

Foard, Frederick Theophilus, Jr. ^[1]

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by John Hanby Foard, Jr., 1986

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Frederick Theophilus Foard, Jr., physician and U.S. Public Health director, was born in the Vale section of Bandy Township, [Catawba County](#) ^[2], the fourth child of Dr. Frederick Theophilus (1855–1933) and Mary Frances Hudson (1853–1914) Foard. After receiving his secondary education at Oak Ridge Military School in Oak Ridge, he attended [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[3] in 1910 and 1911 as a premedical student. In 1916 he was graduated from the University of Maryland School of Medicine, where he had served as a resident clinical assistant at the university's hospital in Baltimore from July 1914 to June 1916.

Following a six-month medical internship at the U.S. Marine Hospital, Chelsea, Mass., he practiced with his father in Catawba County for several months before accepting a position with the U.S. Public Health Service in February 1917. His first assignment was to field duty with the Rural Sanitation Demonstrations section in Hill County, Tex., where he worked in the control of typhoid fever. Remaining with this section throughout World War I, he was assigned to duty on Extra Cantonment Zone Sanitation at Camp Dodge, Des Moines, Iowa; Camp Wheeler, Macon, Ga.; Camp MacArthur, Waco, Tex.; and the Fifth Naval District, which included the city of Portsmouth and Norfolk County, Va.

At the end of the war, Foard became director of Public Health Service field activities in the Fifth Naval District where he remained until July 1919. In that capacity he was instrumental in forming a full-time county health department for Norfolk County, Va., to include the city of Portsmouth. Reassigned as a member of the staff of the U.S. Marine Hospital in Boston from 1 July 1919 to August 1920, he was again placed on field duty and sent to Montana, where he established and assisted in operating the Cascade County and City of Great Falls Health Department. It became the first fulltime county health department in the northern Rocky Mountain states. During the two years he was there, Foard worked closely with state health officials in continuing to develop full-time local health services.

From January 1923 to June 1927 he was an assistant to the U.S. Public Health Officer for the San Joaquin Local Health District, Stockton, Calif. During this time he also acted as a field representative in the development of full-time local health departments in the California counties of San Diego, Imperial Santa Barbara, Monterey, Orange, and San Louis Obispo. In June 1927 he was assigned to the Mississippi State Department of Health in connection with flood sanitation work and the promotion of full-time local health service in the Mississippi Delta counties. After eight months, he was sent to West Virginia to serve for a short period with the state Department of Health in Charleston, but in August 1928 he was reassigned to California as a representative of the U.S. Public Health Service in the development of local health service in the eleven Rocky Mountain and Pacific Coast states, Hawaii, and Alaska. In his next post, from August 1933 to September 1935, Foard was assistant to the state health officer of West Virginia where he had charge of the organization and administration of the WPA sanitation program to improve the sanitary conditions in mining villages and rural areas throughout the state.

In September 1935 Foard returned to his former assignment in the western states with headquarters in San Francisco. Through his efforts and those of Dr. Platt W. Covington, both of whom worked as a team for periods between 1923 and 1933, the groundwork had been laid for the rapid expansion of state and local health services throughout the west that began after the Social Security Act was passed in 1936. The increased federal grant-in-aid funds provided under the act enabled Foard to play an important role in initiating statewide public health surveys in the western states over the next ten years. These health surveys were instrumental in developing full-time state departments of health in Arizona, Idaho and Nevada and in reorganizing state departments of health in Colorado, Washington, and Wyoming. His work also helped bring about state legislation to provide for the organization of county and district health services in New Mexico and Utah.

On 27 June 1936, Foard was commissioned as a surgeon (captain) in the U.S. Public Health Service; he retired on 1 Nov. 1952 with the rank of medical director (colonel).

When war with Japan was declared, he was placed in charge of the Federal Civil Defense Medical and Health Program for the Rocky Mountain and Pacific Coast states with headquarters in San Francisco, where he served until the end of World War II. He was then appointed regional medical director of the U.S. Public Health Service Region VIII in Denver, Colo. He remained in this position until 1947, at which time he was temporarily assigned to the States Relations Division

of the Public Health Service in Washington, D.C.

During his years with the Public Health Service, Foard recognized the acute need of the western states for better trained public health personnel in all fields of health service. To this end he advocated and was instrumental in the formation of the School of Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley.

In November 1947 he became regional medical director of Public Health Service activities to organize health services in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. On 3 Apr. 1948, Foard was injured in a gas explosion that demolished his office at San Juan, P.R., and took the life of his wife. After his recovery he was assigned to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, as director of medical services for the United States and Alaska. His service in the western states had made him thoroughly familiar with the inadequacy of the health and hospital care being provided reservation Indians by the federal government. In an attempt to rectify the situation, he obtained increased funds for the employment of urgently needed professional personnel to staff the seventy-four hospitals being operated exclusively for American Indians. He also initiated the training of Indian boys as sanitarians to serve on reservations where they could speak the tribal language of the people. However, his most significant achievement during this period was his untiring effort to secure the transfer of all hospital and health services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to the U.S. Public Health Service. To bring the plight of American Indians to the attention of those in a position to endorse his proposal, Foard wrote numerous medical papers on their health care needs. Among them were "The Health of the American Indians" (*American Journal of Public Health*, November 1949), "The Federal Government and American Indians' Health" (*Journal of the American Medical Association*, February 1950), "Health Services for the North American Indians" (*Medical Woman's Journal*, November 1950), and "The Tuberculosis Problem Among Indians" (Forty-eighth Annual Meeting of the National Tuberculosis Association, 1952). The transfer finally became law on 1 July 1955—over two years after his retirement from the Public Health Service in 1952.

Upon retirement, Foard returned to his native state where he accepted a post with the North Carolina State Board of Health as director of the Epidemiology Division. He retired from that position in January 1965 at the age of seventy-five, but remained a consultant to the Board of Health until his death.

Foard received the Distinguished Service Medal and Citation from the Department of the Interior, presented by the secretary for his pioneering "in the development of local health units in the Western States" and his "effort to arouse interest in Indian health problems" (1952); the Carl V. Reynolds Award for Outstanding Contributions to Public Health from the North Carolina Public Health Association (1959); the Sedgwick Award from the American Public Health Association, for his distinguished pioneer service in the public health field (1960); and the honorary degree of doctor of laws from The University of North Carolina, "In recognition of his contributions to public health" as a "devoted servant of the public" (1962).

He was a fellow of the American Public Health Association and of the American College of Preventive Medicine, a lifetime service member of the American Medical Association, an honorary life member and president of the Northern California Public Health Association, an honorary life member of the Western Branch of the American Public Health Association and of the Idaho Public Health Association, a diplomate of the American Board of Preventive Medicine, and a member of the [North Carolina Medical Society](#)^[4] and of the California Medical Association.

Foard was first married on 6 Aug. 1929 to Helena Wilhelmine Krause (1882–1948). They had no children. On 25 July 1958 he married Elsie Fredericka Dochterman. He was a Democrat, Lutheran, Mason, and Shriner.

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Subjects:

[World War II \(1941-1945\)](#)^[5]

[Post War 20th Century \(1946-2000\)](#)^[6]

[Government agencies](#)^[7]

[Governmental programs](#)^[8]

[Indian reservations](#)^[9]

[Physicians/Dentists/Other Medical Professionals](#)^[10]

[Public health](#)^[11]

[Public officials](#)^[12]

[Public service](#)^[13]

[UNC Press](#)^[14]

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