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"Changing the Face of Medicine: Emily Dunning Barringer"













Dr. Emily Dunning Barringer became New York City's first woman ambulance physician ...

... working from a horse-drawn wagon in the neighborhoods of the Lower Fast Side.

Originally, Emily Dunning thought she would become a <u>nurse</u>.

It was Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi who recommended Cornell University's medical preparatory course for her education instead.

Dr. Jacobi believed Emily Dunning would choose to become a doctor.

In 1897 she enrolled at the College of Medicine of the New York Infirmary.



The day after she completed her residency, in 1904, she married Dr. Benjamin Barringer.

Quickly she became frustrated that his prospects were so much better than hers.

She said,

"<u>He</u> could count on a splendid training in one of the big general hospitals,"

"... with post-graduate work abroad, in whatever line he elected ...

"And I? What did I see ahead?

Her opportunities seemed greatly limited. Again, Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi advised Dr. Barringer ... urging her to take the competitive internship exams held by New York's large area hospitals... ... even though women had never been allowed to compete. Together, the two women pressured several hospitals to open their internships to women. Dr. Barringer became the first woman medical resident at Gouverneur Hospital in New York City. Her male colleagues harassed her assigning her difficult schedules for on-call and ward duties. She carried on with her work, despite these difficult circumstances... ... and was widely reported in the local papers as something of a novelty as a woman ambulance physician. During World War II, Dr. Barringer made headlines again lobbying Congress for military commissions for women physicians. While women could serve as contract surgeons in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps they were not commissioned employees ... and so, were not given





[Footage of women surgeons in WWII – video sent by NLM]

the same benefits as the men.

In 1943, the Sparkman Act was signed into law ...

... allowing women the same benefits as men in the Army and Navy.



Dr. Emily Dunning Barringer created a legacy of helping women achieve equal status ...

... in the medical profession, and in the U.S. military ...



... Opportunities passed on to the generations to come.

TEXT VERSION

Dr. Emily Dunning Barringer became New York City's first woman ambulance physician, working from a horse-drawn wagon in the neighborhoods of the Lower East Side.

Originally, Emily Dunning thought she would become a nurse. It was Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi who recommended Cornell University's medical preparatory course for her education instead. Dr. Jacobi believed Emily Dunning would choose to become a doctor.

In 1897, she enrolled at the College of Medicine of the New York Infirmary. The day after she completed her residency, in 1904, she married Dr. Benjamin Barringer. Quickly she became frustrated that his prospects were so much better than hers. She said, "He could count on a splendid training in one of the big general hospitals ... with post-graduate work abroad, in whatever line he elected ... And I? What did I see ahead?" Her opportunities seemed greatly limited.

Again Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi advised Dr. Barringer, urging her to take the competitive internship exams held by New York's large area hospitals, even though women had never been allowed to compete. Together, the two women pressured several hospitals to open their internships to women.

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ward duties. She carried on with her work, despite these difficult circumstance, and was widely reported in the local papers as something of a novelty as a woman ambulance physician.

During World War II, Dr. Barringer made headlines again -- lobbying Congress for military commissions for women physicians. While women could serve as contract surgeons in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, they were not commissioned employees and so were not given the same benefits as the men. In 1943, the Sparkman Act was signed into law, allowing women the same benefits as men in the Army and Navy.

Dr. Emily Dunning Barringer created a legacy of helping women achieve equal status in the medical profession, and in the U.S. military -- opportunities passed on to the generations to come.