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“Samurai Bill,” The Third Bigelow

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Introduction

Hidden behind Jacob Bigelow’s imposing mausoleum at Mt. Auburn cemetery stands a small tablet engraved “William SB (1850-1926).” The humble marker covers the ashes of William Sturgis Bigelow, the only child of Henry J. Bigelow, and the last of the line (figure 1).

William Bigelow gave up medicine after two years of surgery and only made minor contributions to anesthesia: his biography of his father pointed out the latter’s decisive role in the adoption of ether in surgery, and as Harvard trustee he saw to it that ether anesthesia was used in all surgical operations and animal experiments. But his colorful life and his contributions to the arts deserve to be remembered.

Early Years (1850-1871)

William S. Bigelow, the only son of Henry J. and Susan Bigelow, was born on April 4, 1850, at 5 Chauncey Place, in the heart of old Boston. His mother was the eldest daughter of William Sturgis, a Salem captain who had amassed an enormous fortune in whaling and in the China trade. Susan Bigelow committed suicide when William was three, and doting aunts and grandmothers, all Mayflower descendants, raised him in the best upper class, or “Boston Brahmin” traditions.

Like his father, William attended the Dixwell’s Latin School. Two of his schoolmates were Henry Cabot Lodge, the future senator, and Frederick Cheever Shattuck, later Harvard physician and medical librarian. Both became life-long friends. Bigelow ranked in the middle of his class



Fig. 1. Bigelow plot at Mt. Auburn Jacob Mausoleum. William’s marker is third from right.

in academic achievements but was at its very bottom in conduct, an early sign of his rebellious spirit.¹ He graduated in the spring of 1869 and spent the summer in Europe with the John Collins Warren family.

In the fall of 1869, Bigelow, Lodge and Shattuck entered Harvard College. Outgoing, gregarious and popular, Bigelow joined the Hasty Pudding and Porcellian clubs where he made new friends: William Lawrence, the future Episcopalian bishop of Boston; Phillips Brooks, later rector and popular preacher of Trinity Church; and the writer Frank R. Stockton. He entertained his friends at the clubs and in his private lodgings near the campus, where he engaged in spirited debates on the political and cultural issues of the day. He already was a staunch Republican. Bigelow did well academically but was reprimanded for shunning prayer services and protest-

ing compulsory chapel attendance. He joined in his father’s and grandfather’s opposition to President Eliot’s reforms, such as admission of women and blacks to Harvard. He received his AB degree in the spring of 1871.

The Medical Years (1871-1881)

William Bigelow entered the Harvard Medical College in the fall of 1871. His teachers included his father, J. Mason Warren, and Oliver W. Holmes. He received his

medical degree in mid-1874 and immediately sailed for Europe where he was to spend the next five years furthering his medical education.

After a few months in Dresden to improve his German, he attended the medical faculties of Heidelberg, Strassburg, and Vienna. In Strassburg, the noted histologist Waldemeyer initiated him to microscopy (a life-long interest of Bigelow) and to cell biology and helped him write a paper on cell mitosis.² Bigelow spent his last two European years in Paris, studying under Ranvier and, especially, Pasteur who introduced him to the new science of bacteriology.

In Paris, Bigelow met Sam Bing, an art dealer who sparked his interest in Japanese artifacts and sold him hundreds of pieces. Collecting and studying Japanese art would become his life’s passion.

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Historical Activities at the ASA Annual Meeting in New Orleans, October 22-26, 2005

Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology Annual Exhibit

Freud, Erdmann & Einstein: The Heroes of 1905, ASA's Founding Year
Morial Convention Center; ASA Resource Center (Technical Exhibits Hall)

Sunday, October 23rd, 12:30 PM - 6:00 PM

Monday, October 24th, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Tuesday, October 25th, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Friends' Tea and Book Signing

Morial Convention Center, Room 282

Monday, October 24th, 12:15 PM to 2:30 PM

Forum on the History of Anesthesia

The ASA at 100: A History Continued

Morial Convention Center, Room 281

Monday, October 24th, 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Lewis H. Wright Memorial Lecture

Morial Convention Center; La Nouvelle Orleans A

Tuesday, October 25th, 1:00 PM to 2:10 PM

History Panel

History of Solid Organ Transplantation

Morial Convention Center; La Nouvelle Orleans A

Tuesday, October 25th, 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Anesthesia History Association

Annual Dinner Meeting

Antoine's Restaurant

Tuesday, October 25th, 6:00 PM

• • • • •

History of Conjoined Twins

Mark Rockoff, M.D.

• • • • •

See flyer insert for details.

The ASA Centennial Gala Dinner and Dessert Reception

New Orleans Marriot
555 Canal Street

Monday, October 24th

Gala Dinner

6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

Dessert Reception

8:00 PM to 10:00 PM

**For more information and
to purchase tickets, go to
faer.org/asatickets.php.**

Docents Needed

The WLM is looking for WLM Friends to volunteer as docents for the WLM exhibit at the ASA in October.

Please call the WLM at (847) 825-5586 for more information.

Anesthesia History Association Tenth Annual Resident Essay Contest

The Anesthesia History Association (AHA) sponsors an annual Resident Essay Contest with the prize presented at the ASA Annual Meeting.

Three typed copies of a 1,000-3,000 word essay written in English and related to the history of anesthesia, pain medicine or critical care should be submitted to:

William D. Hammonds, M.D., M.P.H.
Professor of Anesthesia and Director of Pain Outcomes Research
Department of Anesthesia
University of Iowa
200 Hawkins Drive, 6JCP
Iowa City, IA 53342-1079
U.S.A.
william-hammonds@uiowa.edu

The entrant must have written the essay either during his/her residency or within one year of completion of residency. Residents in any nation are eligible, but the essay **MUST** be submitted in English.

This award, which has a \$500.00 honorarium, will be presented at the AHA's annual dinner meeting to be held on October 25, 2005, in New Orleans. This dinner is always held during the annual meeting of the American Society of Anesthesiologists. The second-place winner receives \$200.00 and the third-place winner receives \$100.00. The papers will be considered for publication in the *Bulletin of Anesthesia History*.

All entries must be received on or before September 1, 2005.

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The *Bulletin*, formerly indexed in Histline, is now indexed in several databases maintained by the U.S. National Library of Medicine as follows:

1. **Monographs:** Old citations to historical monographs (including books, audiovisuals, serials, book chapters, and meeting papers) are now in LOCATORplus (<http://locatorplus.gov>), NLM's web-based online public access catalog, where they may be searched separately from now on, along with newly created citations.

2. **Journal Articles:** Old citations to journals have been moved to PubMed (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/PubMed), NLM's web-based retrieval system, where they may be searched separately along with newly created citations.

3. **Integrated History Searches:** NLM has online citations to both types of historical literature -- journal articles as well as monographs -- again accessible through a single search location, The Gateway (<http://gateway.nlm.nih.gov>).

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Bigelow. . . *Continued from Page 1*

Back in Boston in late 1879, Bigelow set up a private bacteriology laboratory on Pemberton Street, where he did research, lectured on asepsis³ and helped Professors H.C. Wood and H.P. Bowditch write their report on bactericides for the National Board of Health.

Henry Bigelow, eager to see his son follow in his footsteps, in early 1880 had him appointed as Assistant Surgeon at Massachusetts General Hospital Out-Patient-Department. Although a skillful surgeon, the young Bigelow soon came to loathe the drudgery and gore of surgery. He apparently suffered a "nervous breakdown" in early 1881 and spent a few weeks in Vienna. Little is known of that mysterious episode. He may well have consulted Freud.

Then came the winter of 1881-2, which Bigelow called the "turning point of his life."

The Samurai Years (1882-1889)

In late 1881 Bigelow attended one of Morse's lectures on Japan at the Lowell Institute. A self-taught zoologist of immense enthusiasm and vigor, Edward S. Morse had gone to Japan to study the local seashells, had fallen in love with the country and accepted a post at the Tokyo Imperial University to teach marine biology and Darwinism. In 1878 he had his Salem friend Ernest F. Fenollosa appointed to the chair of Western philosophy at the same university. A restless, iconoclastic artist, Fenollosa also became captivated by Japan. He, Morse and Bigelow were the precursors of the "Great Wave," a group of "eccentric misfits of the American Gilded Age"⁴ who, bored with the New England conformism and materialism, were looking for new directions in Japan. They returned to the U.S. at the end of the 19th century and exerted a significant influence on the American and European cultures.⁴

In early 1882 Bigelow invited Morse to his Tuckernuck Island lodge to plan with him a short journey to Japan. Without family ties or financial worries, Bigelow gave up his surgical practice and left Boston with Morse in May 1882. They reached Yokohama in June and were welcomed by Fenollosa and Kakuzo Okakura, an eccentric, brilliant and flamboyant scholar who initiated Bigelow to the Japanese way of life. He later came to Boston at Bigelow's invitation, became the protégé (and probably the lover) of Isabella Gardner, and surrounded by an admiring clique of esthetes, taught them to combine Oriental and Western cultures. He, too, was to

greatly influence the American and European arts, philosophy, and literature.⁵

Instead of the few months he had planned to spend in Japan, Bigelow stayed for seven years.⁶ He bought a house in Tokyo and a small summer lodge in the cool hills of Nikko, North of the capital. Adopting the Japanese dress, cooking and customs, he studied the local culture, language and martial arts while he criss-crossed the country, sketching and photographing, two skills at which he excelled.

