

Recollections of Internship

J Richard Gaskill, MD

July 1st, '59, Dallas
Parkland Memorial Hospital
Before copiers and pagers
Concerns about smoking
ICUs and Medicare
Lee Harvey Oswald and JFK.

Segregated wards oppressive
With no air conditioning
All-white medical staff
Nurses' starched uniforms and caps
Page operator's seductive voice
Often disappointing in person.

Dozens of multip deliveries
Work-ups, IVs, and scut
On call every other or 3rd
Sleep deprivation the norm
Call rooms a-whirr with fans
Staff lounge a welcome refuge.

Alphabetic array of disease
On crowded Medicine floors
Ascites, Bacteremia, Cirrhosis
Diabetes, Emphysema, FUOs ...
Sickle cell children on Peds
Anemia, jaundice, and crises.

Variety of problems in the ER
From trauma to rare and weird
Fatal tetanus after abortion
Women with "fallin'-out spells"
Dehydrated infants, barely alive
Sunken fontanelles restored with clay.

Endless flow of surgical admits
Outpatient surgery unknown
Long cases as second assistant
Abdominal retractor in hand
Sunrise sometimes from the OR
Never again after the 30th of June.

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