

Dr. Myles V. Lynk and Founding The National Medical Association
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After graduating from Meharry Medical College, a part of Central TN University in Nashville, TN, Dr. Myles V. Lynk began publishing a medical journal out of his practice in Jackson, TN, The Medical and Surgical Observer. This medical journal was likely published by the printing house of the CME Church which was located near Lynk's medical practice in Jackson. In an editorial in December 1892, Lynk pointed out the need for a national medical association open to African American physicians.

In 1895, Lynk along with Dr. Robert F. Boyd from Nashville, attended the Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta, GA. This is the Exposition where Professor Booker T. Washington made his famous "fingers on the hand" speech. Lynk says he was in Atlanta because he was partly in charge of the colored exhibits from Jackson, TN. While at this Exposition, Lynk and twelve medical men met at the First Congregational Church in Atlanta to discuss the need for a national medical organization. Because Professor I. Garland Penn was commissioner of the Negro Division of the Exposition, he was asked to chair the meeting.

There were doctors at this meeting from TN, NC, VA, GA, IL, AL and several other states. Dr. Robert F. Boyd of Meharry was elected president of the association. Dr. Myles Lynk suggested that the organization be known as The National Association of Colored Physicians, Dentists, and Pharmacists, the name used until 1903. In 1903 at its annual meeting in Nashville, the name was changed to The National Medical Association.

In addition to the election of Dr. Boyd as association president, Dr. H. R. Butler of Atlanta was designated vice president for GA, Dr. Myles V. Lynk vice president for TN, Dr. David Scott of AL treasurer and Dr. David Martin of TN secretary. The two principal men in bringing the National Medical Association into existence in 1895 were Dr. Myles V. Lynk and Dr. Robert F. Boyd.

The association met in 1897 at the Centennial in Nashville and in 1900 in Louisville. At its 1905 meeting The National Medical Association began publishing records of its proceedings. It does not appear that Dr. Lynk held a leadership position in the association other than the one he held at its initial organization.

Come back next week to learn how and why Dr. Lynk and his wife, Beebe Stevens Lynk, founded the University of West TN.