Bigelow, Morse, and Charles G. Weld, another unhappy Boston surgeon, traveled throughout Japan, buying large amounts of artifacts for their private collections and for the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Salem Peabody Museum. The Japan of the Meji era (1868-1912) was then rejecting its past and offered golden opportunities for foreign collectors.



Fig. 2. Henry J. Bigelow in old age

Bigelow and Fenollosa also spent many months at the Homoyo-in monastery (near Otsu) studying Esoteric Buddhism under S.K. Ajari. Both took their vows of priesthood in September 1885, Bigelow taking the name of Genshin Kojii (Moon Mind). The monastery was one of the main beneficiaries of the many large contributions Bigelow made to various Japanese institutions.

In 1883 Bigelow invited to Tokyo his cousin Percival Lowell and the Gardners. Isabella S. Gardner, the wealthy wife of the railroad financier and Boston socialite. Jack Gardner was a patient of Henry J. Bigelow and a close friend of his son William. An avid art collector, her mansion

was to become the future Bella Gardner Museum of Boston. As a trustee of the Museum of Fine Arts, she was later to quarrel bitterly with Bigelow. Percival Lowell, a frustrated financier, was to remain in Japan for several years and take up astronomy. Upon his return to the U.S., he built an observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona, where he worked with Morse and two other eccentrics, David Todd and Lafcadio Hearn.⁴ Their observations led them to conclude that there was life on Mars, thus starting an American obsession with the planet which still exists today.

In 1886 Bigelow was the host of Henry Adams and John LaFargue. Adams' wife Marion ("Clover") was Bigelow's first cousin. Afraid of foreign travels and depressed by her father's recent death and her husband's attentions to Elizabeth Cameron, "Clover" Adams swallowed a lethal dose of cyanide shortly before sailing and Adams invited LaFargue as his traveling companion, paying his expenses, as LaFargue had by then dissipated his large paternal inheritance.⁴ LaFargue brought back from Japan many concepts which were to influence the decorative arts. He later designed the stained glass windows at the Boston Trinity Church where the funeral service of his friend Bigelow was held in 1926.

In the fall of 1889 Bigelow's religious master Ajari became fatally ill and, following the Buddhist custom, Bigelow nursed him until his death in mid-December 1889. Bigelow immediately left for Boston. On his way home he stopped in Paris, where he was introduced to Theodore Roosevelt who was spending his second honeymoon there. The meeting was to lead to a close friendship, which lasted until Roosevelt's death in 1919.⁷

Active Years in Boston (1890-1921)

Back in Boston in early 1890, Bigelow found his father ailing and despondent (figure 2). Unhappy with President Eliot's reforms, Henry Bigelow had left Harvard and retired to his Oak Hill residence in Newton where he farmed and treated an occasional patient. He had not recovered from a head injury sustained in a carriage accident and suffered from gastric troubles (a severe pyloric stenosis was found at his autopsy).

His son had disappointed him by giving up medicine, leaving Boston, adopting a foreign religion and way of life and, especially, depriving him of grandchildren. The elder Bigelow died in October 1890 and was buried under a simple marker in the Bigelow plot at Mt. Auburn. He left

his son an immense fortune, his houses on Beacon Street and in Newton, a lodge on Tuckernuck Island, and his Harvard trusteeships (Harvard College, Massachusetts General Hospital, and Museum of Fine Arts). William Bigelow had admired his brilliant father and in 1894 anonymously published a loving biography stressing his father's dominant role in introducing ether to the world.⁸

Five years after Henry Bigelow's death, a young woman, Mary E. Bartlett, sued his estate to recover \$150,000 that, she claimed, he had promised her when he broke their engagement. The long legal proceedings (1895-6) obsessed and exhausted William. He even turned to his friends, the Homoyo-in monks, and asked for their prayers. He generously rewarded them when he won the suit in 1896.

After his father's death, Bigelow moved into his house on 56 Beacon Street. He frequently and lavishly entertained his friends in his new home, in his exclusive Boston and New York clubs and his Tuckernuck Island lodge. This lodge was in fact a sumptuous mansion with a permanent staff of servants and cooks, large stocks of German wines and Manila cigars and a three-thousand-book library. Henry Adams, a frequent guest, called it a "thing of splendor." Only men were invited to the island where they could lounge all day in pajamas or in the nude and would dress formally for an elegant dinner. H.C. Lodge and his two sons, George and John, were frequent guests. An egregious "club man", and a gracious and generous host, Bigelow was known to his friends as "Sturgis," "Big Bill," or "Samurai Bill."

After his return to Boston, Bigelow joined the American Oriental Society, the Asiatic Society of Japan, the Boston Historical Society and the Boston Music Hall (becoming its director) and was made a Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences.⁹ He introduced polo to Boston and with his friend Sam Warren, businessman and future director of the Museum of Fine Arts, founded the Boston Polo Club where both avidly played.¹¹

In 1897-8 Bigelow spent one year in Europe, attending the Wagner Festival in Bayreuth. There he met, and claimed to have fallen in love with Milka Ternina, a famous Croatian opera singer, who he later squired during her American tours. In 1899 Henry Adams and several companions joined him in Paris and London where they met their friend John Hay, Roosevelt's fu-

ture Secretary of State, who was then the American ambassador in Great Britain.

Bigelow was often seen at Boston and New York social events escorting glamorous socialites such as Bella Gardner, Edith Wharton, Margaret Strong, Ethel Slater and Milka Ternina when she was in the U.S. Despite his claims at various times that he was in love with those women and ready to marry them, those friendships



Fig. 3. The Homoyo-in Monastery near Otsu, Japan

probably remained platonic. Bigelow combined his busy social life with more serious pursuits in medicine, religious, and politics, and, especially, the arts.

A. Medicine

Despite giving up his practice, Bigelow kept a keen interest in medical advances through lectures, professional journals and medical books to the end of his life. He remained an influential member of the Massachusetts Medical Society, the Boston Surgical Society and the Boston Society of Medical Sciences.^{9,10} As a trustee of the Harvard Medical College and the Massachusetts General Hospital he followed his father in insisting that ether be used for all surgical operations and that animal experiments be done only for research and always under general anesthesia. He saw to it that Harvard only used the Zeiss microscopes that he had worked with in Europe, as he felt that they were superior to other types for research. He often funded their purchase. He also generously funded the laboratories of his friends Bowditch, Chadwick, Lovett and Harvey Cushing. He encouraged and funded the army's research on yellow fever and campaigned for sex education in boys. He created for the Boston Surgical Society the Henry J. Bigelow medal, to be annually awarded to an outstanding surgeon. The first recipient was Will J. Mayo. Because of the World War the ceremony was postponed until 1921 and became Bigelow's last public ap-

pearance.

Like his father, Bigelow recommended large doses of morphine to treat pain. When Roosevelt developed severe pain during his terminal illness, Bigelow guided the ex-president's wife on how to medicate him. Roosevelt died pain-free and a relieved family profusely thanked Bigelow for his help.

B. An Active Religious Life

The first decade of the twentieth century was a period of intense religious activity for "Samurai Bill." In 1902 he returned to Japan at the invitation of the Homoyo-in monks to dedicate a bronze statue of his teacher Ajari and to suggest improvements to the monastery (figure 3). He spent a few weeks joining the priests in spiritual debates and left a large gift on his departure. He then visited his many Japanese friends and urged them to hold on to their old traditions while adopting Western technology, a warning he was to repeat to the end of his life. His partiality to raw fish caused a severe bout of dysentery which was still plaguing him as he sailed for Europe. After short visits to Dresden and Heidelberg he met Henry Adams in Paris. While there he developed facial zona and accompanied by Adams traveled to Nice to recover in the sun. Both friends were back in Boston by Christmas of 1903.

In 1908 Bigelow was invited to give the biennial Ingersoll lecture at Harvard. He discussed "Buddhism and Immortality." The lecture was well received and published shortly afterwards.¹¹ The discourse is a rather confused one on consciousness, nirvana, and an attempt to explain reincarnation through the scientific concepts of Darwinism and genetics. In the fall of 1908 Bigelow also gave a series of eight lectures on "Buddhism in Modern Times" at the Harvard Faculty of Theology. An introduction to those lectures was published in the Harvard Review of Theology¹² but despite the urgings of his colleague F.C. Shattuck, Bigelow never wrote a full treatise on Buddhism.

