NEW JERSEY'S HALLS OF MEDICAL FAME AND SHAME

Text for 12th annual Allen Weisse Lecture at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, September 29, 1915. delivered by Michael Nevins, MD.

Both Dr. Weisse and I have had the privilege of serving as Presidents of the Medical History Society of New Jersey which was founded some thirty years ago and currently numbers nearly one hundred members. Two years ago at one of our semi-annual meetings in Princeton, I invited all those present to choose from a preselected list what they felt were the most "**important medical events"** in our state's history. The poll was flawed in many respects — it was thoroughly unscientific, totally subjective and certainly not intended to be taken seriously. Nevertheless, the results provided a snapshot of the opinions of a varied group who shared an enthusiasm for medical history.

Our survey may have been the first of its kind, but over the years several books have been written about New Jersey's medical history. The first one, written by Dr. Stephen Wickes in 1879, described several prominent physicians during Colonial times. During the 1960s, our late colleague Professor David Cowen, regretting that Wickes chose not to cover the 19th century, wrote his own comprehensive classic which was called *Medicine and Health in New Jersey: A History.* And after that, several other past presidents of our history society also have written books. In 2002 historian Karen Reeds published *A State of Health: New Jersey's Medical Heritage* and last year Dr. Sandra Moss's book about a 19th century Newark physician Edward Holden has all sorts of fascinating information.

Some of you may know that the Medical Society of New Jersey will celebrate its 250th anniversary next year. Well for its bicentennial in 1966, the society published a book called *The Healing Art* which listed many names and events. One of its co-authors, Fred Rogers, had written an earlier book (1960) called *Help-Bringers. Versatile Physicians of New Jersey* which provided vignettes about a dozen pre-20th century doctors and I'll briefly mention just two of them in order to give the old-timers their due.

One of them was **William Augustus Newell** (1817-1901) of Monmouth County who graduated from Rutgers in 1836 and then earned his medical degree at the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to practicing medicine, he was active in politics and as a member of the House of Representatives was responsible for passing an act to create a Life Saving Service along the New Jersey coast which later became the US Coast Guard. Dr. Newell was both friend and physician of Abraham Lincoln's family and in 1847 he became New Jersey's 23rd governor (1857-1860.) But apparently these credentials didn't impress the Monmouth County Medical Society which in 1881, on the advice of their ethics committee, censured Dr. Newell for what they described as "an indiscretion, to say the least." And what was that? He was guilty of consulting with herbal practitioners and other so-called "irregulars" which conflicted with the AMA's strict code of ethics which banned collaboration with the enemy. After being censured by the Medical Society, Dr. Newell went west and served for several years during the 1880s as governor of the Washington Territories — during his last years the former governor returned to New Jersey where he died penniless in 1901. Certainly a varied career with highs and lows.

Another 19th century notable was **Ezra Mundy Hunt** (1830-1894) of Metuchen. His experiences during the Civil War impressed him with the importance of hygiene to control epidemic diseases after the war, when he became president of the state medical society he was a state and national pioneer in the public health movement. When the state legislature anticipated an impending cholera epidemic, it formed a Sanitary Commission with Dr. Hunt as its chief. Later, he was instrumental in organizing New Jersey's Department of Health and in that capacity he promoted mass vaccination and waste removal and insisted upon accurate data collection about the incidence of disease in different locations. When Dr. Hunt attended an AMA meeting in 1870, he was dismayed that there was organizational bias at the national level against colored delegates and reported back to his New Jersey colleagues that, in his opinion, anyone who had "certified competency and character" should be admitted to membership. He said, "We have enough to do to contend with the irregularities of pretense and quackery and false creeds of doctoring without drawing ethnological distinctions." With no medical school of its own, New Jersey was considered to be a medical backwater, but Dr. Hunt disagreed and had this to say when writing to a colleague in 1888:

> *There is no medical wilderness between New York and Philadelphia. We can name scores of members of this Medical Society who from* ***1875*** *on, have kept well-informed as to the prominent and popular medical hypothesis of the period and have given it consideration in their study and treatment of disease.*

Note that he said “from 1875 on”, not from 1775 on, and, no doubt, he was referring to the work of Pasteur and Koch. Nevertheless, Dr. Hunt admitted that the greatest barriers to hygienic reform existed within the medical profession itself which still was concerned, almost exclusively, with curing rather than preventing disease.

