

FOREWORD

One aim of the International History Club at its inception nearly 25 years ago was to document the history and development of paediatric surgery. It has taken this length of time to realise this dream of publishing a book on the topic and as editors we are proud to have achieved this. It would of course not have been possible to write without the enormous contributions made by our international colleagues in this specialty which has grown so prodigiously in a relatively short period of time. The time is right for such a book to document accurately facts about the pioneers in paediatric surgery by many who can recall the earlier pioneers who have sadly passed away. We are indeed fortunate in having Dan as one of our editors who has such a worldwide network of friends all of whom, even if they wanted to, felt unable to refuse our gentle request to contribute to such a book. Despite some delays, almost all have contributed substantial material and we are grateful to them for the many hours of work amassing their material.

After some discussion between the three editors, we reached an agreement with World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd. who agreed to publish "*A History of Surgical Paediatrics*". This was a great undertaking unlike other previously published textbooks, scientific material or papers. The plan was to create a history from as many parts of the world as possible rather than limit to certain local areas where individual contributions have been published in past years. Last summer we contacted friends and colleagues around the world asking for their support and for contributions in this venture. The specialty is rather exceptional in the enlarged "family"

approach which has made strong bonds between paediatric surgeons internationally. Their common bond is in seeking to improve the health and welfare of the infants and children and not one controlled by the financial return which may be achieved.

“Paediatric Surgery” or “Surgical Paediatrics” are in fact synonymous terms and we had considerable discussion on which term we would use for the title. We settled on the latter as we are in practice paediatricians who look after the many infants and children with surgical disorders. In many places in the 19th century and well into the 20th century, the medical paediatricians preferred to have a surgeon “on call” for when they considered it appropriate to ask for surgical assistance. Where surgical beds and service were provided, it has been seen and recorded more than a century ago that more patients were referred to surgeons than to the medical paediatric clinics in these hospitals — a fact alluded to in at least two of the chapters, The specialty has developed from general surgeons who have had an interest in children’s care and have developed expertise in the handling and management of the infants and children.

The book gives an indication of the development of the historical group in the specialty by the initiator, Jan Molenaar. Contributions for the second section on the development of the specialty in a wide range of countries, and to our pleasure, almost all of those asked have contributed interesting accounts of how the specialty has evolved in the vastly different social systems around the world. Following is a list of individuals whose names have been selected by asking a large number of our international colleagues to give us a list of individuals whom they felt had made major contributions to the development of the specialty. From the replies we have selected the most frequently quoted individuals in Section 3 and either referred to them there or indicated where they had received considerable mention in Section 2. The range of names received sometimes had a local dominance and from others the list given was very much reflected on the international standing. We felt it reasonable to limit the list to the 32 names although a great many others were mentioned. The one exception was the addition of Wilms.

We record our gratitude for the overwhelming support from all the contributors. The initial request was for an account of up to 3000 words for the countries or about 300 words on the individuals, but there is a wide variety in the responses. Limits have not been enforced, no doubt reflecting on the authors' respect of the request balanced against their view of the importance of recording of the innumerable facts they could have included. The exercise did help people get 'in touch' with colleagues' who were in retirement and reminisce about earlier days in the specialty and of colleagues, contributions and idiosyncrasies. Age has been no barrier; at least one 94-year old has recalled details that had not been documented previously.

Brief accounts of Associations and details of the current journals are followed by a selected group of contributions. They include two historical papers, a review of fetal surgery, a view on the minimally invasive surgery and one on modern imaging for our patients.

One of the Editors would like to acknowledge Professor V. G. Griffiths, whose interest in the history of surgery served as a beacon in those formative years at medical school.

Without the organisation and control of Kay Byrne of the Department of Surgical Paediatrics in Glasgow the finalised articles from so many different parts could not have been achieved. We wish to record our thanks to her for all her painstaking and careful work and in her contacts with the contributors, publishers and ourselves.

We hope you enjoy reading it as much as we enjoyed researching it.

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