Bigelow also spent much time tutoring in Buddhism George "Bay" Lodge, the eldest son of the senator during frequent visits to Tuckernuck Island. "Bay" Lodge, a promising poet died at 36 of heart failure on the island in August 1909 while Bigelow was in Paris. The latter had bequeathed his lodge to his young protégé before leaving for Japan in 1902. "Bay's" death im-

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Bigelow. . . *Continued from Page 5*

mentally grieved his father who never returned to Tuckernuck.

C. Bigelow as Politician

Bigelow played an influential, though mostly hidden, role in American politics through personal contacts and, especially, an extensive correspondence with his many political friends.¹⁴ He helped Roosevelt's appointment as Assistant Secretary of the Navy and encouraged him to build the "White Fleet," an important element of his future "Big Stick" diplomacy.

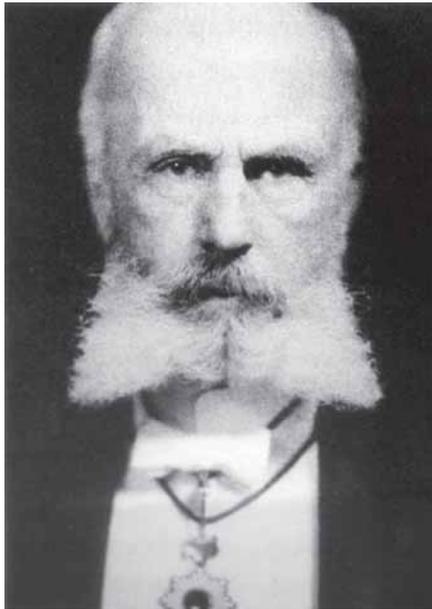


Fig. 4. W.S. Bigelow as Commander of the Order of the Rising Sun

Bigelow and Lodge opposed the war with Spain in 1898 and Roosevelt's enlistment, but the latter ignored their advice and, with "Bay" Lodge, joined the "Rough Riders." Returning from Cuba as a national hero, Roosevelt successively ran for governor of New York then for vice-president in 1901 with Bigelow's political and financial support.

Bigelow's influence grew considerably once Roosevelt became president after McKinley's assassination and after his reelection in 1904, again with Bigelow's generous help. Bigelow supported some of the president's policies such as his reforms on the currency and of the civil service, and his opposition to the German adventures in Venezuela and in Morocco. Both he and Lodge, unsuccessfully, opposed other of Roosevelt's social and financial policies and his judicial radicalism, although all three men remained good friends.

An amusing episode occurred at one of Bigelow's visits to the White House shortly after Roosevelt had become president. Eager to introduce the president to judo, Bigelow chose Elihu Root, the Secretary of War as his opponent and to Roosevelt's delight had soon dropped him to the floor. At his friend's suggestion, the president hired Professor J.J. O'Brien as a teacher and had one room of the White House converted as a judo den, in which he practiced with diplomats of the Japanese embassy.

Over the opposition of the chauvinistic Lodge, Bigelow continued to lobby the administration for Japan. During the Portsmouth peace negotiations that Roosevelt chaired in August 1905, Bigelow urged the Japanese delegates to demand larger compensations and encouraged Roosevelt to agree. However, the latter, a former admirer of Japan, had become weary of Japan's dominance in the Far East and her threat to U.S. interests and imposed a moderate compromise. Roosevelt's role won him the Peace Nobel prize but frustrated Bigelow and embittered Japan, causing riots in Tokyo.

Bigelow was more successful in 1908 when he pushed the president to ignore Lodge and to oppose the discriminatory measures voted by the San Francisco City Council and the California legislature against Japanese immigration, land ownership and equal education. Roosevelt's intervention led to the "Gentlemen's Agreement."

In 1909 the grateful emperor of Japan made Bigelow a Commander of the Order of the Rising Sun, a rare honor for a foreigner. Bigelow went to Paris to receive the medal. He seems to have been very proud of his decoration, as shown by his picture (figure 4) and a charcoal portrait made by his friend John Singer Sargent in 1917.

After Roosevelt's defeat and the decline in power of his political friends, Bigelow vainly opposed the Alien Land laws, the 1924 National Origin laws and other anti-Japanese measures enacted by the California legislature. As predicted by Bigelow those actions caused much Japanese resentment against the U.S. in the 1930s.

Grateful for Bigelow's support, Roosevelt appointed him to the U.S. Essay Commission in 1909. In 1908 as a member of the Numismatic Commission he had designed the two-and-a-half and five dollar gold coins, still known as the "Bigelow Coins."

Bigelow and Lodge opposed Roosevelt's defection from the Republican party in 1908 but loyally supported him during his "Bull Moose" campaign. Later on, Bigelow

bitterly opposed Wilson and Bryant and the entry of the U.S. in the war. For unclear, probably personal reasons, he objected to the nomination of John J. Pershing as Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Forces. Once the hostilities had started, however, he supported the war effort and generously contributed to the American war charities. At the 1919 Peace Conference in Versailles he lobbied the U.S., Allied, and Japanese delegations to have Japan generously compensated for her participation on the Allied side but was unsuccessful.

His last political fights before his health failed him had him support Lodge's opposition to the entry of the U.S. into the League of Nations, campaign for Coolidge and bitterly oppose Prohibition¹⁵ and the unions' growing power.

D. The Museum Of Fine Arts

Bigelow's interest in Japanese art had started in 1871 during his medical studies in Paris. His fortune allowed him to gather an immense collection and the acquisition and study of Japanese artifacts became his life's passion. By 1921 he had donated all his acquisitions (over 36,000 artifacts and 40,000 wood-prints) to the Museum of Fine Arts, making it the largest gathering of Japanese art outside of Japan. The collection occupies a whole section (the "Bigelow Wing") of the present building. Bigelow also provided the museum with large funds to purchase Asian and other art.

As a trustee, member of various committees, curator of the Japanese section and, for a time, assistant director, he played an important part in the management of the institution until 1921, when he became ill and house-bound.¹⁶ He also helped his friends Fenollosa, Okakura and John Lodge (the senator's youngest son) become curators of the Japanese or the Asian collections. He showed himself to be a skillful, stubborn and, at times, vicious infighter in the intrigues and quarrels of the museum staff, opposing the reforms of the directors, Sam Warren, Bella Gardner and Matthew S. Prichard, the British assistant director, siding with Ned Warren, Sam's brother, himself a generous benefactor of the museum.

Bigelow usually won his battles by threatening to take back his collections. He failed to remove Bella Gardner, a dogged fighter and an immensely generous contributor, and she remained on the staff though she refused to talk to Bigelow for ten years. Bigelow did force Prichard's retirement in 1906, hinting at his association with British homosexual circles. Sam



Fig. 5. Pagoda-shaped shrine with Bigelow's ashes at the Homoyo-in Monastery (Japan)

Warren also resigned in 1906. In 1910 depressed over a lawsuit brought by his brother Ned and the loss of his position at the museum, he shot himself, causing an immense scandal in Boston.¹¹

Years Of Decline And Death

Bigelow had returned from Paris in failing health in 1912. Over the next few years his close friends Roosevelt, Lodge, Okakura, LaFargue and Fenollosa all passed away, leaving an old, lonely, hypochondriac recluse in his empty Beacon Street house. He felt, in his words, like "a squirrel in his cage." He continued to read avidly, to meditate, and to dictate to his secretary Agnes B. Hudson letters for his few remaining friends and to listen to classical music on his radio. He now suffered from severe headaches, constant sore



Fig. 6. William S. Bigelow at Harvard Medical College

throats, hemorrhoids and leg edema. He had become heavily dependent on alcohol and morphine. During his last three years, he became bedridden, suffering from what his friend H. Cushing diagnosed as astasia-abasia. Severely depressed, he felt that he had wasted his life in lust, folly and frivolous pursuits. In March 1920 he decided to commit spiritual seppuku to prevent his soul's re-incarnation and tried to have a mystified and terrified Irish priest come and destroy his soul.

In August 1926 Bigelow underwent a prostatectomy under ether anesthesia at the Charlesgate Hospital in Cambridge. He had to be re-operated a few weeks later and on the evening of his second surgery suffered a massive cerebral hemorrhage. Discharged in coma he lingered for another six days at home and died on October 26, 1926.¹⁷ He was seventy-six. As directed in the deceased's will, John Lodge dressed the body in the robe of a Shinto priest, covered it with bay twigs and placed Buddhist prayer beads in its hands, a mixture of New England and Japanese symbols.

The funeral service was held on October 8th, at Trinity Church, built by H.H. Richardson and decorated by John LaFargue, two of Bigelow's close friends. The ceremony was led by William Lawrence, the retired Episcopalian bishop of Boston and a good friend of Bigelow since their Harvard days. After cremation half the ashes were buried at Mt. Auburn. The other half was placed in 1928 in a pagoda-shaped shrine at the Homoyo-in temple, along with the ashes of his Buddhist companion Fenollosa (figure 5).

