

News, Notes, and Queries

GRANTS FOR THE STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE MADE BY THE WELLCOME TRUST

During May to November 1983, twenty-four grants have been newly made or extended by the Trustees on the recommendation of the History of Medicine Advisory Panel, whose Chairman is Professor Peter Mathias. Some of the largest are intended to develop activities at the major centres supported by the Trust. Thus the Unit for the History of Medicine at Cambridge was awarded the year's salary and costs of Dr A. Wilson, who is taking on the duties in that Unit formerly carried out by Dr John Gabbay. Another grant to the Cambridge Unit has allowed Mr J. P. Williams to replace Dr Wilson in part-time tutorial duties. Cambridge also receives a Research Training Scholarship, awarded to Mr R. L. Kilpatrick.

The Panel recommended that the Oxford Unit should be strengthened by the "ear-marked" award of a Research Fellowship for three years which, after advertisement, was awarded to Dr Helen Jones, who will embark on a study of occupational health policy in the period between the two World Wars. The recent expansion of the accommodation for this Unit by the University means that the scholars (and the library) there have considerably more elbow-room. A Research Training Scholarship was awarded to Mrs M. C. Swarbrick, who is to investigate the career and writings of the sixteenth-century physician, William Turner.

Similarly, the Unit at University College London benefits from the extension of Mr M. R. Neve's temporary Lectureship in the History of Biology for a further year, and the Wellcome Institute from the short-term Fellowships awarded to Miss M. E. Perez (Mexico) and Mr J. H. Warner (Harvard). The former will continue her studies on the history of medicine in Mexico, especially medical education at the Royal and Pontifical University. The latter will work on the transmission of French medicine to Britain between 1816 and 1870.

The Trustees have also joined the Science Museum in providing a subvention to assist the publication of the papers presented at the symposium devoted to Joseph Priestley in 1983.

A large sum has been granted to the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology where, in the Department headed by Professor D. S. L. Cardwell, Dr J. V. Pickstone has for a number of years carried out (with the Trustees' support) studies on the history of hospitals and other aspects of health care and industrial medicine in the Manchester region. The publication of the first volume of his work by Manchester University Press is expected soon. In addition, Dr Roger Cooter, formerly of the Oxford Unit, will carry out research on the history of orthopaedics.

Among smaller grants made in aid of research and its publication, Professor R. M. Acheson (School of Clinical Medicine, Cambridge) receives assistance in his research on education in public health and epidemiology; Professor J. A. R. Miles (University of Otago, New Zealand) receives aid towards the publication of his cognate study of public health progress in the Pacific, which contains much comparative statistical material on the changing pattern of life in the Pacific Islands (including Japan) during this century; and Professor P. Haggett (Department of Geography, University of

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Bristol) receives support for his study on the recent incidence of disease in relation to Iceland.

Two future symposia have been given support by the Trustees; one, arranged by the Manchester Museum (University of Manchester), concerned with 'Science in Egyptology' touches on palaeomedicine; the other, arranged by the British Society for the History of Science, will include a number of papers on the history of modern biology of close relevance to medical history. A meeting on the archives relating to the history of biochemistry and molecular biology, promoted by Dr R. C. Olby (and held at the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine), and another on medical microscopy, arranged by Dr B. Bracegirdle, have also been given financial assistance.

Continuing the theme of palaeomedicine, Dr N. W. Kerr of Aberdeen Royal Infirmary has been assisted in the examination of medieval skulls found in that city, and the Friends of Christchurch, Spitalfields, London, in their much larger study of the skeletal remains, to be removed from the vaults of that church.

Finally, along with various small grants for research expenses, Mr I. R. Winship, Librarian of Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic, receives aid in his preparation of a bibliography of science, technology, and medicine in the North of England.

A. Rupert Hall

THE SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

Session 1982-83

Another session has passed during which the Society held three well-attended meetings.

THE THIRTY-FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND HUNDRED AND THIRD ORDINARY MEETING

These meetings were held in the Western General Hospital, Edinburgh, on 30 October 1982, the Ordinary Meeting being addressed by Dr Hugh L'Etang, then Editor of the *Practitioner*, who spoke on 'Disease and decision-making'.

In seeking medical information on the health of world leaders, inaccuracy of newspapers or deliberate misinformation must be guarded against. In retirement and after the death of their patients, doctors are sometimes willing to give clinical details. Among physical handicaps are orthopaedic, ocular, or cardiac disorders, but the triumphs of many so afflicted are well known. The so-called physically fit may, on the other hand, show gross behavioural disorders and the effects of medication, prescribed or self-administered, must not be forgotten. Those whose health is obviously failing pose a particular problem, yet, for example, Churchill, Roosevelt, and others, though grossly disabled, exerted an influence which, for a time, outweighed any of their obvious failings. The present all-too-common summit conferences have inherent dangers unless the ground is properly prepared beforehand.

