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WAR DEPARTMENT,
SURGEON GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Washington, February 25, 1881.

It is with profound regret and a sense of loss, not only to his Corps, but to the medical profession, that the death of George Alexander Otis, Surgeon and Brevet Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Army, is announced to the Medical Corps of the Army.

Born at Boston, Massachusetts, November 12, 1830, he graduated with the degrees of A. B. and A. M. from Princeton College; entered the Medical Department of the University of Pennsylvania, and received his degree of M. D. from that Institution in 1850; visited Europe, and prosecuted his studies in London and Paris, and returning to this country he established himself at Springfield, Massachusetts; appointed Surgeon 27th Massachusetts Volunteers, September, 1861, he held this position until appointed Surgeon, U. S. Volunteers, August 30, 1864. After the close of the war he entered the Medical Corps, U. S. Army, as Assistant Surgeon, February 28, 1866; became Captain and Assistant Surgeon, July 28, 1866; Major and Surgeon, March 17, 1880, having received the four brevets of Lieutenant Colonel of Volunteers, Captain, Major and Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Army, for meritorious services during the war. While Surgeon of the 27th Massachusetts Volunteers he served in Virginia, North and South Carolina, and was on special duty in charge of the Hospital Steamer "Cosmopolitan" in the Department of the South. Assigned to duty in this Office July 22, 1864, he was Curator of the Army Medical Museum, and in charge of the Division of Surgical Records until his death.

He was editor of the Richmond Medical Journal for three years, member of the leading medical societies of America and corresponding member of various similar societies in Europe, and a contributor to prominent medical journals. Surgeon Otis, with his personal observations of the surgical collections abroad, brought indefatigable industry and untiring energy to the development of the surgical and anatomical collections of the Army Medical Museum, which he has made the most valuable of their kind in the world. The compilation of the Surgical Volumes of the Medical and Surgical History of the War has placed Surgeon Otis confessedly among the most prominent contributors to surgical history.

While on duty in this Office Surgeon Otis wrote for publication no less than ten reports on subjects connected with Military Surgery, &c.; among which are his most valuable and exhaustive reports on "Excision of the head of the femur for gunshot injury," and on "Amputation at the hip-joint in military surgery." Of great culture, retentive memory, and with a remarkable facility of expression, he was, as a compiler and writer, conscientious in his analyses, giving his deductions from the facts before him with modesty, but decision. With such a record it is needless to speak of his zeal, his ambition or his devotion to his profession and especially to the reputation of the Corps of which he was so bright an ornament. While devoting himself to the preparation of the Third and last Surgical Volume (now more than half completed) of the Medical and Surgical History of the War, he died in this city February 23, 1881. His untimely death will be deeply deplored, not only by the Medical Corps of the Army, but by the whole Medical Profession at home and abroad.

W. H. Barnes

Surgeon General.



