

## News, Notes, and Queries

### Medical Archives and Manuscripts News, 2003

During 2003 a number of Wellcome Library projects that had been set in train in 2001–2 continued to deliver impressive results. The retrospective conversion of the manuscript and archival finding aids, which began in the autumn of 2001, had by September 2003 provided on-line access to some 80 per cent of the catalogued holdings of the Archives and Manuscripts Department (<http://archives.wellcome.ac.uk>); the cataloguing of the papers of Francis Crick, which were acquired in 2002, began in the summer of that year, and by the same time about half the collection had been completed, and regular progress reports posted on the Wellcome Library website (<http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/projects/crickreport>); and dwarfing both in terms of size and complexity, the Wellcome Foundation Archives project began to feed catalogue records into the archives database, beginning with the records of Cooper, McDougall and Robertson Ltd, the veterinary products subsidiary. At the time of writing, completion of all three projects is subject to varying degrees of uncertainty, owing to funding difficulties. There is no doubt, however, that they have already contributed significantly to consolidating the position of the Wellcome Library as the premier location in the UK for medical historical research.

This position is once again confirmed by a trawl through the latest digest of accessions to repositories in the field of health and medicine, published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission (<http://www.hmc.gov.uk/accessions/2002/02digests>). This digest shows that of a total of 179 notified accessions made by UK repositories in 2002, no fewer than 51 were made by the Wellcome Library. In addition to the Crick papers mentioned above, significant names that populate the digest include the psychiatrist Michael Fordham (1905–95), the epidemiologist Alice Stewart (1906–2000), the bacteriologist David Tyrell, and the neurologist and medical peer, Lord Walton of Detchant.

Noteworthy accessions of personal papers to other repositories include those of the wartime physician Alexander Walker, c.1932–46 (Glasgow University Archives), the military nurse Enid Palmer, 1943–45 (Imperial War Museum), the neurosurgeon Sir Geoffrey Jefferson (1886–1961) and the haematologist JF Wilkinson (1897–1998) (John Rylands Library, Manchester), and the physician Sir Robert Young (1871–1959) (Royal College of Physicians).

Among the records of organizations and institutions acquired by national and special repositories in 2002, some of the more interesting would appear to be those of the English National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting (The National Archives, Kew), of the Association of National Health Service Officers, 1920–92 (Warwick University, Modern Records Centre), and those of the London Food Commission, 1980–98, and MIND, 1946–2002 (Wellcome Library).

Accessions to local repositories are, as ever, dominated by the records of hospitals and local health authorities: most date from the twentieth century, although exceptions include inspectors' comments and other papers from Devonshire Royal Hospital, Buxton, 1859–1984 (Derbyshire Record Office), and minutes and case files from the Royal London Homeopathic Hospital, 1800–1999 (London Metropolitan Archives). Other clinical records mentioned include case files from Brookfield Hospital, Woking, c.1893–1979 (Surrey History Centre Woking) and mental health case files from St Catherine's Hospital, Tranmere, 1900–60 (Wirral Archives). The patient's perspective is unsurprisingly elusive, although transcripts of letters by a patient convalescing from TB at Meathop Sanatorium, Grange-over-Sands, 1933–34 (Cumbria Record Office Barrow) look tantalizing, and the papers of two district nurses, Bertha Langslow and Violet Wood, acquired by Shropshire Records Centre, may provide

interesting glimpses of early-twentieth-century health care from below. Business records are conspicuous by their relative absence, the only obvious candidates being prescription books and other financial records of Martindale & Co Ltd, dispensing chemists of London, 1889–1931 (Wellcome Library) and stock lists and photographs of Speechly & Milbank, pharmacists of Bishop's Stortford, c.1857–1959 (Hertfordshire Archives).