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THE HUNDRED AND FOURTH ORDINARY MEETING

The Society met for this meeting in the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh on 12 March 1983, when two papers were read.

The first, by Philip Harris, FRCS, neuro-surgeon, was entitled 'Inca medicine'. Following the discovery of Macchu Picchu in 1911, the remarkable Inca civilization was really revealed. The main sources of their early medical history are to be found in the decorations on earthenware jars and vessels. Fertility rites for man and animals were commonly depicted. Trepanning and the artificial production of cranial deformity by bandaging the heads of infants were among the commonest of practices. Embalming was prevalent and, of course, to South America in general we are indebted for such drugs as quinine, cocaine, and curare.

Adam Smith, FRCS, discussed 'Hogarth Pringle and his manoeuvre'. James Hogarth Pringle (1863–1941) deserves to be better known. Born in Australia, educated at Sedbergh and Edinburgh University, he worked in Glasgow under the shadow of William Macewen. A versatile surgeon, he promoted the hindquarter amputation, pioneered vascular surgery, particularly grafting, and the block dissection operation for malignant melanoma in the days before the advantages of modern anaesthesia, blood transfusion, and antibiotic regimens. His work on the hepatic circulation won him his place in the eponyms of surgery. His description of the control of haemorrhage in the liver and biliary area by compression of the hepatic artery and portal vein in the free edge of the gastrohepatic omentum was so simple, direct, and effective as to catch and hold the attention of abdominal surgeons. The "Pringle Manoeuvre", as it was called, was first used by him as the initial step to control urgent haemorrhage from a tear in the liver (1908).

THE HUNDRED AND FIFTH ORDINARY MEETING

Murray Royal Hospital, Perth, was the locus of this meeting held on 25 June 1983, when John Blair, FRCS, spoke on 'The St Andrews MD'.

From the university's foundation (1411), medical teaching was carried out, albeit in desultory fashion, and from 1750 to 1830, the St Andrews MD was given "in absentia", a practice common to other universities. Thereafter, serious efforts were made to strengthen the degree and, without doubt, it then became a true test of medical knowledge and experience, no absent candidates being permitted. From the beginning of the present century, the MD became identical in form with those of the other Scottish universities. With the formation of Dundee University in 1967, the St Andrews medical faculty seemed destined to disappear, but a pre-clinical school was formed and has since flourished. The last St Andrews MD was conferred in 1972. May we see it again in the future some time?

William Cunningham, President
H. P. Tait, Editor, Report of Proceedings.

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UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH, SWITZERLAND

Beat Rüttiman, MD, has been appointed lecturer in the history of medicine, especially the history of orthopaedics. Dr Rüttiman, author of the recent book on the founder of orthopaedic surgery in Switzerland, Wilhelm Schulthess, is an active orthopaedic surgeon and an honorary member of the staff of the Institute of the History of Medicine at the University of Zurich (directed by Prof. Huldrych M. Koelbing, MD).

The Henry E. Sigerist Prize for 1983 has been awarded to Dr Marco Nicola for an essay on the psychological aspects of witchcraft in the seventeenth century.

PYBUS CLUB

A meeting of the Pybus Club will take place at 5.15 pm on Thursday, 17 May 1984, in the Department of Classics, Percy Building, University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Dr Ghada Karmi (Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine) will speak on 'Cautery, cupping, and venesection: folk medicine in the Middle East'.

HANNAH INSTITUTE FOR THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

The Hannah Institute for the History of Medicine is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Angus G. MacLaren, Department of History, University of Victoria, as Visiting Hannah Professor during the academic year 1984–85. He will be in residence at the University of Toronto from 1 January to 30 June 1985. His current research interest is the history of eugenics in Canada.

HISTORY OF DERMATOLOGY SOCIETY

The fourth Samuel J. Zakon Award in the History of Dermatology was presented to Dr Albrecht Scholz of Dresden, East Germany, and Dr Feliks Wasik of Wroclaw, Poland, co-authors of a paper entitled 'Albert Neisser 1855–1916'. Entries are now invited for the fifth Samuel Zakon award. This competition is open to historians and dermatologists in practice or in training, and essays may relate to any aspect of the history of dermatology not heretofore published. Manuscripts should be submitted to John Thorne Crissey, MD, 960 East Green Street, Pasadena, CA 91106, USA, by 1 October 1984.

MEDICAL SCIENCES HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The annual general meeting of the Society was held at the Wellcome Institute on 30 March 1984, when Mr K. Ashley, Technical Director of Mast International, gave a talk entitled 'Antibiotic susceptibility testing: 1904–1984'.

A residential symposium is to be held at Cambridge during the weekend of 15 September 1984. The theme will be 'Aspects of Blood in Medical History', and accommodation has been reserved in Downing College with meetings at the Cambridgeshire College of Arts and Technology. Full particulars may be obtained from the Society's secretary: Dr Leo F. Gore, School of Dental Surgery, Pembroke Place, PO Box 147, Liverpool L69 3BX.