



Courage to Heal

Paul Bernstein

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Set in a world of iron lungs, the Great Depression, and a World War, *Courage to Heal* is based on the true story of a young surgeon who, along with the twentieth century's boldest industrialist, changed the face of American medicine forever. History is brought to vivid life in this novel of an intransigent physician, his fight to provide health care to all, and his undying love for a beautiful nurse who marries the man determined to defeat him.

At the height of the Great Depression, Doctor Sidney Garfield saw the thousands of men involved in building the Los Angeles Aqueduct as an opportunity to provide quality affordable health care for workers. He built Contractors General Hospital: a 12-bed hospital in the middle of the Mojave Desert, six miles from the tiny town of Desert Center, California, and began treating sick and injured workers.

With the start of WWII, the need for health care for shipworkers was even greater. Working with industrialist Henry Kaiser, Garfield created the first true health care system in the Richmond shipyards, then opened a hospital in Oakland, still the headquarters of what is now Kaiser Permanente. When WWII was over, the doctor's private war began, when the AMA tried to shut down Kaiser (calling it socialist) and take away his medical license. Through it all, Garfield persisted in his vision of affordable health care. Kaiser Permanente is the largest HMO in the U.S., serving over 8 million people.

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