



## **NINETY YEARS AGO, NOVEMBER, 1921**

Frederic J. Farnell, MD, make general remarks on endocrine disorders and their relation to the individual in a paper presented before the Rhode Island Medical Society in September of that year. He opens by noting that “the physiologist can scarcely escape the feeling that here he has broken through into an uncanny fourth dimension of medicine, where the familiar canons and methods of scientific criticism are become foolishness, where fact and hypothesis are habitually confounded and ‘nothing is but what is not.’”

Harold I. Gosline, MD, a pathologist for the State Hospital for Mental Diseases in Howard, RI, examines a study made on syphilis in mental cases. He starts by suggesting that possibly not all of the cases of syphilis among patients are valid, and he goes on to discuss various treatments, tests, and mortality reports. Gosline stresses, in the end, the importance of performing a lumbar puncture prior to any discharge, and the yearly testing of blood.

An editorial on chiropractics opens with: “It comes within the range of possible conjecture that the science [sic] of chiropractics has some helpful use, either mental or physical—probably the first—upon the health of some people of certain temperament. It is beginning to be apparent, however, that the ‘Reign of Reason’ is gaining the ascendancy over the ‘Rain of Dollars,’ heretofore enjoyed by this particular cult, and that their star of popularity is on the wane.”

The book *Diseases of Children* by Herman B. Sheffield, MD, is reviewed making note that the author has included all of the recent advances in medical research and disease prevention. There is criticism, however, in that in the author’s attempt to fit so much information into a 800-page volume, some information is too brief and may lead to an erroneous impressions.

## **FIFTY YEARS AGO, NOVEMBER, 1961**

A panel presentation on peripheral arterial occlusive disease is presented by Jesse P. Eddy III, MD, Stephen J. Hoye, MD, William P. Corvese, MD, Seebert J. Goldowsky, MD, and Lester J. Vargas, MD. The presentation covers the history and natural course of arteriosclerosis obliterans, prognosis to life and limb, and progression of disease—also noting a correlation between arteriosclerosis obliterans and diabetes and age. From there, the topics move to arterial occlusions, diagnoses, arteriography, and surgical treatments including endarterectomy, graft, and lumbar sympathectomy. The presentation finishes with a question-and-answer session moderated by Dr. Eddy.

Robert L. Curran, MD, and Thomas Forsythe, MD, examine an unusual cause of gastrointestinal hemorrhage—systemic neurofibromatosis with involvement of the duodenum. Their case focuses on a 56-year old white female with a three-day history of melena associated with light-headedness and dys-

pnea. After numerous tests and examinations, on the tenth day a sigmoidoscopy and hemorrhoidectomy were performed. After a couple of more visits due to a reappearance of melena, a laparotomy revealed a tumor consistent with leiomyoma, but a closer examination of the removed tumor turned out to be neurofibromata, a rare finding in the gastrointestinal tract. The patient’s convalescence was uneventful and the seven-month follow-up was positive.

An editorial notes: “A computer center at Brown University and increasing references to computers in medical science signal the advent of computers in clinical practice. What a computer can and cannot do is not generally understood.” The writer goes on to predict, with anticipation, uses of computers in diagnostics and analysis.

As the Rhode Island Medical Society approaches its sesquicentennial year, its place within the history of state medical societies is examined, placing it eighth oldest (1812) following New York (1807) with the oldest state medical society being New Jersey (1766).

## **TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, NOVEMBER, 1986**

This issue opens with a tribute by Wendy Smith and Stanley M. Aronson, MD, to Seebert J. Goldowsky, MD, who is celebrating his twenty-sixth anniversary as Editor-in-Chief of the *Rhode Island Medical Journal*. The tribute covers his years of schooling, to his long surgery practice and other positions. The tribute also talks about Dr. Goldowsky’s father, the first Jewish detective in Rhode Island, and Dr. Goldowsky’s history with the journal, and his contributions to the advancement of the medical profession.

The opening article is a surprising discussion on images and use of medicine in the work of James Joyce by Irving A. Beck, MD. Dr. Beck looks at Joyce’s early life, literary career, and *Ulysses* in particular, discussing medical allusions, symbols, references, and so forth. A look at Joyce’s medical history is also made, drawing some connections between the Irish author’s afflictions and some of his writing.

Helen E. DeJong presents an amazing tour of the library of the Rhode Island Medical Society. She notes the society’s oldest volume is Pliny’s *Historia Naturalis* (1501). Other notable books dating in the sixteenth century include Oribasius’s *Collectorum Medicinalium* (1555), Lycosthnes’s *Progidiorum ac Ostentorum Chronicon* (1557), and Gorraeus’s *Definitorium Medicarum* (1564). The rest of DeJong’s roster reads like a fevered wish list of anyone with a fascination for the history of medical sciences.