Quite as important as acquiring research material are the processes involved in making it accessible to researchers. Last year in these pages we reported on the awards made under the Wellcome Trust's funding initiative *Research Resources in Medical History* during its first year of operation, 2001. Since inception forty-five awards have been made, ranging in value from just under £3000 to just under £100,000. Most awards relate to documentary collections and include grants for preservation/conservation as well as cataloguing and increasingly digitization. Examples of the former during 2002 include conservation of the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies Archive (£10,000 to Edinburgh University Library), and the microfilming of case books of the Lawn Hospital, Lincoln, and St John's Hospital, Bracebridge (£11,101 to Lincolnshire Archives). Both conservation and cataloguing projects often relate to acquisitions mentioned in these pages, such as the £16,862 awarded to Surrey History Centre for cataloguing the records of Brookwood Mental Hospital, or the £40,636 for the cataloguing of the papers of R D Laing (Glasgow University Archives). The largest award made during 2002 was for an ambitious project to preserve, catalogue, selectively digitize and augment the collection of the Papworth Village Settlement and Papworth Hospital (£63,985 to Cambridgeshire Archives). At the other end of the financial scale, one of the most interesting projects supported involves the reproduction of the almost 800 glass plate lantern slides and negatives collected by George Cunningham (1852–1919), "father" of the

school dental service, as "propaganda for the war on dental hygiene" (£8625 to the British Dental Association Museum): the project will digitize the images, which are threatened by loss of emulsion and general deterioration, to database and CD ROM. Selected images can be viewed via the Research Resources web pages <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/en/1/homgrarrmsucpr4.html>.

The provision of digital facsimiles of original material, on the Web, with or without associated catalogue data, continues apace. In 2002 the LSE launched the Charles Booth online archive (<http://booth.lse.ac.uk/>), which gives access to Booth collections in the British Library of Political and Economic Science and the University of London library: researchers can access copies of Booth's poverty maps of 1898–99, browse digitized notebooks recording interviews with police on the beat, and search the catalogue of the original survey notebooks or Charles Booth's own personal and family papers. At the opposite end of the chronological scale, the Wellcome Library mounted a digital facsimile of the fifteenth-century physician's handbook, referred to in these pages last year, on its website in 2003 (<http://library.wellcome.ac.uk/resources/etexts/ms8004/>). The purpose of the exercise was mainly to test the market for this type of resource; visitors were invited to answer a web-based questionnaire and contribute other comments about the facsimile. The replies and comments made it clear that there is a lively demand for this sort of resource, but that without an accompanying transcription and/or full catalogue description the facsimile remains of limited research value. Nevertheless it is hoped that this marks the start of a programme of digitization of early medical manuscripts in the Wellcome collections, both to provide useful remote access to such material for scholars, and to bring rare and fragile materials that hitherto have been largely reserved for specialist use to a wider public audience.

*Call for Papers*

International Conference  
'Mélanges, crases, tempéraments: la chimie du  
vivant dans la médecine et la biologie anciennes'  
Lausanne and Geneva, 6–8 May 2004

The IURHMS of the universities of Geneva and Lausanne, is organizing a conference on "mixtures", crases, temperaments and the chemistry of life in ancient medicine and biology. Those who wish to participate should send, before 15 January 2004, a one page résumé

of their submission to: Institut universitaire romand d'histoire de la médecine et de la santé (IURHMS), 1, chemin des Falaises, CH-1005 Lausanne, Switzerland; tel.: 00-41-21-314-70-50; fax: 00-41-21-314-70-55; e-mail: hist.med@inst.hospvd.ch.

**Jerry Stannard Memorial Award**

The 2004 competition for the annual award in honour of the late Professor Jerry Stannard is open to graduate students and to recent recipients of a doctoral degree (PhD or an equivalent), conferred not more than five years before the competition deadline. The purpose of the award is to encourage research by young scholars in the pre-1700 history of materia medica, medicinal botany, pharmacy, folklore of drug

therapy, and the bibliography of these areas. In 2004 the award will be \$800. Submissions should be received no later than 15 February 2004. For further information, please contact: The Stannard Award Committee, Attn: Professor Victor Bailey, Department of History, University of Kansas, Wescoe Hall, 1445 Jayhawk Blvd. Room 3001, Lawrence, KS 66045-7590, USA.

*Call for Papers*

**36th Annual Meeting of Cheiron**

The International Society for the History of Behavioral and Social Sciences calls for proposals for the 36th annual meeting of Cheiron, to be held on 17–20 June 2004 at the University of Akron, Akron, Ohio, USA. Papers, posters, symposia or workshops on the history of the behavioural and social sciences or related historiographical and methodological

issues may be submitted. For further information, contact David K Robinson, Cheiron Program Chair, Division of Social Science, 100 East Normal Street, Truman State University, Kirksville MO 63501, USA; email: drobinso@truman.edu; tel.: 660-785-4321; fax: 660-785-4337.