

3

World War I 1917 to 1920s

Key Points

- Occupational therapy sought legitimacy as a medical profession, aligning with and often working under the supervision of the medical profession.
- In World War I, for the first time in history, the United States government provided reconstruction services for disabled soldiers and sailors to return them to productive, satisfying lives.
- The War Department and Surgeon General's Office established a civilian personnel category of reconstruction aide in occupational therapy to provide services to soldiers and sailors with the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe and for those in the United States.
- Emergency war courses were established to meet the need for reconstruction aides.
- These reconstruction aides, pioneers in occupational therapy, helped to establish the new profession of occupational therapy in the United States.

Highlighted Personalities

- Reconstruction aides in occupational therapy
- Dr. Elliott G. Brackett, orthopedic surgeon
- Dr. Joel E. Goldthwait, orthopedic surgeon
- Dr. Thomas W. Salmon, neuropsychiatrist
- Elizabeth Greene Upham Davis
- Lena Hitchcock, reconstruction aide
- Mrs. Clyde McDowell Myres, reconstruction aide (frequently misspelled as Myers)
- Bird T. Baldwin, psychologist

Key Places

- Pioneer schools in Boston, Philadelphia, St. Louis, and Milwaukee
- Walter Reed General Hospital
- Base hospitals in France
- Base and general hospitals in the United States