

MEDICINE-PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs Aid Doctors

The sick and wounded may get well sooner because of photos taken by MAMAS. After the war, this organization will contribute to better understanding of disease.

By JANE STAFFORD

See Front Cover

► DOCTORS behind all our far-flung battle lines have a new organization to help them treat the sick and wounded. When peace comes, this same organization, the MAMAS, will play an important part in making permanent the advancement in medical science which has been called "the only worthwhile result of any war."

MAMAS is not a maternal organization. The name is made from the initial letters of the Museum and Medical Arts Service. It was organized as part of the Army Medical Museum in 1942. Its purpose, as stated by Capt. Ralph P. Creer who heads it, is "to provide an adequate and efficient illustration service for the Medical Corps." Men of MAMAS, like those shown on the front cover of this SCIENCE NEWS LETTER, are "shooting" for the records so that Army doctors and aid men will have vivid, accurate pictures to prepare them for the battle injuries they will handle.

To the layman, an illustration service, however adequate and efficient, might seem the last thing the Medical Corps would need or want. But suppose you were a young doctor, trained to recognize measles and mumps, tuberculosis, cancer, syphilis and to handle the wounds of peacetime traffic accidents, and found yourself confronted with the skin sores of some strange tropical disease, or the frightful injuries of shell-torn arms and legs.

There would be no medical library, no older and more experienced physician to consult. You are on your own, responsible for restoring these sick and wounded men to health and fighting efficiency if possible. You may know the names of the tropical diseases and the rules for treating them. But how can you be sure which one has attacked this soldier?

If you have, in your training for medical work in the Army, seen vivid, accurate drawings and photographs of people sick with unusual tropical diseases

or of the unusual injuries that occur in this war, you are better prepared to recognize the condition in the patient before you.

This is where MAMAS helps. Its specially trained artists and photographers are ready to go anywhere in the world where a medical officer calls them to get pictures of an unusual disease or injury. They are stationed at key points so as to be quickly available.

Their pictures are flown back to the Army Medical Museum in Washington so that in a short time medical students and physicians at home, preparing for service with the armed forces, can study the pictures and go out better equipped to treat the wounded and sick of our fighting forces.

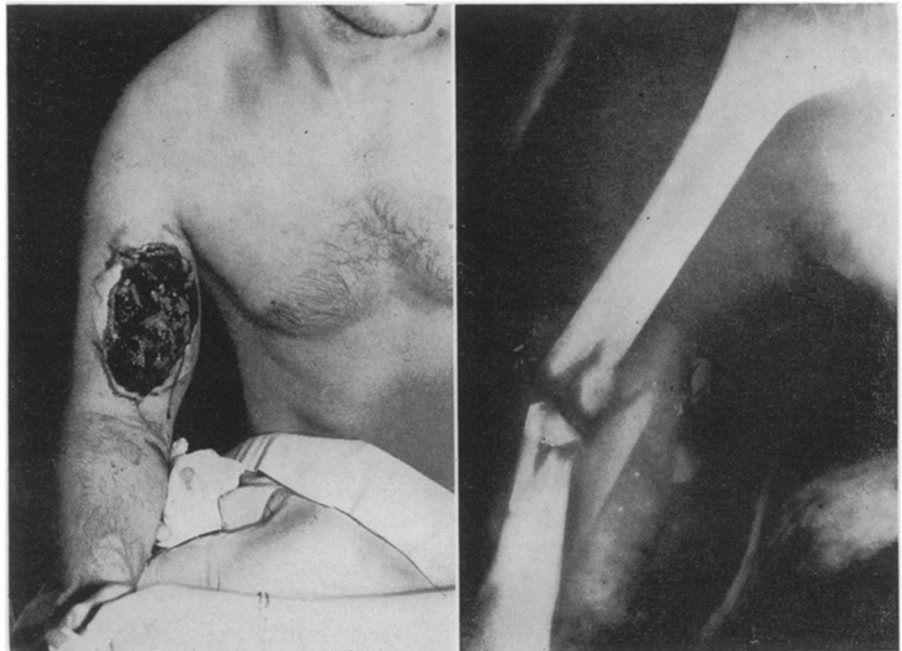
After the war, this rogues' gallery of disease can serve medical scientists seeking better understanding and perhaps even better methods of treating disease

and injury than those that we now have.

MAMAS is doing more than making a picture history of the medical phases of the war. It is also collecting missiles and helmets that have been struck or hit by gunfire; medical and surgical instruments of our own and of the enemy, especially those modified or improved during the war; and specimens of injured and diseased tissues, preserved and fixed for study at any time in the future.

Doctors are not the only ones whose training will be helped by MAMAS. From its accurate, vivid pictures, the training division of the Surgeon General's Office can make realistic, full-size wax models of various war injuries to show the enlisted men of the Medical Corps, those heroic aid men who are the first to reach and treat the wounded and who give much nursing care in Army hospitals. In addition, Capt. Creer states, duplicate casts of latex or similar material, thin sleeve-like appliances, can be made. Worn on maneuvers, they give a realistic sight of the injuries that may be encountered in battle.

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GUNSHOT WOUND—Among the least gruesome of the Army Medical Museum's rogues' gallery of disease and injury are these pictures of a gunshot wound of the arm. The X-ray picture (right), shows the path torn by the missile, the splintered bone and its fragments scattered through the flesh.