



Chimborazo: The Confederacy's Largest Hospital

Carol C. Green

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Chimborazo Hospital, just outside Richmond, Virginia, served as the Confederacy's largest hospital for four years. During this time, it treated nearly eighty thousand patients, boasting a mortality rate of just over 11 percent. This book, the first full-length study of a facility that was vital to the Southern war effort, tells the story of those who lived and worked at Chimborazo.

Organized by Dr. James Brown McCaw, Chimborazo was an innovative hospital with well-trained physicians, efficient stewards, and a unique supply system. Physicians had access to the latest medical knowledge and specialists in Richmond. The hospital soon became a model for other facilities. The hospital's clinical reputation grew as it established connections with the Medical College of Virginia and hosted several drug and treatment trials requested by the Confederate Medical Department.

In fascinating detail, Chimborazo recounts the issues, trials, and triumphs of a Civil War hospital. Based on an extensive study of hospital and Confederate Medical Department records found at the National Archives, along with other primary sources, the study includes information on the patients, hospital stewards, matrons, and slaves who served as support staff. Since Chimborazo was designated as an independent army post, the book discusses other features of its organization, staff, and supply system as well. This careful examination describes the challenges facing the hospital and reveals the humanity of those who lived and worked there.

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