

profiles in history

Montague Laffitte Boyd, M.D.

1883-1965

by Charles B. Upshaw Jr., M.D.

Atlanta's first urologist, Montague Laffitte Boyd, M.D., played a major role not only in defining and improving the treatment and care of patients with genitourinary diseases in Georgia, but also the nation. Throughout his remarkable life, he was also an outstanding author, student, surgeon, teacher, investigator, leader and sportsman.

Dr. Boyd was born in Bulloch County, Georgia, and raised in Savannah, where his father, M.L. Boyd Sr., M.D., was a general practitioner. He received his Ph.D. degree from Emory College at Oxford in 1903 and medical degree from the Johns Hopkins Medical School in 1907. Training in urology at Hopkins under Hugh Young, M.D., he was the second resident in urology in the United States.

In 1911, Dr. Boyd moved to Atlanta to begin his urology practice and joined the staff at Piedmont Hospital. He also began teaching medical students at the Atlanta Medical College, which merged with Emory University in 1915. During these years he worked diligently to improve Piedmont Hospital facilities for genitourinary surgery, an emerging specialty, efforts that were interrupted in 1917 by the entry of the United States into war.

Dr. Boyd volunteered for overseas duty and crossed the Atlantic Ocean on the SS Baltic with the first contingent of American soldiers, including the commanding general, John J. Pershing. When U.S. troops were stationed in France, he was assigned to the 1st Division, where he developed a successful venereal disease prevention program, which became a model for the U.S. Army.

Following the war, he returned to Atlanta in 1919 to resume his practice and



teaching. Devoted to his patients and students, Dr. Boyd spent much of his adult life trying to improve the delivery of urological care. An able, intense, productive, small, wiry perfectionist, he became a natural leader in the field of urology. He organized and served as the head of the Departments of Urology at Piedmont Hospital from 1919 to 1959 and Emory Medical School from 1925 to 1935. He was the founder and first president in 1932 of the Southeastern Section of the American Urological Association; he was elected president of the American Association of Genitourinary Surgeons in 1940.

Having been published in 91 articles in various medical journals, Dr. Boyd was a prolific writer, initiating the *Piedmont Hospital Bulletin*, of which he was editor from 1924 to 1939. In honor of his ability as an accomplished writer, Piedmont established the Montague Boyd Award in 1985 to encourage Piedmont physicians, healthcare professionals and employees to publish professional papers to help improve patient care.

Highly respected by his colleagues and patients, Dr. Boyd retired in 1960, having served 49 years on staff at Piedmont Hospital and 40 years as the head of the Department of Urology. In his retirement he remained active and was happiest aboard his yacht, which he built himself in his backyard and launched in Savannah, cruising from the Great Lakes to Fort Lauderdale, Fla., as owner and skipper. ✚

Editor's note: Charles B. Upshaw Jr., M.D., is a cardiologist on staff at Piedmont Hospital.

