William Crawford Gorgas Encyclopedia Article

William Crawford Gorgas

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Contents

William Crawford Gorgas Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

William Crawford Gorgas.....3

William Crawford Gorgas

1854-1920

American physician who made major contributions to public health reform, urban and military sanitation, and the control of yellow fever. As chief of sanitation in Havana, Cuba, Gorgas worked with Dr. Carlos Juan Finlay, Dr. Walter Reed, and others to prove that yellow fever was transmitted by the bite of infected mosquitoes. Utilizing this insight to control yellow fever in Panama, Gorgas was largely responsible for overcoming one of the most serious obstacles to the construction of the Panama Canal.