

Some Ways into the New Millennium

In the January 2000 issue of *Medical History*, Bill Bynum paid tribute to Vivian Nutton on his retirement after twenty years as co-editor of the journal. Bill then wrote that he and I intended to take *Medical History* “some ways at least” into the new millennium. Three years on, Bill also has decided to take his leave as editor, although he too joins our House of Lords, the Editorial Board, where his expertise will still be available to us.

Bill’s retirement from the editorship of the journal marks a significant transition. For twenty-three years, Bill has been—to us modernists at least—the voice of *Medical History*. Bill was no passive editor. He used his editorship creatively, for the benefit not just of his readers, but also of his authors. *Medical History* was maintained by Bill and Vivian as a broad church, where all submissions received careful consideration, and in which articles of many different styles and perspectives found a readership. Editorial involvement was, however unobtrusive, extensive. Bill’s authors quickly became aware of the nurturing quality of his editorial role. Time and again, Bill’s gloss on referees’ reports helped to put them in perspective, and to make the business of revision practical and less painful. His own suggestions were invariably judicious and constructive. I and many others received our training in the writing of journal articles from Bill, and as historians we remain in his debt.

There is no doubt that the retirement of Bill and Vivian presents us as their successors with a considerable challenge. We intend to maintain the consistent scholarly standard of the journal, as well as its catholic approach to historiography and subject matter, and its tradition of editorial supportiveness. We are fortunate in the continuing service of Caroline Tonson-Rye, our invaluable assistant editor. Without Caroline, the assumption of responsibility for the journal would have been daunting indeed. I am joined as co-editor by Harold J Cook, currently Director of the Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL, who will be known to our readers as a distinguished historian of early modern medicine, and a discerning and fairminded judge of scholarship. Together we intend to take *Medical History* some further distance into the new century, if only a little way into the new millennium.

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