THE Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital, first of its kind established in Pennsylvania, fighting an uphill battle from its humble start, has an enviable record of service to its credit. Founded in 1895 by Dr. N. F. Mossell, in a modest three-story building, located at 1512 Lombard Street, it has grown to a Class A Hospital, so recognized by National, State and County medical associations, with buildings and equipment modern in every detail and with a money value of three hundred thousand dollars ($300,000.00). The attending and consulting staffs of the hospital are composed of the most prominent doctors and surgeons in Philadelphia.

The hospital is provided with four public wards, a maternity ward, an emergency ward, a number of private and semi-private rooms, two diet kitchens, well planned and always kept under expert supervision. There are operating and sterilizing rooms and a special X-ray room for diagnosis with modernly equipped pathological and histological laboratories. The institution has 75 beds and at the completion of the Nurses’ Home, now in process of construction, will add 25 beds, making it a hospital of 100-bed capacity.

No one is ever turned away from its doors because of creed or color, or because they are too poor to pay. Of the 4,531 bed patients cared for during the past five years, thirty percent (30%) were
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Unable to pay for either services or treatment. One hundred and fifty thousand (150,000) patients have received treatment since Douglass Hospital first opened its doors. Ten thousand social service visits were made by the nurses and more than 125,000 persons visited and examined, who required emergency or clinical attention. The first bed, endowed at a cost of $7,000, was the gift of a humble Negro citizen.

The hospital has graduated hundreds of nurses, many of whom are engaged as supervisors in other hospitals and many others doing public health work in numerous cities. There are fifty-four Douglass Hospital ex-interns engaged in regular practice in the City of Philadelphia, while an equal number are located in other cities, in different States, all of them doing faithfully their daily work in relieving the sick, soothing the dying, helping the poor and promoting in general the moral and material welfare of mankind.

Clinical demonstrations at the Douglass Hospital have proven the most valuable adjuncts in its health program. It maintains clinics in general medicine, surgery, dentistry, obstetrics, gynecology, a chest clinic, an eye clinic, one for the ear, nose and throat, and one for the study of nervous diseases. The work done in its chest clinic has been fundamental to the health of the population.

Recently another forward step was taken in the opening of a night chest clinic where day workers may secure attention in the evening hours. The chest clinics are supported by the Department of Public Health of the City of Philadelphia, and is in recognition of the potential work in combating and preventing diseases, which has featured the Douglass Hospital from its inception.

These clinics and laboratories have been used to marked advantage by numerous visiting physicians from rural districts in various parts of the country taking post-graduate studies. This brings us to record a disagreeable fact. The American hospital, with its many virtues, has not lived above the manifestation of racial exclusiveness. It is not only quite difficult for young colored physicians to secure internships, but many practicing physicians find themselves barred from numerous post-graduate schools because of racial prejudice.

Doctor Mossell says: “With all, we wish it had not been necessary to establish the Douglass Hospital. We deplore the present trend in the dominant public mind to create in many sections of the country hospitals and medical schools, especially for colored people—it means extravagance, inefficiency, duplications of effort, and is undemocratic in that it establishes caste. Because of the Douglass Hospital’s attitude in this matter, and because it has persistently refused to accept a subordinate man-

Nathan Francis Mossell, physician, the founder of the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital, was born on July 27, 1856, at Hamilton, Canada, the son of a brick manufacturer, Aaron Mossell, and of his wife, Eliza Bowers Mossell. His family environment was peculiarly one of charming manners and large mental accomplishments. Reared in an abolition atmosphere, hearing at his mother’s knee the recital of the story of runaway slaves, or men, women and children who were fleeing from the prison-house of bondage, eluding the keen scent of the bloodhound, or dodging the more dangerous pursuit of the avaricious slave-hunter, his sympathies were naturally listed with the downtrodden and unfortunate.

The youth, having the strength and activity of a great and original genius, was attracted to scientific career at an early age. At the age of 20, young Mossell graduated from Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, receiving the degree of Master of Arts. The following year he entered the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania, being the first Negro student to graduate schools because of racial prejudice.
enter and the first to graduate from this celebrated school of learning. The city of Philadelphia and its earlier history impressed his youthful imagination. The Quaker City had led off in the challenge to African slavery. Just one year prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, Benjamin Rush and Benjamin Franklin had joined in a protest against slavery—had actually participated as organizers of the first Abolition Society formed upon this continent.

