The Department was founded in 1919 by its first Chairman, Clarence Van Epps. A native Iowan, he graduated from medical school at the University of Iowa in 1897 and subsequently earned a second M.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, obtaining additional training in Vienna, Austria. Van Epps joined the University of Iowa faculty in 1904, rising to the rank of Professor by 1910, by which time he was acting as the university’s sole neurologist. Called away to serve as a Major in the Army Medical Corps in World War 1, Van Epps returned from France following the war to be named the first Chairman of a new Department of Neurology at the University of Iowa.
Van Epps served in France during WWI and founded the department when he returned to Iowa in 1919.

(Front row, fifth from left).
For the first nine years, the Department of Neurology did not have its own space, but was housed in the General Hospital on the east side of the Iowa River (now Seashore Hall). In 1898 there were 50 beds.
In 1928 the new General Hospital was built. It was one of the largest hospitals in the country, with a capacity of 700 beds. Neurology had a 48 bed inpatient ward.