Bigelow's immense fortune was divided between his relatives, Milka Ternina and trusts to Harvard and the Museum of Fine Arts.

Who Was Bigelow?

Bigelow left neither diaries nor memoirs but his friends' reminiscences and, especially, his huge correspondence¹⁴ reveal the man. A tall, straight-backed, muscular sportsman impeccably groomed and dressed and with refined Brahmin manners, witty and articulate, a gracious and generous host, "Samurai Bill" was immensely popular within his small group of close friends (figures 6-7). His immense fortune let him indulge his tastes for art,

foreign travels, French cuisine, European wines and Manila cigars. Intelligent and cultured, he spoke French, German, Japanese, and he read Latin. A fierce republican and political conservative, he paradoxically had rejected the Yankee Puritanism and his Episcopalian faith and befriended many rebels, eccentrics and misfits. He generously gave time and money to friends, artists and cultural institutions. His work at, and his gifts to, the Museum of Fine Arts will remain his life's monument.

Several of his friends suspected that "Big Bill" was a homosexual masquerading behind bluff manners, love of violent sports and attention to young women.⁴ Despite declarations of love and talks of marriage, his relationships with women seem to have remained platonic.

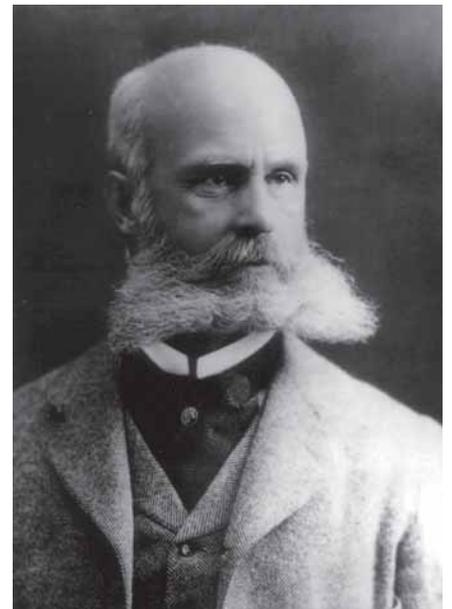


Fig. 7. W.S. Bigelow during visit in Japan in 1902

He claimed that traces of madness in his family had kept him from marrying (his mother and first cousin had committed suicide). He certainly enjoyed the male company of his clubs and his Tuckernuck retreat and had a puzzling knowledge of American and British homosexual circles. Strange also was his close friendship with "Bay" Lodge.

Bigelow's letters¹⁴ show an easy, witty, cultured writer but also a gossipier, a dandy and a "poseur" addicted to French and Latin expressions. They include caustic or nasty comments on his opponents, anti-Semitic or racial slurs, and disparaging remarks on foreigners.

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Bigelow. . . Continued from Page 7

A Full Life And The End Of An Era

The third generation, and last, descendant of a brilliant medical family, William Bigelow refused to follow his father's surgical career and to continue the Bigelow medical dynasty. He thus has been ignored by medical historians. He directed towards the arts the enormous intellectual talents and enthusiasm he had inherited from his father and grand-father and Boston and the U.S. will ever remain in his debt for his contributions to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and his influence on American cultural life. Bigelow was a brilliant leader of the eccentric artists of the American Gilded Age.⁴ His death also marked the demise of that fascinating period of American history.

Authors' Note

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In Memoriam

Vincent Joseph Collins, M.D., 1914-2005

A Career in Anesthesiology

by Patrick Sim, Librarian

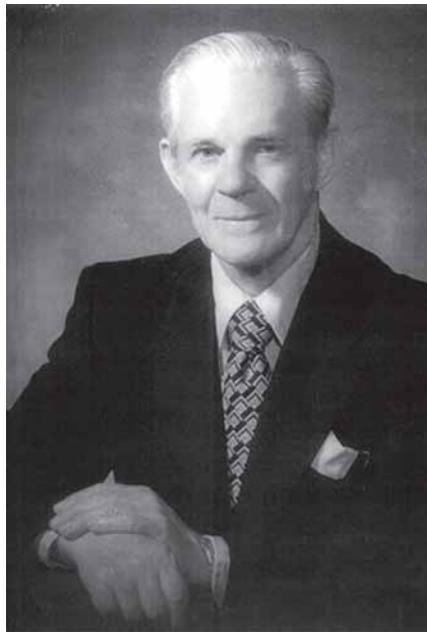
Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology

Renowned and respected anesthesiologist Dr. Vincent J. Collins died on April 4, 2005 at his home in Winnetka, Illinois, of suburban Chicago. Dr. Collins was 90 years old. He had lived a rich and fulfilling life with an illustrious career in anesthesiology spanning more than half a century. His education and medical career shuttled between the East Coast and the Midwest. His military service in the war years allowed him to establish a professional network responsible for his future success. Much of his life and career are well known in the anesthesiology community. This memorial tribute to Dr. Collins highlights the professional life of a great physician anesthesiologist relative to his encounters and association with prominent anesthesiologists of the 20th century.

From a family of Irish immigrants tracing back to his great great-grandfather in the late 18th century, Dr. Collins was born and grew up in Haverstraw, New York. He attended Marietta College in Ohio on scholarship, and continued his graduate study at Brown University, where he studied biochemistry. At Brown, on a fellowship from the National Research Council of the NIH, he investigated the blocking effect of estrogen on animal reproduction, and discovered that estrogen intervention in the reproductive process of the laboratory animal could stop population growth. His work attracted interest in the pharmaceutical industry in developing contraceptive drugs. As this was in conflict with his religious beliefs, he soon discontinued his research.

Continuing his postgraduate biomedical research at Yale, Dr. Collins found that requirements for a doctoral biomedical research curriculum were similar to those for medicine. A medical career was in order. Two interesting episodes occurred during his medical school days, which had some bearings for his decision to become an anesthesiologist. He attended the legendary Harvey Cushing's course in 1937, and was allowed to use Dr. Cushing's personal library, an inspiration in developing his lifetime interest in the history of medicine and rare medical books. Another course was taken under the duo-legends in pharmacology, Louis Goodman and Alfred

Gilman, of the Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics fame, who were admired for superb oratorical skill and known for the encyclopedic tome they were soon to publish. As an enticement and motivation to their students, Drs. Goodman and Gilman invited them to create a title for their book. Along with a few fellow students, the young Vincent Collins won a prize of \$25.00 in helping decide the title of this famous medical text in 1942. The exposure to these great medical professors had been inspiring and beneficial for a budding medical career, particularly in anesthesiology.



Vincent Joseph Collins, M.D.

As a lad at age eleven, young Vincent suffered a fractured leg, and underwent orthopedic surgery without anesthesia. The excruciating pain from this experience might have implanted in him a desire to become a doctor associated with this real life event. Preparation in biomedical research, encountering a legendary surgeon and prominent pharmacologists in his medical education, further motivated him for a career in anesthesiology. The military service became an important catalyst, like many young physicians in the World War II era. In addition, while in medical

school, Dr. Collins took an anesthesia clerkship, learning clinical anesthesia at New Haven Hospital with pioneer nurse anesthetist Alice M. Hunt. Her excellent reputation in clinical anesthesia brought her to New Haven, carrying a faculty appointment as assistant professor of the medical school. Dr. Collins talked fondly of his clerkship with Professor Hunt.

Following his graduation as a physician in 1942, Dr. Collins married his love, Florence O'Mara. Soon after, he was called on active military duty, in charge of anesthesia. His clerkship experience with Ms. Hunt was certainly an advantage. For training in anesthesia, the Army dispatched 1st Lt. Collins to Albany Medical College to train with Maj. F. A. Duncan Alexander, a Ralph Waters trainee. This tutoring experience was extended through Dr. Alexander's assistant, Dr. Benjamin Etsten, who actively encouraged him to specialize in anesthesiology. The U.S. Army then sent Lt. Collins to Columbia University with fifteen other medical officers to receive training in wound care. He met Dr. Virginia Apgar, and was greatly impressed, describing her in complimentary terms that she "talked as fast as she walked." Dr. Apgar referred young Dr. Collins to her mentor at Bellevue, which eventually developed into a very cordial and beneficial professional relationship with Dr. Emery Rovenstine. His expertise in regional anesthesia was a result of the learning experience with the master, and it was also responsible for the publication of one of his earlier books on regional block. In the Army, he was further trained in anesthesia with other prominent teachers of the time, including Lloyd Mousel and Stevens J. Martin.

