



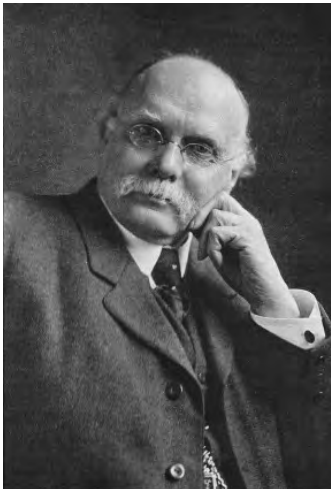
# DeForest Willard: First Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania



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DeForest P. Willard was born in Newington, Connecticut on March 23, 1846 – son of Daniel H. and Sarah Maria (Deming) Willard and descendant of two families intimately involved with the development of Colonial America. After obtaining his undergraduate degree at Yale College, he joined the University of Pennsylvania where he earned the degrees of Doctor of Medicine (1867) and Doctor of Philosophy (1871). While in medical school, during the

Civil War, he served as acting surgeon under the auspices of the United States Sanitary Commission at City Point and Petersburg, Virginia. Despite his decision to specialize in surgery early in his career, Dr. Willard studied all branches of medicine so as to maintain a broad perspective. Throughout his remarkable career, he retained a close affiliation with the anatomical and surgical departments of the University of Pennsylvania as demonstrator of anatomy (1867 to 1870), quiz master of surgery and anatomy (1868 to 1877), and assistant surgeon (1870 to 1877).

Dr. Willard soon discovered that his true passion lied in orthopaedics and thus led the effort to organize the nation's first freestanding Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pennsylvania. He was appointed lecturer in orthopaedic surgery in 1887, clinical professor of orthopaedic surgery in 1889, and professor of orthopaedic surgery in 1903. His contributions were instrumental in the establishment of both the orthopaedic ward in the Agnew wing of University Hospital and the Infirmary for Nervous Disease at Penn. At various points in his career, he served as chairman of the surgical

section of the American Medical Association, president of the American Surgical Association, and president of the American Orthopaedic Association. One of his crowning achievements was the establishment of the Widener Memorial School for Crippled Children – an institution dedicated to the education and training of children maimed by disease. In recognition of his work, the University appointed DeForest Willard the first chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery – an office which he held from 1889 to the time of his death in 1910. Despite his numerous professional accomplishments, Dr. Willard preferred to be remembered for his acts of kindness to his fellow man rather than for his awards and accolades.

The legacy of DeForest Willard continues to inspire orthopaedic surgery at the University of Pennsylvania. The DeForest P. Willard Award is granted by the faculty every year to senior residents demonstrating outstanding performance in the likeness of Dr. Willard. The DeForest Willard Society was created as an alumni organization that both honors our illustrious history and assists in building our future. All department alumni – including faculty members, residents, clinical fellows, research fellows, and visiting scholars who have spent a minimum of one year either on clinical service or in the lab – are automatically members of the Society. Class Officers are elected by alumni members to serve as Society ambassadors. The mission of the DeForest Willard Society is to foster community, camaraderie, social exchange, and scientific collaboration. The Society will hold meetings consisting of social events and scientific sessions twice per year: once at the AAOS Annual Meeting and once during a separate dedicated weekend. Annual dues will help maintain an endowment established to support resident research and education. With the aid of the DeForest Willard Society, the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery will continue to pursue the ideals set forth by DeForest Willard himself: excellence in patient care, research, and education.