

## News, Notes, and Queries

### Medical Archives and Manuscripts News, 1996

Issues of common concern to archivists with responsibility for medical records and archival collections are discussed regularly at meetings of the Health Archives Group (HAG). Membership of this group is growing constantly and includes representatives from local authority record offices, Health Trust and Hospital archivists, the Royal Colleges, the British Medical Association, the Public Record Office (PRO) and the Institute of Health Record Information and Management. It is heartening that although these professionals have recently seen the abolition of a much-needed post of Archivist at the Royal Society of Medicine (where there are many valuable holdings of archives and accumulated deposited manuscripts), new positions have been created at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow and the Royal College of General Practitioners, and that at the York Health Trust (now based at the Borthwick Institute) has been placed on a more secure footing.

Discussion at HAG meetings often embraces the loaded topics of access and selection of records. In particular the group recognizes that more guidance is needed for those involved in the selection of patient clinical records. This year, courtesy of a grant from the Wellcome Trust, the group published a small booklet: *Hospital patient case records: a guide to their retention and disposal* (H Maxwell-Stewart, J Sheppard and G Yeo: single copies available without charge from the Archivist, St Bartholomew's Hospital, West Smithfield, London EC1A 7BE). The booklet has proved popular and has been widely circulated to record keepers and archivists throughout the UK. Another booklet, with similar aims, has also appeared under the aegis of the Liverpool NHS Trust: *Caring for records and artefacts: some guidelines on the disposal of records and artefacts*. Both publications are timely, given the continued closure of many hospitals, combined with the fact that the Department of Health has now contracted out storage and

retrieval of current health records, and many Hospital Trusts are considering private sector management of non-clinical services including health records, which raises new concerns about issues of access, sensitivity and the survival of patient records.

Of the 108 new or additional accessions of material of medical interest received by repositories in the UK in 1995 and reported to the National Register of Archives, 24 are hospital records. Records of the **York Lunatic Asylum** from 1770 are at the Borthwick Institute. **Glamorgan County Asylum** records, including patient case notes and photographs from 1864 to 1970 are at the Glamorgan Record Office. Records of several Birmingham hospitals including accounts for the period 1823 to 1857 of the **Birmingham Eye Hospital**, records and registers of patients and photographs covering 1765 to 1993 of the **Birmingham General Hospital**, and **Birmingham Maternity Hospital** minutes and papers, 1843-1948, form a particularly rich group in Birmingham Central Library. Devon Record Office received records for 1868 to 1974 from the **Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital**, nineteenth- and twentieth-century plans of the **Devon Lunatic Asylum**, and patient registers and diagnostic books from 1893 to 1974 from the **West of England Eye Infirmary**. Regional interest is keen at the University of Exeter, where a Medical Archives Survey, sponsored by the Exeter Hospitals Heritage Trust, is surveying Devon hospitals and community medical records to coordinate and formulate a policy for the preservation of the records. Devon County Council plan (with the help of lottery/millennium money) to convert a redundant psychiatric hospital to include space for archives. The National Archives in Ireland have also undertaken hospital survey work recently.

It is notable that, discounting hospital records which straddle the century, 63 of the new

accessions are twentieth-century collections. Inevitably a large percentage of these are located in the Wellcome Institute's own Contemporary Medical Archives Centre (CMAC). These include the archives of the **Chartered Society of Physiotherapy** and the papers of the controversial psychiatrist, **William Sargant** (1907-1988). Notable collections of very recent date include those of **Body Positive**, the HIV support group (London School of Economics), papers of **David Blunkett**, Shadow Secretary of State for Health (Sheffield Archives), and files from the **Medical Research Council** 1914-1986 (Public Record Office). The latter's archives have been gradually transferred to the Public Record Office, and as well as a list, a CD-ROM of their minutes and reports 1913-1969 is now available. Edinburgh City Archive have received records of **Plus**, a support group for pain relief, 1980-1989, and historians interested in the patient angle on medical care will find much of relevance in the **Patients Association** records (CMAC). **The Health Promotion Research Trust** was established in the early 1980s by the Government with funding from the Tobacco Industry for health promotion and research exclusive of tobacco products. Now that it has been wound up, the records of its research projects have been placed in the CMAC as well. **The Metropolitan Hospital Sunday Fund**, one of the important charities which, like the Hospital Saturday Fund, achieved so much with fund-raising, has placed its records c. 1873-1990 with the Guildhall Library.

Despite the currently quiet state of the market for manuscripts, a number of interesting items appeared in the salerooms during the year. A group of three Middle English medical manuscripts was auctioned by Bonhams in May, where Cambridge University Library acquired a **leechbook** of c. 1400 and a fifteenth-century **recipe book**, and the Wellcome Institute Library an Elizabethan **medical manual**. The latter was also successful in its bid for the seventeenth-century **recipe book of Lady Ann Fanshawe** at Bloomsbury Book Auctions in April. For the eighteenth-century, the **journal of the Staffordshire physician and antiquary Richard Wilkes**, 1736-38, was acquired by Staffordshire Record Office at Sotheby's in December 1994, whilst the Hunterian Society (collection in the Wellcome Institute) successfully bid for a student's copy of **lectures by John Hunter** at the Warren Smirl sale the previous month. Other acquisitions during the year included medical treatises based on the practice of **Charles Barbeyrac**, physician of Montpellier, late seventeenth century, and notes of lectures on osteology by **Joshua Brookes**, 1821 (Wellcome Institute), journals of the physician and writer **John Moore**, 1790-95 (Cambridge University Library), and medical casebooks and journals kept by two members of the **Emmison family of Lincolnshire**, 1832-61 (Lincolnshire Archives).

