

NINETY YEARS AGO, OCTOBER 1920

In "Encephalitis Lethargica," Charles A. McDonald, MD, reported on the cases that he had examined. In spite of much research, "it is fair to say the cause has yet not been discovered." Although encephalitis lethargica and poliomyelitis are similar ("It may be that one is an attenuated form of the other") the "weight of evidence is that these diseases are not identical." Dr. McDonald described a woman who had been asleep for five days. Eventually she died without waking. Dr. McDonald estimated the mortality rate at 7 to 10%.

An Editorial, "Narcotics Clinics," noted the end of the "clinics for narcotic habitués, which have been in operating...since the passage of the Harrison Anti-Narcotic Act." The editor judged the clinics to have been the "dispenser of drugs, rather than a means of cure of the habitué." The editor judged outpatient treatment ineffective. The new solution for drug addiction was to be the State Hospital at Howard.

A second editorial, "A New Specialty," described the emergence of "industrial surgery," tied to large industrial organizations.

FIFTY YEARS AGO, OCTOBER 1960

Americo A. Savastano, MD, contributed "Low Back Pain from the Orthopedic Standpoint." He cited the principal points to consider in a diagnosis: pain, tenderness, muscle spasm, limitation of motion, posture, tests of passive mobility, x-ray and laboratory tests.

Henry C. McDuff, Jr, MD, contributed "Gynecological Causes of Backache.

Ernest K. Landsteiner, MD, contributed "Urological Causes of Back Pain."

In "Western Equine Encephalomyelitis in Rhode Island," Alton M. Paull, MD, and Raymond Young, PhD, described the incidence in animals, then concluded with a report of a patient "thought to represent the first case of western equine encephalitis diagnosed in this state and probably in New England."

Mieczyslaw Garber, MD, reported on "The Use of an Aldosterone Antagonist in Patients with Resistant Edema." He discussed two patients.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, OCTOBER 1985

In "Competency Peer Review," Herbert Rakatansky, MD, explained the Medical Society's Peer Review Competency Committee and the Impaired Physicians Committee disciplinary board.

Mark J. Fagan, MD, and Tom J. Wachtel, MD, in "Serum Iron Studies Compared to Bone Marrow Iron in Patients with Pernicious Anemia," explained: "Unless transferrin is less than 25%, bone marrow biopsy is essential to exclude iron deficiency."

Rosalind Ekman Ladd, PhD, and Edwin N. Forman, MD, in "Pediatric Ethic Rounds: An Evaluation," noted: "The impact of ethics rounds on clinical decision-making is worthy of further exploration."

In "Controversies in the Treatment of Parkinson's Disease, Joseph Friedman, MD, noted: Carbidopa-levodopa combination is effective, but not without problems and complications."

H. Denman Scott, MD, and John T. Tierney contributed "Home Care in a Hectic Environment."

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