Dr. Collins was assigned to the Glennan Army General Hospital in Okmulgee, Oklahoma as Chief of anesthesia in 1944. Here he developed teaching manuals, and began to organize the voluminous lecture notes he had taken during his anesthesia training days, which were the bases for his first book in anesthesia published in 1952. Publishing became a prominent part of his anesthesia career; as a consequence of ser-

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Collins. . . *Continued from Page 9*

endipity. Upon his transfer from Glennan General Hospital to the Army-Navy Hospital in Hot Springs, Arkansas, Dr. Collins befriended orthopedic surgeon Donaldson who published widely in his field. Through Dr. Donaldson, Vincent Collins became acquainted with the publishing house of Lea & Febiger, from which many of his books would be published. This relationship extended to the re-publication of the first monographic classic in anesthesia, John Snow's *On the Inhalation of Aether, 1847*, for the Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology in 1959. Dr. Collins' expertise and knowledge in the printing process allowed him to collaborate with Lea & Febiger to use classic Churchillian print types on a paper stock closely matching the original paper used in the mid-19th century text from the desk copy of John Snow's owned by the WLM. At the time of this facsimile re-issuing of John Snow's book, there were only six copies of this original edition extant scattered in major libraries of the world. The new facsimile edition soon became a much sought after rare book, assisting the WLM in its early publishing activities to bring anesthesia classics to the medical world.

Upon his return to civilian life in 1946, Dr. Collins went to private practice at the Doctors Hospital in New York. A year later, he joined Dr. G. H. Van Gilluwe at St. Vincent's Hospital to develop a teaching program, and became Chief of Anesthesia in 1950. It was during his tenure there that Dr. Collins was instrumental in assisting Dr. Wood to relocate part of the WLM museum collection to the brownstone building owned by the hospital. He was an original member of the first WLM Board of Trustees, as its constitutional secretary. Among his many contributions and service to the WLM, he helped its incorporation in New York, and obtain its permanent charter with the New York State Board of Regents. His proud resident at St. Vincent's of this era was Dr. Robert G. Hicks who later became the 1970 ASA president.

Dr. Collins was sought by his former mentor at Bellevue to join him as an assistant professor of New York University in 1957. Part time private practice opportunity at his former hospital on weekends compensated the financial deficiency in academia to support a growing family. At Bellevue, he would soon learn that Dr. Rovenstine was seriously ill, suffering from late stage prostate cancer. Friendship between mentor and student grew as the

chief's health deteriorated. It became a daily routine for Dr. Collins to drive his chief home on most working days, and befriend Mrs. Jewell Rovenstine as he visited them at day's end. Dr. Collins delivered the eulogy as Dr. Rovenstine had requested before he died, as he paid tribute to his mentor at his memorial. He succeeded Dr. Rovenstine as acting chairman at Bellevue in 1960-1961.

As Chief at Bellevue, Dr. Collins soon found that budgeting in New York City was a real challenge. At the same time, the Cook County Hospital in Chicago was actively recruiting a Director of Anesthesiology, as no less than twelve successive directors had left their position. Chicago surgeon Carl Meyer had asked Rovenstine for recommendation of good candidates. After Dr. Rovenstine's death in 1960, Dr. Meyer approached Dr. John Adriani at Charity Hospital in New Orleans. Adriani recommended Collins. At an extensive interview in February 1961, Dr. Collins set out five conditions for accepting the position at Cook County. He wanted an independent department, an adequate budget, fair salary, civil service rank, and full voting membership on the medical staff. Dr. Meyer accepted all of the requirements, and Vincent Collins began his Midwestern career in anesthesiology at Cook County in 1961. Subsequently, during this second lengthy career, he served on the faculty of the University of Illinois College of Medicine, and also at Northwestern University Medical School, training many future anesthesiologists. The first and foremost among his distinguished residents was Dr. Alon Winnie who has distinguished himself as an international leader of the specialty.

Dr. Collins was also active at state and local organizational affairs. His crowning achievement was the founding of the annual Midwest Anesthesia Conference (MAC) of the Illinois Society of Anesthesiologists in 1963, modeled after the New York Postgraduate Assembly. Three decades later, he was recognized as the "Father of MAC." He also instituted the prestigious international Ralph Milton Waters Award, with the endorsement of the award's namesake after much persuasion. In retirement, Dr. Collins continued his busy schedule in publishing, writing his last book, *The Physiological and Pharmacological Basis of Anesthesia* in 1993. His single authored text, the *Principal and Practice of Anesthesiology*, attained its third edition in 1986, along with its translations into many foreign languages. An interesting phenomenon on the popularity level of this book is

that it "enjoyed" pirated editions printed many times in the Third World. It still stands as a viable single-author textbook in modern anesthesiology. Shortly before his death, Dr. Collins was still busy at work on his last book project on the biographical profiles of anesthesiology. His parting advice to young anesthesiologists was to accept anesthesia as a professional calling, not just a job. It is a practice of medicine to care for the human being, requiring compassion in upholding the Hippocratic Oath. A gifted professional endowed with talents and possessed the ethics of hard work, Dr. Collins nurtured his profession, and his family with dedication.

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Altered States: LSD and the Anesthesia Laboratory of Henry Knowles Beecher

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Introduction

Lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) is one of the most pharmacologically potent and culturally controversial psychoactive substances ever identified and was the drug of choice for a counterculture whose mantra was “turn on, tune in, and drop out.” First synthesized in 1938 by Dr. Albert Hoffman,¹ a Swiss chemist investigating the properties of the fungus ergot, LSD took its own strange trip through the worlds of chemistry, medicine, psychology and espionage until it was brought to national attention by the self-proclaimed “high priest” of the psychedelic era, Dr. Timothy Leary. Leary was a well-respected psychologist on the faculty of Harvard University who developed an interest in hallucinogens after a personal experience with psilocybin in 1960 and who ultimately developed this interest into both a scientific study and a cultural vision. Throughout the early 1960s, Leary and his colleagues Dr. Ralph Metzner and Dr. Richard Alpert explored the effects of psychedelics at Harvard,² resulting in both fame and infamy—especially for their studies on students. While Leary stands out as an early pioneer of psychedelic research at Harvard, it is rarely appreciated that Dr. Henry Knowles Beecher, one of the pioneers of anesthesiology, had published seminal work on the psychology of LSD some ten years earlier. How is it that Beecher, the first endowed professor of anesthesia at Harvard, found his way to the study of LSD? The answer to this question is a fascinating history that spans from the shores of Italy in the 1940s to the frontiers of bioethics in the 1960s.

Henry Beecher at Harvard

Henry Knowles Beecher was born and schooled in Kansas and matriculated at the Harvard Medical School after teaching chemistry at the University of Kansas.³ While still a student, Beecher had published important articles on respiratory failure and began his training as a surgi-

cal house officer in 1932. He was encouraged by the Chief of Surgery to employ his physiologic acumen in the emerging field of anesthesia and his rapid ascension through the ranks at Harvard could only be characterized as meteoric.

Just three years after graduation, Beecher was awarded the Moseley Traveling Fellowship, which he served by studying under the Nobel Prize-winning physiologist Dr. August Krogh in Copenhagen. In April of 1936, Beecher was appointed Instructor in Anaesthesia at Harvard Medical School—and by May of the same year was Chief of Service. In 1941, Beecher was named “The Henry Isaiah Dorr Professor of Research and Teaching in Anaesthetics and Anaesthesia,” a grand title that represents the first endowed professorship of anesthesia in the world.⁴ While Beecher’s rapid rise through the academy clearly reflects the uncharted territories of anesthesiology in the 1930s, his appointment was no fluke—Beecher ultimately made fundamental contributions to several aspects of anesthesiology as well as the field of medicine in general. His most significant accomplishments were enumerated in a memorial article written several years after his death:⁵

1. The first to establish a research laboratory exclusively devoted to the study of anaesthetics.
2. The first to apply the technology of clinical anaesthesia to resuscitation of wounded soldiers.
3. The first to demonstrate the possibility for quantitative measurement of subjective responses to drugs.
4. A vigorous and vocal proponent for human rights in science.
5. A pioneer in the establishing sci-

entific principles for the ethical study of drug effects in the human, the motivating force that led to the establishment of Human Study Committees at Harvard.

6. The major driving force behind the first formal enunciation of the criteria for definition of brain death.

While these accomplishments have been recognized, it has not yet been elucidated that Beecher’s study of LSD in the 1950s bears an important relationship to virtually all of his other endeavors.

Beecher’s Research on LSD

In 1956, Beecher and co-investigators published a study on LSD and a related compound lysergic acid monoethylamide.⁶ It is important to note that LSD was legal at this time and remained so until the mid-1960s. The subjects in the study were given pre- and post-drug Rorschach tests and psychological evaluations and vital signs were observed. The researchers found that the degree of change in the subject’s interpretation of the Rorschach tests was positively correlated with pre-existing “personality disturbances or maladjustment.”