So, upon finishing his college course, he opened an office at 924 Lombard Street, at the center of the city’s black belt. Shortly afterwards he was selected by the celebrated surgeon, Dr. D. Hayes Agnew, to be one of his assistants in the Out-Patient Surgical Clinic in the University Hospital, a position which Mossell filled admirably for several years and which gave him his inspiration and training in surgery. He was elected a member of the Philadelphia County Medical Society in 1888, being the first physician of color to receive this honor; subsequently he went abroad, taking post-graduate studies at St. Thomas Hospital, London, England.

These became busy days in the life of this young physician. Contacts widened. A serious, strong, steadfast, sincere man, living near the heart of realities—in a great metropolitan city—he attracted equally strong and courageous men and women. His office became a clearing house—where helpful contacts widened. A serious, strong, steadfast, sincere man, living near the heart of realities—in a great metropolitan city—he attracted equally strong and courageous men and women. His office became a clearing house—where helpful solutions drawn together in efforts to find a solution for problems affecting the welfare of both races could think and plan. In addition to advancing the domain of pure and applied science, he took leadership in promoting the cumulative achievement of his group in education, in industry, in art, in music and in literature. His search for better educational and industrial opportunities for the young brought him face to face with the ugly facts of racial exclusiveness and discrimination. Thus he founded the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital, as a protest against segregation of nurses and interns, which was then the rule and not the exception in the hospitals of this day. He dedicated it as a monument to Frederick Douglass, the incorruptible leader of his race, of whom Theodore Roosevelt said: “Frederick Douglass never compromised a right principle, nor truckled to the mean in high places.” The Douglass Hospital stands primarily for the manifestation of the Frederick Douglass spirit, and Nathan Francis Mossell is the incarnation of that Spirit!


This formidable group became impressed with the sincerity of their struggling protege. They recognized in him, one of those characters who live for tomorrow, a reformer, who doggedly advocates and carry out new ideas, new things, for which they themselves get neither thanks nor profit. In the formation of the original consulting staff of the infant hospital, many of Philadelphia’s most distinguished physicians and surgeons were listed and continued their connection during the remainder of their lives.

The following are the names of the Board of Managers and the Attending and Consulting Staffs of the Frederick Douglass Memorial Hospital:

**Board of Managers:**


**Attending Staff:**

- Dr. J. Q. McDougald, Dr. Charles A. Lewis, Dr. T. L. Powell, Dr. K. L. Curd, Dr. M. T. Morris, Dr. D. L. Maddox, Dr. Bruce Fleming, Dr. J. T. Irish, Dr. L. F. Appleman, Dr. A. E. West, Dr. John P. Turner, Dr. G. C. Brannon, Dr. G. H. King, Dr. J. G. Moore, Dr. DeHaven Hinkson, Dr. G. M. Rogers, Dr. T. S. Burwell, Dr. P. J. Taylor, Dr. B. C. Truitt, Dr. J. S. Lennon, Dr. M. W. Scott, Dr. W. H. Barnes, Dr. N. S. Duff, Dr. C. A. Scott, Dr. R. P. Matthews, Dr. R. W. Henry, Dr. N. F. Mossell, Dr. S. E. Robertson, Dr. R. W. Bailey, Dr. W. L. Brown, Dr. T. W. Georges, Dr. W. B. Carter, Dr. P. M. Edwards, Dr. W. A. Forsythe, Dr. M. N. Pannell, Dr. L. A. Clark, Dr. Granville Clark, Dr. S. Hanliff, Dr. W. F. Jerriek, Dr. J. W. Roberts, Dr. J. W. Shirley, Dr. S. G. Smith, Dr. D. C. Wilson, Dr. C. Woodying, Dr. Alfred Gordon, Dr. W. H. Rodgers, Dr. T. A. Williams, Dr. Charles B. Howard, Dr. C. T. C. Nurse, Dr. Agnes P. Berry Monttier, Dr. James Patgrett and Dr. Virginia M. Alexander.

**Dentists:**


**Consulting Staff:**

- Dr. Howard F. Hansell, Dr. John B. Deaver, Dr. Chas. K. Mills, Dr. Edw. J. Klopp and Dr. John M. Fisher.