Well enough about the really old old-timers. So now let me give the results of our history society’s survey from two years ago. I’m sure many of you will have your own favorites who were not included — or will protest “How could you leave out Dr. so and so?” Naturally, I don’t want to offend any living people so please indulge me. I’ll begin with two specific events which weren’t identified with any particular individual physician or scientist.The leading event, with seven votes out of a possible twenty three in our survey, was the New Jersey Supreme Court’s decision in 1976 in the tragic case of **Karen Ann Quinlan.** Not only did their ruling profoundly impact how end-of-life decisions are made but, in some respects, altered the dynamic between doctors and patients — favoring patient autonomy over traditional physician paternalism. The Quinlan case drew worldwide attention and discussions of Karen’s fate introduced such terms into our vernacular as “death with dignity,” “pulling the plug” and “a right to die.” It surely was the most famous single case in New Jersey’s history and the Court’s opinion became a legal landmark which set the stage for later decisions, such as the famous cases of Nancy Cruzan and Terri Schiavo. Next May our history society will mark the 40th anniversary of the Quinlan decision at our spring meeting.

In our survey, there were three votes for another once famous medical event that occurred right here in Newark. In 1885 when four Newark school boys were bitten by a rabid dog, they were sent to Paris to receive Pasteur's brand new rabies vaccine. It caused a national media sensation and money was raised from all over to send the boys abroad. This picture from Harpers Weekly shows one of the boys receiving the vaccine with Pasteur, himself, looking on.

With all that as preliminary, now I'll list the top individual vote getters in our thoroughly unscientific survey — and, following Dave Letterman's example — I'll mention them in reverse order. Naturally, one could talk at great length about any one of them, so please understand that I'll have to be extremely brief and superficial.

New Jersey is justly famous for its pharmaceutical industry and much outstanding research was done here by tens of thousands of laboratory scientists. One important contributor was this Croatian born chemist, **Leo Sternbach** (1908-2005) who is credited with discovering benzodiazepine tranquilizers, including Librium and Valium. During the 1930s he worked for Hoffman-La Roche in Switzerland, but in 1941 fled to this county to escape the Nazis. Working at the Roche plant in Nutley, Sternbach held more than 240 patents which helped make the company into an industry giant although he didn't personally become wealthy as a result of his discoveries. In 2003, on the 40th anniversary of Valium's approval, the 95 year old scientist told *The New Yorker* that it was a very good drug. He added, "It has pleasant side effects. It's quite a good sleeping drug, too. That's why it's abused. My wife doesn't let me take it."

Dr. **James Oleske** needs no introduction to this audience. He arrived here as a medical student in 1968, never left and, eventually, rose to become professor of pediatrics. He has received a lifetime achievement award from the American Academy of Pediatrics for his work in children on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDs and in 2002 he was appointed medical director of the Circle of Life Foundation based here at the school.

Henry Leber Coit (1854-1917) was the first practicing pediatrician in Newark and in 1896 established the nation's second Babies' Hospital here. He is best known for calling attention to the dangers of impure milk and starting an international movement to "certify" that raw milk was produced by dairies under sanitary conditions regulated by a medical commission. Dr. Coit's method eventually was replaced by pasteurization, but he left his mark on pediatrics and public health far beyond his little hospital in Newark — and, long before Dr. Spock, he promoted education concerning how to care for healthy children and prevent disease.

Next in our survey, and still very much with us, was a long-time faculty member of the New Jersey Medical School, nephrologist **Richard Wedeen.** Starting in the early 1970s and working at the East Orange VA his research focused on lead-induced hypertension and kidney disease. Dr. Wedeen helped to define the field of occupational renal diseases and he has been a forceful advocate for lowering federal thresholds for safe lead levels in blood and water. His book *Poison in the Pot* (1984) reviewed the long history of lead poisoning and a later book called *Toxic Circles* (1993) - co-edited with Helen Sheehan and with several other contributors - described such

environmental health hazards as mercury, chromium and dioxin all of which were prevalent in this heavily industrialized state.

