

declared that the hospital was fit to take sick and wounded French soldiers. The hospital remained in existence until March 1919, expanding to over 600 beds. Women from Royaumont also managed a specially-constructed casualty clearing station nearer the front, which was established at Villers-Cotterets in 1917.

Eileen Crofton tells the story of the hospital, its staff and its patients with considerable skill, weaving together a narrative of war-work with pen-portraits of some of the key figures associated with the hospital; not least the indomitable Chief Medical Officer, Miss Frances Ivens. Crofton paints a vivid picture of medical work, of daily chores, and of relations between patients and staff. One aspect of wartime medical work which comes through strongly in Crofton's account is the enormous importance of small details in maintaining the morale of both patients and staff. Nothing was more important than the secondment of one former patient—a famous Paris chef—to the hospital kitchens. He remained virtually the only man employed at the hospital during the war, barring a few of the patients during their convalescence.

Rich in detail, and nicely balanced between narrative and personal testimony, this book provides a valuable insight into the nature of medical work during the First World War. Specialists will see the Royaumont hospital as a useful point of contrast to hospitals under military or British Red Cross control, but the book deserves and is likely to achieve a far wider readership.

Mark Harrison, Sheffield Hallam University

Leon Z Saunders, *A biographical history of veterinary pathology*, Lawrence, Kansas, Allen Press, 1996, pp. xviii, 590, illus., \$83.00 (USA only), \$88.00 (worldwide) (0-935868-84-4).

Leon Z Saunders has spent a lifetime in veterinary pathology, and with a keen and growing interest in the history of his subject. His enviable ability to pick up languages in the

course of his research resulted in 1980 in an authoritative account of *Veterinary pathology in Russia 1860–1930*. Now in his late seventies and retired from his post at SmithKline Beecham he has produced what is obviously a labour of love: a biographical dictionary of veterinary pathologists and their science throughout the Western world (only one, Japanese, representative of the Far East is included). The choice is eclectic, and Saunders makes no claim to comprehensiveness; that would indeed be too much to expect for an initial one-author volume of this kind. He has nevertheless made a laudable effort, with the inclusion of just over 150 authors whose contributions have enriched the literature on and knowledge of veterinary pathology over a century and a half before, during, and after two world wars.

For those interested in veterinary pathology and its history this weighty volume is an invaluable source and reference book, introducing through scientific biographies of distinguished practitioners of the subject a guide to its history and evolution in the later nineteenth and through to our own part of the twentieth century. The choice of personalities included here also reflects the fine balance to be struck between veterinary and comparative pathology: the volume is dedicated to the memory of Osler, and comprises the names of many other “veterinary” pathologists who began their professional lives with medical degrees and interests.

In his introduction Saunders rightly emphasizes the essential role played by Virchow's definition of cellular pathology and by the rise of histology, fuelled by improvements in microscopes, in mid-century, paving the way for the great advances in human, veterinary, and comparative pathology—as also in bacteriology, protozoology, and eventually in virology. Quite a number of the pathologists described in this “biographical history” included tumours and neoplasms in their studies. This makes it perhaps surprising that there is no mention of Peyton Rous, who had to wait fifty-five years for a Nobel Prize recognizing his

Book Reviews

demonstration of transmissibility of a chicken sarcoma via cell-free filtrates, and his later work on the concept of carcinogenesis as a two-stage mechanism. But Saunders has already disarmingly apologized for any omissions which may have accidentally occurred; and we can only congratulate him on the vast amount of information he has single-handedly accumulated for the benefit of present and future historians.

Lise Wilkinson, Wellcome Institute

W F Bynum (ed.), *Gastroenterology in Britain: historical essays*, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine Occasional Publications No. 3, London, The Wellcome Trust, 1997, pp. 138, £8.00 (1-869835-64-6).

An engaging slim compilation of 138 pages, small enough to slip into a jacket pocket, this book offers diverse accounts of British contributions to gastroenterology that run the gamut from panegyric to paean. The most delightful is by Roy Porter, that most prolific of current historians, on 'Biliousness', followed closely by that of Denis Gibbs who, an American notes with pleasure, is the "Apothecaries Lecturer in the History of Medicine". His essay is entitled: 'The demon of dyspepsia'. Other essays are more personal reminiscences about the development of gastroenterology, hepatology, and the like, which will entertain those named and their acolytes, but may prove of lesser value to those outside the original select circle of British gastroenterology. In reviewing the "British" contributions to the discussions about gastric acid, Hugh Baron manages a political syncretism which gives British citizenship to Paracelsus, Spallanzani and Tiedemann, to name only a few, a feat that leaves those from William Beaumont's home state grateful that he too was not Anglicized for a place in the pantheon, although Gibbs states, on what grounds I do not know, that Beaumont was born a British subject.

All in all, this is a most engaging read.

Editor W F Bynum says it all in his introduction, "If psychiatry is half of medicine, then gastroenterology might lay fair claim to much of the remaining territory". Gastroenterologists who do no endoscopy will certainly agree.

Those who have slogged through more than a few contributions about American gastroenterologists and parallel developments in the States, however, may wonder whether parochial histories like this one are of sufficient archival value to deserve a book form. Even before the advent of general gastroenterology journals, not to mention the jet plane, fax, and e-mail, the medical world had become so very interrelated that, for example, it can be very difficult to isolate the influence of Johns Hopkins Hospital on Yale Medical School without considering the influences of that genial Canadian William Osler on both, even after he had found a home in Oxford. The essays would have been of greater interest outside the UK if all authors had followed the lead of the first two.

Howard Spiro, Yale University

Arthur Hollman, *Sir Thomas Lewis: pioneer cardiologist and clinical scientist*, London, Springer-Verlag, 1996, pp. xx, 300, illus., DM 89.00, SFr 78.50 (3-540-76049-0).

Thomas Lewis (1881–1945) was one of the most important and interesting British physicians of his day. After initial studies in Wales, he went on to study at University College, London, the institution where he was to spend most of his career. Lewis focused his early investigations on the cardiovascular system. At first he analysed pulse tracings obtained by the polygraph, but starting in 1909 he turned to the investigation of the heartbeat using electrical records created by the newly-invented electrocardiograph (ECG). Lewis went on to apply this tool to great effect in the analysis of all manner of abnormal cardiac rhythms, but most notably to the irregularly irregular pulse known as atrial fibrillation.