

ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Messing around Allentown: Paul Meyer Wood



The U.S. Army Ambulance Corps (USAAC) was the outfit that medical student Paul Meyer Wood joined before mobilizing to the Italian Front during World War I. His stateside training occurred in Pennsylvania, as depicted in the postcard scene (*above*) titled "GOING TO MESS, U.S.A.A.C., ALLENTOWN, PA." The word "mess" has a messy etymology. "Having been put or placed" (Latin *missus*) a "dining course" evolved into a similarly defined Old French word (*mes*) which crossed the Channel to become a 14th-Century English noun for food portion and then verb for serving up food portions (*mess*). Disorganized jumble was not associated with that word for another three centuries. So recruits were not under military orders to be sloppy diners in the U.S.A.A.C. Mess Hall.... (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H., Honorary Curator, ASA's Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Park Ridge, Illinois, and Clinical Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. UJYC@aol.com.