Tied with Dr. Wedeen is a person whom, I'm sure, few, if any of you will recognize. **John B. Smith** (1858-1912) wasn't even a doctor. He was born in 1858 and practiced law for five years before becoming fascinated by New Jersey's notorious mosquitos — I can't resist suggesting that he must have been bitten by the bug, or bugs, many times. Early settlers had claimed that mosquitos caused more anguish than the "threat of Indians" and, when window screens were introduced in the 1880s, they were described as "the most humane contribution the 19th century made to the preservation of sanity and good temper." In addition to being annoying, mosquitos transmitted such scourges as malaria and yellow fever - so when John B. Smith was appointed professor of entomology at Rutgers in 1889, he performed extensive research on the life cycles of mosquito. Professor Smith produced more than 600 scientific and popular publications, including extensive catalogues of the insects of New Jersey. He also lobbied the legislature to fund various control projects in the salt marshes of the Meadowlands and along the Jersey shore which, happily, also turned out to be a boon to the tourist industry.

Fifth place was a tie between Drs. **Irving Selikoff** (1915-1992) and **Philip Levine** (1900-1987) with 9 votes each. Most everyone knows about Dr. Selikoff's documentation of asbestos-related diseases among workers at the Johns-Manville factory in Paterson. But probably few of you know that early in his career he was involved in research at Sea View Hospital on Staten Island that established the efficacy of isoniazid for treating TB — and for

that work, he and his colleagues shared the prestigious Lasker Award for advances in medical research. When Irving Selikoff first opened a general medicine practice in Paterson during the 1950s, he established a connection with the local Asbestos Workers Union and, indeed, the rest is history. For the next thirty years, in hundreds of meetings and publications, he made both the profession and the public aware not only of the danger of asbestos but of a deliberate cover-up by the Asbestos industry — he was like a relentless Inspector Javert. Industry fought back, demonized him and their vilification continued for a dozen years **after** Selikoff's death - an example of shooting the messenger long after he's left the scene. In his later years Irving Selikoff founded and directed the Environmental and Occupational Health Division of Mount Sinai Hospital, which later was named after him, and many have credited him with being the "Father" of the specialty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

Philip Levine was far less charismatic and controversial. He was an imuno-hematologist whose work advanced knowledge of the Rh factor, hemolytic disease of the newborn and blood transfusion. Born in Belarus in 1900, his family moved to this country when Levine was eight. He grew up in Brooklyn and in 1925, just two years out of Cornell Medical School, he became assistant to Nobel Laureate Karl Landsteiner at the Rockefeller Institute. In 1935 Philip Levine became a bacteriologist at Newark's Beth Israel Hospital where, four years later, he and a colleague (Rufus Stetson) published a classic paper which suggested that a mother could make blood group antibodies, as a result of immune sensitization to her fetus's red blood cells, and then pass them back to the fetus. At the time this was a common cause of maternal anemia and miscarriages and was responsible

for the deaths of some 10,000 babies each year in this country. In 1946 (the second year that the Lasker Award was given) it went to Dr. Levine along with his colleagues Karl Landsteiner and Alexander Wiener for their research in hematology.

In fourth place is an outstanding heart surgeon, Newark's own **Victor Parsonnet.** Now in his 90s, Vic currently is writing his memoirs and I've had the pleasure of reading more than 100 fascinating chapters. They chronicle not only his own exploits, but also those of his remarkable ancestors who were synonymous with the best of Newark medicine. His paternal and maternal grandfathers, Victor Parsonnet Sr. and Max Danzis both immigrated from Russia to Newark during the late 1880s, with just a few rubles in their pockets and unable to speak any English. In a little over a decade the two were instrumental in starting Beth Israel Hospital and in subsequent generations dozens of family members worked at the Beth. I'm sure that everyone here knows that Dr. Parsonnet pioneered the development of cardiac pacemakers and personally implanted many thousands — the last, I think, when he was age 87! He also did research on a nuclear pacemaker and an artificial heart and in 1986 was the first New Jersey surgeon to perform a heart transplant among many other firsts. All of these and many fascinating vignettes are described in his memoir - whenever that comes out. I've been nagging him to finish the job - so watch for it.