While certainly an interesting scientific investigation, a question naturally arises: why would Henry K. Beecher, whose early work was on the more orthodox topics of pain and pulmonary physiology, be studying Rorschachs and hallucinogens in his “Anesthesia Laboratory”? One answer is that the study reflects Beecher’s interest in the pre-existing mood and the subjective response of individuals receiving drugs. Indeed, Beecher and his co-investigators Dr. Louis Lasagna and Dr. John von Felsinger published a broader two-part investigation on mood and drugs in the 1950s.^{7,8} LSD, as was noted in the discussion of one of his papers, was one of the

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Beecher. . . *Continued from Page 11*

most potent agents in inducing changes on the Rorschach test and could thus be viewed as a window to the phenomenon of subjective response. In this era of hallucinogenic research, LSD was considered more of a “psychotomimetic” rather than a “psychedelic” drug. The former term implies that the drug experience “mimics psychosis,” while the latter denotes that the drug is “manifest in the mind.” Although the introduction of his paper on LSD noted that the substance was associated with schizophrenia-like symptoms, Beecher’s conclusion was that it likely expands or reflects the pre-existing state of mind. This conclusion would later be echoed by Leary and others, who claimed that experiences under LSD reflect a subject’s “set” (i.e., mind-set) and “setting” (i.e., environment) rather than the mere pharmacology of the drug.² In order to understand Beecher’s interest in concepts similar to set and setting, one must consider his experience in World War II. By doing so, intriguing questions arise as to the relationship between his psychedelic research and the U.S. Government.

Beecher in World War and Cold War

Henry Beecher enthusiastically entered the conflict of World War II and served as a consultant in the beachhead campaigns of North Africa and Anzio, Italy. While in Anzio, Beecher noted with fascination that soldiers who were badly injured seemed to require far less morphine to relieve their pain than would a civilian with a comparable injury. He kept careful notes of his observations and would later hypothesize that pain had two aspects: the tissue injury itself and the meaning of the pain to the individual.⁹ The meaning of the pain clearly related to the environment in which the pain was experienced and the expectations and perceived consequences of that pain. For the Bostonian, a serious motor vehicle accident would be perceived as catastrophic, but for a soldier in the hell of Anzio, an equivalent trauma could mean a ticket home—injured, but alive. Beecher published these observations after returning to the MGH and initiated a research program investigating the topic of pain and subjective response.⁹ Thus, his work on LSD and the evaluation of its effects was consistent with the broader context of his scientific inquiry of psychological

“This conclusion is based on personal interviews with former colleagues of Beecher.

meaning and drug response that originated in the war.

Although it is certainly clear why Beecher might have been interested in LSD, it is a considerably more fascinating question as to why the U.S. Army was interested. Beecher’s work, as noted in the paper, was “supported in full by a grant from the Medical Research and Development Board of the United States Army.”⁶ The Army was likely less concerned with the mysteries of the mind than the mysteries of mind control. Indeed, it has been reported that:¹⁰

The intelligence agencies working through the U.S. government financed drug research. An example is that Dr. Beecher of Harvard University was given via the U.S. Army Surgeon General’s Office \$150,000 to investigate “the development and application of drugs which will aid in the establishment of psychological control.”

Investigators who were funded by such sources commonly published some results in the medical literature and transmitted other results directly to the government. Thus unclear is how extensive of Beecher’s research on hallucinogens actually was. Beecher’s work on this topic may also have been funded or in some other way supported by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). In a book on the history of LSD, Beecher is referred to as “an esteemed member of the Harvard Medical School faculty who conducted drug experiments for the CIA.”¹¹ The CIA had a secret project exploring drugs for mind control (a project called MKULTRA) and they were at the very least aware of Beecher’s research for the army. Beecher’s name appears in several files of the CIA and MKULTRA program that were obtained after declassification of the documents (present author’s emphasis in bold):¹²

CIA-020795-A 1 folder; 0.1 cu.ft. Source: **Central Intelligence Agency Collection: Army Contents Description: File on Henry Beecher describing LSD research and experiments for the Army, along with Louis Lasagna. Descriptors: Biological Effects; Human Subjects; Medical Diagnosis; Medical Records; Research—Nontherapeutic; Scientific Data; Robert Stone; Harvard Medical School; War Department (War)**

Subproject 107: **MKULTRA: American Psychological Association: Army Testing; Assassination: Raymond A. Bauer: Berlin Poison Case: Biometric Lab: Biophysical**

Measurements: Beecher (Henry K.): Brainwashing

Of considerable interest is that there is virtually no knowledge of this work among the current and former staff members at the Massachusetts General Hospital who either knew Beecher or his life and work.¹ Why is it that so many of Beecher’s colleagues and successors knew nothing of this research? Beecher himself evidently never discussed it; his involvement in these programs was revealed by his research associate Louis Lasagna during interviews with the Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments in the 1990s, decades after Beecher’s death.¹³ As an investigator who was one of the early pioneers of ethics in human experimentation, it comes as little surprise that Beecher was reticent to discuss such work. It may appear paradoxical that Beecher both advocated the ethical treatment of human subjects and had also engaged in potentially unethical work on hallucinogens for the government. A more compelling hypothesis, however, is that Beecher advocated ethical treatment of human subjects largely because of such work.

Beecher’s Psychedelic Research and Other Contributions: Pain, Placebo, and Protocol

The impressive list of Beecher’s accomplishments includes his work on pain, his study of the placebo effect, and his advocacy for ethical considerations in human experimentation. Although a relatively small part of his work, Beecher’s study with LSD nonetheless has a clear relationship to his other important contributions. That Beecher’s interest in the relationship of set and setting to drug response was likely stimulated by his observations of analgesia during World War II has been noted above. This interest has relevance to his study of the placebo effect; Beecher had an interest in the psychological aspect of subjective response to a drug. While this observation was certainly clinically relevant, it also carried an important scientific significance. Beecher astutely realized that in order to study analgesics, his experimental conditions required comparison with proper “inert” controls.^{9,14} Note that in his work on lysergic acid diethylamide, he compared the drug’s effect to that of the closely related (but more psychologically inert) compound lysergic acid monoethylamide.⁶ This study reflected his interest in distinguishing the effect of the drug from the effect of the subject’s expectations regarding the drug. In part, through the use of inert substances as experimental

controls, Beecher came to elucidate the role of the placebo effect.

The relationship of Beecher's LSD research to his later contributions in bioethics is perhaps more interesting. Beecher had knowledge of Nazi experiments with mescaline in the concentration camp at Dachau¹⁵ and was well aware of the potential for ethical abuse in the study of hallucinogenic substances. Although one might assume that his knowledge of Nazi experimentation with psychoactive drugs on unwitting subjects would have deterred any involvement in such research, it is important to note that Beecher was a vocal opponent of the application of the Nuremberg Code (crafted in response to such Nazi atrocities) to American medical experimentation. In one of his first important papers on bioethics in 1959, Beecher stressed the difficulty of applying the Nuremberg Code to clinical experimentation and brought into question the very concept of informed consent.¹⁶ In his classic 1966 publication in the *New England Journal of Medicine*,¹⁷ however, Beecher expressed a far more stringent view of ethical violations in medicine, a view that likely led to the implementation of Institutional Review Board protocols¹⁸ and informed consent. One component of his more developed bioethical perspective might have come from his direct knowledge of CIA experimentation with LSD.

In 1953, Dr. Frank Olson, a scientist who specialized in biological warfare, killed himself after being unwittingly dosed with LSD at a CIA-sponsored party.^{18***} In the subsequent weeks after the "experiment," Olson became increasingly withdrawn, depressed, and paranoid—and finally jumped, fell, or was pushed headlong through a closed window to his death ten stories below. While it is unclear if Beecher knew about this incident (which

***It is important to note that Beecher himself believed that ethical responsibility should rest with the investigator rather than the institution or its standardized regulations.*

****It was none other than Dr. Sidney Gottlieb, the director of the MKULTRA project, who had adulterated his drink—along with many others at the party.*

*****It is of interest to note that both Timothy Leary and Aldous Huxley (the British writer who popularized the mescaline experience in **The Doors of Perception**) both requested and received intravenous injections of LSD on their deathbeds.*

was actively concealed by the CIA), he most certainly knew about a similar incident in which a Swiss psychiatrist committed suicide after being administered LSD. The Geneva physician had suffered from a depression that was exacerbated after the LSD experience, resulting in her death. In fact, Beecher prepared a memorandum regarding MKULTRA that was cited in the Senate Subcommittee Hearing on the project in 1977.¹⁹ Beecher's own research suggested that the drug might exaggerate a pre-existing psychopathology⁶ and recognized that "this case is a warning to us to avoid engaging subjects who are depressed, or who have been subject to depression."¹⁹ Whether or how Beecher's knowledge of CIA experimentation influenced his ethical development is a matter of speculation. In a recent article, bioethicist Dr. Johnathan Moreno has suggested the following:¹³

What was the source of Beecher's strong commitment to the ethics of human research? One element was his strong Christian religious commitment. Another was likely his own army-sponsored research in the early 1950s, in which he directed projects that exposed healthy subjects to hallucinogens without their consent... Thus it was that research sponsored by the national security state inspired one of its own investigators to take on the task of reforming the system of human experimentation.

