

NINETY YEARS AGO, NOVEMBER 1920

The year 1920 marked an era before malpractice suits. In "Diagnosis and Treatment of Gall Bladder Disease," Charles O. Cooke, AM, MD, advised readers to conduct routine physical examinations. "I recall one patient whom I anaesthetized for another surgeon in which failure to examine the heart led to a needless exploratory operation on a normal gall bladder."

In "Case Report: Salivary Calculus," James W. Leech, MD, described a 52-year old woman who complained of "swelling and sores in the right neck of a few days' duration." When, eighteen months before, she had had swelling in her jaw, a physician in another state advised "extraction of teeth, followed by vaccine injections, the nature not known." The swelling subsided in 2 to 3 weeks. This time, "with lachrymal probes the opening was enlarged and a Eustachian whale-bone bougee introduced the entire length of the duct into the gland where a grating sensation made certain the presence of a salivary calculus." A few days later, healing was complete.

Harvey B. Sanborn, MD, in "Analysis of Wasserman Reactions," discussed the interpretation of partial readings.

FIFTY YEARS AGO, NOVEMBER 1960

Alfred A. Argrist, MD, Professor and Chair, Department of Pathology, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, presented the 13th Annual Doctor Isaac Gerber Oration: A Pathologist's Experience with Death." He concluded: "Let us foster a rational satisfying equanimity for the event of death" and strive to "live a creative life and do some good which will live after us."

Hyman Goldman, MD, Orthopedic Surgeon, Poriah Government Hospital, Israel, presented at the 149th Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Medical Society: "Report of an Orthopedic Survey of 5,000 Israeli children." Discussing scoliosis, he noted the U shape of Israeli classrooms: no child has a front seat. But children who habitually sat to the right of the teacher showed scoliosis to the right; children who sat to the left showed scoliosis to the left. As to whether the curve followed a political bent, Dr. Goldman concluded: "...we must confess that we did not discover more curves to the left in the pink-tinged kibbutzim."

J. Merrill Gibson, Jr, MD, described "Spontaneous Rupture of an Umbilical Hernia Manifested by Severe Hemorrhage" in a 40-year old man.

Robert A. Brogan, MD, and Howard J. Morrison, MD, in "Fanconi-De Toni-Delire Syndrome," described a boy who died at 4 year, 5 months. The autopsy "revealed crystalline deposits in liver, spleen, kidney and lymph areas."

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, NOVEMBER 1985

Seebert J. Goldowsky, MD, Editor, discussed "The Next Great Need;" specifically, the need for long-term care insurance. President Reagan had just announced a plan to spur private insurers to enter this market.

In "Case Records: Rhode Island Hospital Clinicopathological Case," Tom J. Wachtel, MD, George F. Meissner, MD, and David O. Williams, MD, Editors, presented the case of a 77-year old retired painter, admitted with fractures of the left hip. He had received radiation therapy on his face for basal cell carcinomas, and had developed right facial palsy. Three months before, he developed hoarseness, dysphagia with solids, and impaired vision in his right eye. After 106 days in the hospital, he died. The diagnosis after autopsy: "poorly differentiated squamous cell carcinoma, probably of nasopharyngeal or nasal sinus origin..."

Toussaint A. Leclercq, MD, and Rosalie Bolton, MD, in "Indications for CT Scanning in Benign Head trauma," urged a liberal policy toward CT evaluations of head trauma.

Michael L. Linenberger, MD, and Robert E. Knisley, MD, discussed the "rare occurrence" of "IgD Myeloma with Plasma Cell Leukemia."

FOR LEASE

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