

# The Dental Service Insigne of the AFP



by the Office of Chief, Dental Service

**T**HE old insigne of Dentistry is similar to that of Medicine—two snakes or serpents are entwined around a staff. The difference is that the letter *D* for Dentistry is placed at the middle of the staff to distinguish the insigne from

that for Medicine.

The insigne, accordingly to mythology, originated from Hermes, the son of Zeus, known to the Romans as Mercury, a messenger of the gods. Apollo, god of manly youth and beauty, poetry, oracles,

healing and music, expressed his desire to possess Hermes' or Mercury's lyre. In exchange for the lyre, Apollo offered a magic wand which exercised influence over all, bestowing wealth and all things good. The wand was of an olive branch with garlands — the first caduceus. One day while Hermes or Mercury was on his errand, he witnessed two serpents fighting. He separated the serpents with the magic wand or staff. Henceforth, Mercury bore with him in his daily mission his magic wand around which two serpents are entwined. Their presence on medical

it. Aesculapius, the blameless physician and a sage in arts and science, lived from 1200 to 1300 B.C. He was of human origin, but became so skilled that he not only healed the sick but restored the dead to life. Pluto, guardian of departed souls, soon feared he might lose his job due to inactivity. He complained to Zeus, who struck Aesculapius dead with a thunderbolt. Later on, legends established Aesculapius as a god, the son of Apollo.

The new branch insignie for the Dental Service, AFP, is symbolized by the serpent encircled about

### **New Insignie of Dental Service Draws Inspiration from Philippine History, But Retains Universal Symbols, Producing A Native Appearance in Every Respect**

and dental insignie is associated with goodness, wisdom and ability to heal. Hermes or Mercury, as messenger, signified speed wherefore two wings were added at the top of the staff. This is only one of the innumerable portrayals of the caduceus. Few people know the origin of this historic insignie. Still fewer know the story of its successor, the sign of Aesculapius with staff and one serpent around

an ancient cautery or staff, the sign of Aesculapius. The base letter "O" represents "omicron" (circle or letter O) for "Odont" or tooth. The ancient Tagalog letter "Da" (.....) are typically local in every respect. The serpent on staff and the base letter "O" which are universal symbols since the time of the ancient Greeks are not a property of any country or region.

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"Wars are fought and won by man, not by weapons; in the last analysis it is the knowledge and courage of the man who fight and officers who lead them that wins victories. Take care of your men first, last and always."

—Revista Militar (Bolivia)



**RURAL DEVELOPMENT.** — Defense Undersecretary Jose M. Crisol, spearheading the AFP's rural development work, visited recently, among others, Bahay Pare, Bulacan, not far from the Candaba Swamps where Huks used to take refuge. Camera snapped him (above) offering cigaret to farmer's wife. Photo below shows Crisol jotting down notes about problems and needs of rural folks.