In addition to his broader bioethical concerns, Beecher also became a conscience for the psychedelic research movement. This claim is based on his report to the CIA described above,¹⁹ his direct criticism of Timothy Leary in the 1960s,¹¹ and his views on testing the effects of LSD during the experience of death.^{***} In 1971, two years after his retirement from the MGH and five years before his own death, Beecher published a commentary on an article discussing the administration of LSD to dying patients:²⁰

The results recounted are based entirely upon subjective responses and symptoms, and conclusions are drawn without the use of mandatory controls. In a meaningful evaluation of LSD, it must be known whether it is the LSD or the strong suggestion which precedes the drug which is operant in this situation; the powerful action of the placebo has been unequivocally demonstrated. Apart from the serious difficulties stemming from the established potential dangers of LSD as a drug, there are

those possibly arising from violations of privacy.

Note the recurrent themes of LSD, subjective response, experimental controls, the placebo effect, and bioethics. This particular subject even relates to Beecher's interest in end-of-life issues and brain death. Of note, the article was published in the final issue of the *Psychedelic Review*, a journal founded by Timothy Leary. Beecher's perspectives on LSD were thus present in the literature for the entire crucial period of its study.

Conclusion

Dr. Henry Knowles Beecher holds an esteemed place in the history of anesthesiology for his work on pain, the placebo effect, and bioethics, as well as the work at Harvard that brought the first endowed professorship of anesthesia and an independent anesthesia department and laboratory. His foray into the world of psychedelic research, while relatively unknown, appears to be intimately intertwined with many of his great accomplishments. The context of his research is particularly significant given our own era of concern with chemical warfare, a concern that is reminiscent of Cold War fears. The recent remake of the classic Cold War tale of mind control *The Manchurian Candidate* (cast in modern times with terrorism and globalism as the enemy rather than communism) speaks to the vitality of the issue.

In 1947, Beecher published an article in *Science* entitled "Anesthesia's Second Power: Probing the Mind."²¹ In this article he states:

...we seem to have a tool for producing and holding at will, and at little risk, different levels of consciousness—a tool that promises to be of great help in studies of mental phenomena.

Although he was referring to anesthetics rather than psychedelics, anesthesiologists do, indeed, have the power and the tools to produce altered states of consciousness. The degree to which Henry Knowles Beecher employed this power in the service of scientific inquiry or political duty remains a fascinating question. The answer likely rests only with Beecher himself.

Acknowledgments

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Beecher. . . Continued from Page 13

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Photograph courtesy of
Dr. Miguel Colon-Morales.

AHA Meets in the Magic City!

by A.J. Wright, M.L.S., Director

David Hill Chestnut, M.D., Section on the History of Anesthesia

Department of Anesthesiology

University of Alabama at Birmingham

The 12th Spring Meeting of the Anesthesia History Association convened April 6 and 7 in Birmingham, Alabama, known as the "Magic City" because of its "magical" early growth as a city in the late nineteenth century. The meeting was hosted by the Section on the History of Anesthesia of the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Department of Anesthesiology. Support for the meeting was provided by the UAB Anesthesiology Department, the Alabama State Society of Anesthesiologists, and several commercial vendors.

Wednesday evening a well-attended social reception and dinner was held at Ocean, a popular local eatery. On Thursday paper sessions were held at the Medical Forum, a part of the Birmingham Jefferson Civic Complex in the heart of the city. Thirty-six individuals registered for the meeting; twenty-three of these were AHA members.



David H. Chestnut, M.D.

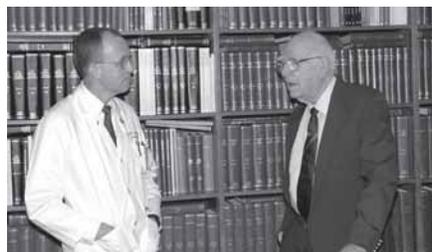
Outgoing Chairman of the UAB Anesthesiology Department, David H. Chestnut, M.D., opened the Thursday session with a special presentation. Dr. Chestnut reviewed the seven endowed faculty positions created by the department over a thirteen-year period, six of them since he began his tenure as Chairman in April 1994. The department currently has three endowed chairs and four endowed professorships. At the end of his remarks, Dr. Chestnut announced the seventh endowed position, newly approved by the University of Alabama Board of Trustees, the Maurice S. Albin, M.D., Endowed Professorship in



Maurice S. Albin, M.D.

Anesthesiology. Dr. Chestnut's review of all these endowed positions can be found in his article in the June 2005 issue of the *ASA Newsletter*. The article is available online at www.asahq.org/Newsletters/2005/06_05/chestnut06_05.html.

In that article Dr. Chestnut noted that Dr. Albin "...joined our UAB faculty in 2002 after having previously served on the faculty of medical schools at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, the University of Michigan, the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Texas at San Antonio. Dr. Albin has an international reputation as one of the pioneers in neuroanesthesia, and he has performed important research that focused on spinal cord cooling, venous air embolism, and cerebral blood flow and metabolism. In 1981 Dr. Albin published a landmark paper on the positioning and use of a central venous multi-orifice catheter for the aspiration of air during venous air embolism. Dr. Albin has served as president of both the Society of Neurosurgical Anesthesia



Dr. David Chestnut and Dr. Lucien Morris in the Dept. of Anesthesiology library

and Critical Care and the Anesthesia History Association. He is one of the co-founders of our department's Section on the History of Anesthesiology, which is the first section of its kind in the United States. In 2004 Dr. Albin gave the Lewis H. Wright Memorial Lecture at the ASA Annual Meeting."

At a May 20th farewell reception for Dr. Chestnut at the Birmingham Museum of Art, Dr. Albin announced that the department's Section on the History of Anesthesia will be renamed the David Hill Chestnut Section to honor his contributions in support of history activities during his eleven years as Chairman and especially his support in the creation of the Section.

Dr. Chestnut's presentation was followed by the opening plenary lecture and 21 free papers. Six of these talks were presented by anesthesia residents and one by a Ph.D. candidate. Two special luncheon talks were also offered at the meeting. Dr. Alfred Habeeb, Alabama's first ABA-certified



Dr. Alfred Habeeb

anesthesiologist who is in his nineties, shared some fascinating and funny stories from his years of practice. Dr. Charles McCallum, former UAB President and current mayor of the Birmingham suburb of Vestavia Hills, described the growth of the university since the medical school opened in Birmingham in 1945.

The following presentations were made at the meeting:

Opening Plenary Lecture

Cholera, Chloroform, and the Science of Medicine: A Life of John Snow'

Peter Vinten-Johansen, Ph.D.

Continued on Page 16

AHA... *Continued from Page 11*



Peter Vinten-Johansen, Ph.D.

Military Opposition and Religious Objections to Anesthetics, 1846-1848

George A. Swanson, M.D.
Crossville, Tennessee



Travers vs. Wilde: Chloroform Acquitted
R.J. Defalque, M.D., A.J. Wright, M.L.S.
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Koller and Halsted at the University of Vienna in the 1870's

Jason McKeown, M.D.

University of Alabama at Birmingham



Noel A. Gillespie: Initial Researches

Mark E. Schroeder, M.D.
University of Wisconsin

Session B

Charles Bernard Pittinger, M.D. (1914-1989)

Bradley E. Smith, M.D.

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn.

The Beginnings of Anesthesia at Washington University

William D. Owens, M.D.

Pediatric Anesthesia—Eighty Years Ago

Thomas J. Golembeski, M.D., David B. Waisel, M.D.

Children's Hospital, Boston, Mass.

The Role of World War II Portable Surgical Hospitals in the Development of Anesthesiology as a Physician Specialty in the United States

David B. Waisel, M.D.

Children's Hospital, Boston, Mass.

Session C

The Rediscovery of John Snow: Was He Really Lost?

William Hammonds, M.D.

University of Iowa

Displacing the Dolorimeter: The Fate of a Pain Measuring Instrument in the Era of Therapeutic Reform, U.S., 1940s-50s

Noemi Tousignant, Ph.D. candidate

McGill University, Montreal, QC, Canada



Alberto Gutierrez, The "Hanging Drop" and Beyond

J.A. Aldrete, O.A. Auad, V.P. Gutierrez, A.J. Wright

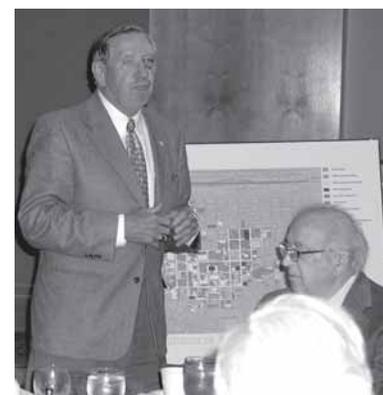
Arachnoiditis Foundation, Inc.; Sanatorio Mater-Dei, Buenos Aires, Argentina; University of Buenos Aires, Argentina; University of Alabama at Birmingham; respectively.



