

News, Notes, and Queries

MEDICAL ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS SURVEY

The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine has initiated a survey of sources for medical history, which, with its staff of two archivists, is based in the Wellcome Building. The survey aims to locate and register archive and manuscript resources relevant to the history of medicine which are open to public access in the British Isles. It is hoped that this unique opportunity to consolidate information will benefit scholars and custodians alike by providing a single point of enquiry for access to sources nationwide.

The scope of the survey is considerable in subject, time-span, and type of material. It will cover all aspects of health and disease from 1600 to 1945, recording the professional and personal papers of individuals and institutions concerned with medical and nursing practice, research, and education. Local and central government records relating to public health and the provision of health care, as well as private papers with a significant medical content, will also be included. Documents recorded will range from death registers to diaries, business records to lecture notes, pharmacopoeias to home-remedy books. Lesser-known locations as well as the prominent national and local repositories will be covered. The information will be collected on a regional basis, initially by questionnaire but making good use of available catalogues and lists, followed by personal visits as and where necessary. The survey results will be computerized from the beginning to provide a reference database from which a book will be compiled for publication in 1990.

In collecting the information, the survey team will necessarily depend on the co-operation and goodwill of archivists, custodians, and historians throughout the country. We shall always be grateful to receive any suggestions or comments, either by telephone or letter. Please contact Janet Foster, Senior Research Archivist, Medical Archives and Manuscripts Survey, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BP.

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY FOR THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

The international Academy for the History of Medicine held its twelfth meeting on 27–28 August 1986, at the University of Leiden, organized by Professor Antonia Luyendijk-Elshout. One session, devoted to papers from members, was held on the second day, parallel to the symposium on clinical teaching. The first session, however, was entirely devoted to matters concerning a reorganization of the Academy, proposed at the 1984 meeting in Freiburg. The Interim Committee appointed by the outgoing president, Prof. J. Leibowitz, and composed of E. Seidler (Freiburg), H. Koelbing (Zurich), and G. Risse (San Francisco), re-emphasized that the principal purpose of the International Academy was to provide an international forum for leaders and young professionals in the field of the history of medicine and the health sciences.

For this purpose, the membership approved an official linkage with the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in London, which will henceforth be the official and legal seat of the Academy. It also appointed Dr Vivian Nutton Executive

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Secretary, and Professor Huldrych Koelbing Interim President of the Academy for the period 1986–88. Dr Nutton was also charged with organizing the 1988 meeting in London.

During the next two years, the Interim Committee will continue its work. Revision of the official statutes, membership categories, and criteria for the selection of new academicians will be among its tasks. All members present in Leiden reaffirmed their determination to see the Academy acquire its own legal as well as financial status. Indeed, rather than simply conferring status on certain full-time workers and teachers in the field, the new Academy will open its doors to the growing number of historians who devote most of their studies to health-related topics. The goal will be to create an effective international forum for scholars not only to present their work but also to establish personal relations with colleagues from around the globe. Suggestions and proposals should be addressed to any one of the Committee members or the Executive Secretary.

Guenter B. Risse
University of California, San Francisco

AMERICAN OSLER SOCIETY

On Saturday, 12 April 1986, the American Osler Society convened at the Meridien Hotel, San Francisco, for the First Annual John P. McGovern lecture to honour Sir William Osler's tradition of ethics. Albert R. Jonsen, medical ethicist at the University of California/San Francisco, reviewed medical practice by the Knights of St. John in the service of the poor in the thirteenth century.

THIRD INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON MEDICINE IN BIBLE AND
TALMUD

This Symposium will be held in Jerusalem on 7–9 December 1987. Topics will be centred on medical anthropology (the image of man, body and soul; the meaning of life and death; the meaning of healing and disease; wholeness and holiness; etc.). Further information from Samuel S. Kottak, MD, Harry Friedenwald Professor of the History of Medicine, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Eln Kerem, Jerusalem 91120, Israel.