

On his return to Australia from Malaya in October 1960, Watson was Officer Commanding the 1st Camp Hospital at Yeronga in Queensland, with the rank of major. It was here that he began a lifetime of hospital service in the Australian Army with a passion and skill that was outstanding. In June 1963 while at Yeronga, Watson was honoured as a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his service in caring for and treating military patients; in particular, one patient suffering from severe burns. As a medical officer, he quickly mastered the element of command while studying and applying the latest processes of hospital design, development and control. These efforts were rewarded with a posting to Melbourne to undertake two years of long-term schooling for postgraduate medical studies during 1963 and 1964.

In February 1965, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel and posted as Commanding Officer of the 2nd Camp Hospital (later redesignated 2nd Military Hospital). Faced with the challenge of upgrading a small camp hospital, he designed programs to ensure that the medical establishment could properly care for military casualties. This situation soon occurred. In 1965, the new military hospital began to receive medical evacuees from the war in South Vietnam.

The following Year, Watson was briefly attached to the 6th Task Force as the senior medical Officer the Commanding Officer of the 8th Field Ambulance, for Exercise *Barrawingga*. By early 1968, he had been posted to South Vietnam with the task of commanding the 8th Field Ambulance, and then to develop the unit into a field hospital at Vung Tau—the logistic base of the 1st Australian Task Force in Nui Dat. This was a difficult assignment for Watson to undertake because the new field hospital was to be formed under wartime conditions and was to continue to receive battle casualties. Nonetheless, he was successful and on 1 April 1968, the Australian Field Hospital became operational, with Watson as its Commanding Officer. Throughout this demanding period, Watson not only directed the organisation of the new hospital, but also actively worked as a surgeon when casualties arrived from the battlefield. Before he left Vietnam, Watson's duties also included service in Saigon as senior medical officer of the Australian Forces in Vietnam.

On his return to Australia in 1970, Watson was appointed as staff officer, first to Major General Colin Gurner, Director General of Medical Services, and then to the Chairman of the Joint Services Medical Committee based in Canberra. In these positions, Watson was involved in hospital planning for all three services.

The Army benefited with new health facilities being built at Canungra, Duntroon, Enoggera Puckapunyal, Singleton and Kapooka. During this time Watson was also the Australian representative on the tri-nation planning team to establish the requirements for medical support for the Australian, New Zealand, United Kingdom (ANZUK) Force in Singapore.

In July 1971, Watson became Deputy Director of Medical Services and was promoted to the rank of colonel. However, later that year, when Australia become responsibly for the newly created ANZUK Military Hospital in Singapore (formerly a Royal Air Force Hospital at Changi), Watson was chosen to command the facility. On returning to Australia from Singapore in 1974, Colonel Watson was appointed Director of Medical Services-Army in the Directorate of Army Health Services. In 1975, following the appointment of Major General Gurner as Joint Services Medical Advisor, Watson was promoted to brigadier and then to Major General as Director General of Army Health Services and Chairman of the Joint Health Policy Committee. He was appointed Honorary Physician to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth

II, on 1 September 1976. In June 1980, Watson was appointed an Officer of the Military Division of the Order of Australia for his services as the Honorary Physician to the Queen and to the Army's health services.

Following his retirement from the Army in January 1982, Major General applied his unrivalled knowledge of hospital planning and organisation to the civilian sector. He assisted the New South Wales Government in hospital reviews and became a much-respected Medical Superintendent of Calvary Hospital in Canberra. When he retired from Calvary Hospital, he employed his vast knowledge and experience to the task of performing medical file reviews in the Directorate of Army Health Services at Campbell Park offices. As Doctor Watson, he proved to be a source of wisdom to many young staff officers posted to Campbell Park Offices who knocked on his door to ask for advice. Major General Watson was a man of great strength and wisdom who represented his country, the Australian Army, the Australian Army Medical Corps and the profession of medicine with distinction.