Mark E. Schroeder, M.D.

Luncheon Plenary Session
Origins and Growth of the Medical Center in Birmingham

Charles A. McCallum, Jr., M.D., D.M.D.
Mayor, City of Vestavia Hills, Alabama
President, University of Alabama at Birmingham, 1987-1993



Anesthesia in Birmingham since the 1930s

Alfred Habeeb, M.D.

Session D

The Rapid Rise and Fall of Rapacuronium

James Sparrow, M.D., Mark Mandabach, M.D.

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Anesthesia as Women's Work: The Historical Role of the Female Anesthetist

Robert Watson, M.D., A. J. Wright, M.L.S.
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Photographs by Dr. Sukhumar Desai and Dr. Robert Schlobohm.

Regional Anesthesia in Children: The Mexican Experience*Estela Melman, M.D.***Mexico****Development of U.S. Academic Anesthesia Centers in the 20th Century***Lucien Morris, M.D.***Seattle, Washington****The Influence of the German-American Bond in the Evolution of Anesthesiology as a Medical Specialty***Juan Pulido, M.D., Ronald MacKenzie,**M.D., Douglas Bacon, M.D.***Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.****Session E****The Evolution of N₂O Anesthesia as Revealed in Publications by Dr. Mary Botsford, Her Staff and Her Surgeons***Selma Calmes, M.D.***Olive View-UCLA Medical Center,****Sylmar, Calif.***Estela Melman, M.D.***The Relationship Between Anesthetists and Patients***Lawrence D. Egbert, M.D., M.P.H.***Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland****Gaston Labat and the first ASRA: Lessons Learned and Unanswered Questions***Mark G. Mandabach, M.D.***University of Alabama at Birmingham****Famous Writers and Anesthetic Agents***A.J. Wright, M.L.S.***University of Alabama at Birmingham**

Abstracts for all these papers can be found at www.anes.uab.edu/aneshist/aha2005.htm.

We hope to see many of you at the 13th Spring Meeting in Rochester, Minnesota, in June 2006!

From the Literature

by A.J. Wright, M.L.S.

Associate Professor and Clinical Librarian
Department of Anesthesiology
University of Alabama at Birmingham

Note: I have examined most of the items listed in this column. Books can be listed in this column more than once as new reviews appear. Older articles are included as I work through a large backlog of materials. Some listings are not directly related to anesthesia, pain or critical care; I interpret those categories very broadly. Some will concern individuals important in the history of the specialty [i.e., Harvey Cushing or William Halsted] who also achieved in other areas or widely-used equipment such as the stethoscope. I also include career profiles of living individuals. Non-English materials are so indicated. Columns for the past several years are available as "Recent Articles on Anesthesia History" in the "Anesthesia History Files" at www.anes.uab.edu/aneshist/aneshist.htm. I urge readers to send me any citations, especially those not in English, that I may otherwise miss!

Books

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This Month in Anesthesia History*

July 27: Feast of Saint Pantaleon, a physician and martyr and patron saint of headache sufferers.

1718 July 20: Johann Bernhard Quistorp [1692-1761] appears in the great auditorium at the University of Rostock, Germany, to submit to a public examination of his doctoral thesis, *De Anaesthesia*. Written in Latin, Quistorp's dissertation was published in the same year. The word "anesthesia" had been used by the ancient Greeks and Romans and had several different meanings, one of which was "a state of insensitivity." The only known

appearance of the word in modern Western literature prior to Quistorp is in Castelli's *Lexicon Medicum Graeco Latinum* published in 1713; his definition was "a privation of the senses." Yet the word must have been used for some decades prior; Quistorp's work consolidates the knowledge of his time about this physiological state. He defines "anaesthesia" as "a spontaneous, deep, more or less persistent loss of sensation by the whole body, except by the organs supporting the pulse and respiration" and describes numerous causes, including "Vapors (fumes) entering the body may produce anaesthesia." Throughout the rest of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the word ap-

pears in numerous medical dictionaries and other works. In 1846 Oliver Wendall Holmes, in a famous letter, suggested the word to describe the state produced by William Morton's ether administrations at Massachusetts General Hospital in October of that year. Quistorp's dissertation was first translated into English in 1999 by Ray J. Defalque, M.D. For more history of the words associated with anesthesia, see Sanchez GC. Lexicographic history of "anesthesia." *J Clin Anesth* 8:435-438, 1996.

1730 July 12: Josiah Wedgwood is born. The English pottery designer and manufacturer was a major financial sup-

*For the full calendar, go to www.anes.uab.edu

Calendar. . . *Continued from Page 19*

porter of Dr. Thomas Beddoes and his Pneumatic Institute near Bristol. Beddoes and Humphry Davy manufactured and experimented with nitrous oxide there in 1799 and 1800. Wedgwood died in 1795, three years before the institute opened. His son Tom participated in those nitrous oxide experiments and also, along with Davy, conducted an early experiment in photography around 1800.

1814 July 19: Samuel Colt is born. In the 1830s Colt, calling himself "Professor Coult" or "Doctor Coult", toured the United States giving nitrous oxide demonstrations to raise money to put his revolver prototype into production. Colt died on 10 January 1862.

1817 July 12: Henry David Thoreau, American naturalist and author, is born in Concord, Massachusetts. Thoreau moved into his famous cabin on Walden Pond on July 4, 1845. Six years later, Thoreau had his one experience with anesthetics. In May, 1851, Thoreau received ether when his dentist removed some teeth. On May 12, Thoreau described the event in his journal. "By taking the ether the other day I was convinced how far asunder a man could be separated from his senses," Thoreau began the lengthy journal entry. "You expand like a seed in the ground. You exist in your roots, like a tree in winter. If you have an inclination to travel, take the ether: you go beyond the farthest star." In the final paragraph of his description, Thoreau seems to undercut his own enthusiasm. "It is not necessary for them to take ether, who in their sane and waking hours are ever translated by thought..." Thoreau

died in 1862.

1834 July 25: The great English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge dies of heart disease at age sixty-one. He was born October 21, 1772, in Devonshire. In 1799 Coleridge was one of several notable participants in the first human nitrous oxide experiments in Bristol conducted by Dr. Thomas Beddoes and his research assistant Humphry Davy. Many of these participants, including Coleridge, provided descriptions of their experiences for Davy's massive book on nitrous oxide that was published in 1800.

1841 July 17: The first issue of the weekly British humor magazine *Punch* is published. In 1847 and 1848 the magazine, edited by Mark Lemon, published several items related to the newly-discovered anesthetics ether and chloroform. These items, which usually suggested unorthodox uses for the gases, included cartoons and such gems as Percival Leigh's song, "The Blessings of Chloroform." [see Weller RM. *Punch*, on anaesthesia. *Anaesthesia* 31:1267-1272, 1976]

1844 July: William T.G. Morton begins using sulphuric ether as a local anesthetic in his Boston dental practice. The agent was suggested to him by Dr. Charles A. Jackson.

1865 July 19: Charles Horace Mayo, co-founder with his brother W.J. of the Mayo Clinic, is born. Mayo is one of the youngest persons on record to administer anesthesia; according to his brother, Charles was giving the A.C.E. mixture [alcohol, chloroform, and ether] at the age of 12 to patients in his father's surgical practice.

1868 July: In Paris T.W. Evans suc-

cessfully liquefies nitrous oxide for storage and portability in metal cylinders.

1868 July 15: William T.G. Morton dies in New York City. In October, 1846, Morton made the first successful public demonstrations of ether anesthesia at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

1876 July 15: J.T. Clover publishes article in the *British Medical Journal* in which he introduces the nitrous oxide-ether sequence and an apparatus for its administration.

1893 July 6: French author Guy de Maupassant, born in 1850, dies. In his brief career, de Maupassant wrote several novels and hundreds of short stories. He suffered from migraines and self-medicated with ether. In one of his stories, "Afloat", written in 1888, the narrator treats his migraines in the same way. In that story the narrator declares that ether provides "a new way of seeing, judging, appreciating things and life..." De Maupassant is one of many writers and artists who have noted such experiences with anesthetic drugs.

1900 July: Oskar Kreis publishes first account of spinal analgesia for vaginal delivery. [Translation of the German original published in *International Journal of Obstetric Anesthesia* 9:174-178, 2000]

2002 July 19: Barry Reed, Massachusetts lawyer and novelist, dies. Reed's best known novel, *The Verdict* (1980) is the story of down-and-out Boston attorney Frank Galvin who attempts to redeem himself by taking the case of a young woman who is in a coma following anesthetic complications during surgery. The novel was filmed in 1982, with Paul Newman as Galvin.