in Serbia, while in 1915 there were over 90, with over 100,000 patient beds. While mobilized peasant carts with bullock teams (along with one ambulance) were used to evacuate the wounded in the Serbian-Turkish wars, until 1885 hospital two-wheelers and horse-drawn carriages were introduced, and until 1912 ambulance trains. Despite the great progress in the organization of the care of the wounded, the great lack of military medicine in Serbia was the complete absence of the hygienic-epidemiological service and anti-epidemic measures. As many as 5,000 Serbian fighters died of cholera in 1913, while the great epidemic of typhus was 1914-1915. took 87 doctors and over 30,000 fighters. It was not until 1915 that organized epidemiological measures were taken with the help of the Allies.[7]

Due to the lack of domestic personnel, the first military doctors in Serbia in the middle of the 19th century were foreigners in the Serbian service - German doctor Dr. Emerich Lindenmeier, from 1838 the first staff doctor of the Serbian army, and Slovak doctor Dr. Carlo Belloni, chief of Serbian military ambulance from 1858. 1877 They were succeeded by Serbian doctors educated abroad, who had a decisive influence on the development and modernization of the Serbian medical service: Dr. Vladan Djordjevic (Chief of Medical Services 1877-1884), Dr. Mihailo Markovic (Chief of Medical Services 1886-1903) and Dr. Lazar Gencic 1909-1915).

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