**Julia Sheppard**

## Burroughs Wellcome Fund

To help commemorate its 40th anniversary as a philanthropic supporter of the biomedical sciences, the Burroughs Wellcome Fund has awarded nearly \$1.3 million to support 25 scholars studying the history of contemporary medicine at 15 academic institutions across the United States and Canada. By releasing scholars from heavy teaching loads, the awards are intended to help develop productive

research careers in the history of medicine. From their studies, the researchers propose to produce publications ranging from full-length books to scholarly articles for professional journals, as well as papers to be presented at national and international scientific meetings.

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund is an independent private foundation established to advance the medical sciences by supporting

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research and other scientific and educational activities. BWF was founded in 1955 as the corporate foundation of the pharmaceutical firm Burroughs Wellcome Co. In 1993, a generous gift from the Fund's sister foundation in the United Kingdom, the Wellcome Trust,

allowed BWF to become fully independent from the company, which was acquired by Glaxo in 1995. Additional information about BWF and its programmes is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.bwfund.org/bwfund/>.

## The Society for Renaissance Studies and Gresham College

A conference to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the foundation of Gresham College in 1597 will be held in Harkness Hall 1, Birkbeck College (University of London), Malet Street, London WC1 on Thursday 20 and Friday 21 March 1997. The aim is to explore the place of Gresham College in the

intellectual life and development of education in late Elizabethan and Stuart London. Anyone wishing to attend should contact Dr Kenneth Carleton, Society for Renaissance Studies, 35 Winchester Avenue, Upminster, Essex RM14 3LP.

## 6th Meeting of the European Club on the History of Neurology and 2nd Meeting of the International Society for the History of the Neurosciences

These two organizations will meet in Leiden, The Netherlands, 20-21 June 1997. For more information please contact P J Koehler, MD, PhD, Dept of Neurology, De Wever Hospital,

PO Box 4446, 6401 CX Heerlen, The Netherlands. Tel.: 31 45 5766700; Fax: 31 45 5767416; e-mail: [u493001@vm.uci.kun.nl](mailto:u493001@vm.uci.kun.nl)

## *Call for Papers* Cheiron The International Society for the History of Behavioral and Social Sciences

The annual meeting of Cheiron will be held 19-22 June 1997 at the University of Richmond in Richmond, Virginia. Programme submissions (symposia, papers, and posters) which may deal with any aspect of the history of the behavioural and social sciences or with related historiographical or methodological issues, must be postmarked by 1 February

1997. Travel awards are available to assist students who present papers or posters. For further information, contact John Carson, Cheiron Program Chair, Dept of Science & Technology Studies, 632 Clark Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853-2501. Tel.: 607 255 6048; Fax: 607 255 6044; e-mail: [jsc15@cornell.edu](mailto:jsc15@cornell.edu)

## Francis Clark Wood Institute for the History of Medicine of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia

### **Resident Research Fellowships**

Short-term grants of up to \$1,000 will be awarded to scholars engaged in projects requiring personal use of the historical collections of the Library and/or Mütter Museum during the spring/summer/fall of 1997. Letters of application outlining the proposed project (no

more than 5 pages), length of residence, historical materials to be used, and a budget with specific information on travel, lodging, and research expenses should be submitted, along with a curriculum vitae and two letters of recommendation, by 31 January 1997.

### **Scholar-in-Residence Program**

One grant of \$30,000 will be offered to a scholar who will spend the 1997-1998 academic year in residence at the College conducting research in the Library and/or Museum. Candidates must have a PhD or equivalent record of professional experience and scholarly publication. A letter outlining the applicant's relevant qualifications, research project, and materials to be used at the College

of Physicians should be submitted, along with a curriculum vitae and three letters of recommendation, by 17 January 1997.

Individuals interested in either program should send pertinent materials to: Monique Bourque, PhD, Assistant Director for Programs, F C Wood Institute, College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South 22nd St, Philadelphia, PA 19103, USA. Tel: (215) 563 3737.

## American Institute of the History of Pharmacy

### **Grants-in-Aid to Graduate Students**

The Institute offers grants-in-aid totalling \$5,000 annually to graduate students to encourage historical investigation of some aspect of pharmacy, and to pay research expenses not normally met by the University granting the degree. Thesis projects devoted to

the history of pharmacy, history of medicine, or other humanistic study strongly related to pharmacy or using a pharmaco-historical approach will be considered for all or part of the funds available. Applications for grants-in-aid will be accepted until 1 February 1997.

### **Fischelis History of Pharmacy Grants**

Applications will be accepted until 1 March 1997 for the Fischelis Grants for Research in the History of Pharmacy. Projects by established scholars devoted significantly to historical understanding of the modern practice of pharmacy in America will be considered for

all or part of the \$5,000 to be awarded yearly. Application guidelines for these grants can be obtained from Beth D Fisher, AIHP, Pharmacy Building, 425 N. Charter Street, Madison, WI 53706-1508. Tel: (608) 262 5378; e-mail: aihp@macc.wisc.edu

## The Sydenham Society

A new society, The Sydenham Society, has been formed in memory of Dr Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689), and to promote research into the history of medicine in Dorset

generally. Enquiries to Dr Max Mackay-James, Villa House, Higher Wynford, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 0ET. Tel: 01300 321166; Fax: 01300 321106.