Probably less well known to today's younger doctors was **Oscar Auerbach**, a pathologist who, while working at the East Orange VA during the 1960s, found the first evidence of a link between cancer and smoking in human lung tissue. Dr. Auerbach was a tireless investigator who some-

times examined 2,000 slides a day. He made careful clinical and pathological correlations and found that the more cigarettes were smoked, the greater the degree of tissue damage. When he trained dogs to smoke and studied the results, he refuted contentions by the tobacco industry that there was no cancer link. Dr. Auerbach wasn't a self promoter, just a dedicated investigator, respected by all, and his work provided the scientific basis for the Surgeon General's Report which in 1964 officially warned against the danger of smoking.

Prior to papers published by Dr. **Harrison Martland** (1883-1954) and his associates during the 1920s, radium was considered a boon to health, not a detriment. They described the clinical and pathological effects of radium poisoning in luminous watch dial painters in Orange, New Jersey. By continually pointing their brushes with their lips, young women workers had ingested radium and other chemicals and among the results was aplastic anemia (what he called "aregenerative" anemia) and certain bone tumors. Maryland's documentation of radiation pathology helped implement safety standards and during World War II he consulted on protective devices for atomic workers. Dr. Martland served for 45 years as Newark's City Pathologist and also was an authority on forensic medicine — it was he who coined the term "punch drunk." (I don't think that his colleague Dr. Auerbach would have been pleased with this photo for obvious reasons.)
He received international acclaim and numerous prestigious awards and several months before his death in 1954, Newark officials dedicated the Harrison S. Martland Medical Center across the street from here. In 1998 when Dr. Stanley Bergen retired and became founding President Emeritus of UMDNJ, the school's trustees renamed it the Stanley S. Bergen Building

and I’m aware that some faculty members from those times still are unhappy about the change — but I won’t touch on that sore subject.

In first place in our thoroughly unscientific survey, with 19 of a possible 23 votes, were the duo of **Selman Waksman** and his junior associate **Albert Schatz** for their discovery of streptomycin. Neither were physicians, but were soil biologists. The nature of their professional and personal relationships has been the subject of much discussion, perhaps best described in Peter Pringle’s book *Experiment Eleven* (2012.) In 1943 Schatz was a 23 year old graduate student working in Waksman’s laboratory at Rutgers when he discovered streptomycin. The younger man’s name appeared first on their classic journal article and also was on the drug’s patent application. Streptomycin was promoted as a “wonder drug more powerful than penicillin” and it was the first antibiotic effective against tuberculosis. However, controversy arose over whether Schatz was merely a junior member of a large team and to what extent his mentor deserved not only all the credit but the royalties as well. The dispute became nasty, it was neither man’s finest hour, and the bottom line was the bottom line — money being the root all evil. There were conflicting narratives and Schatz started a law suit. In 1950 a settlement was made between the two parties in which Schatz and several others shared in the profits. But two years later, when Selman Waksman was awarded the Nobel Prize, no mention was made of Schatz’s contribution. Members of the medical establishment tended to favor Waksman’s position as the Chief of the project. Schatz’s subsequent career was rather undistinguished and some believe that he was blackballed as a troublemaker. But whoever was right or wrong, there’s no question that the discovery of streptomycin was an enormous scientific advance and, as such,

deserves recognition in our survey as perhaps New Jersey's most *important* medical event.

Or was it? I'm sure that my own choice for the New Jersey physician who had the greatest impact will come as a surprise. I've previously mentioned Ezra Mundy Hunt who during the late 19th century was a leader in the public health movement and Newark's Edgar Holden, the hero of Sandra Moss's recent book, who was instrumental in promoting large scale sewer construction to replace privies and cesspools. The work of pioneers like them was instrumental in combatting water borne infectious diseases — and I should mention that in more recent times this medical school has had many notables in infectious disease — including the likes of Donald Louria, Leon Smith, Lee Reichman, Jim Oleske — names most of you are familiar with. However, the doctor whom I'd like to single out now probably won't be known to any of you at all. Indeed, his name didn't appear in our survey nor in any books about the state's medical history and, in fact, I'd never heard of him until just last year when I watched a television program called *How We Got To Now* which discussed him (That show later appeared as a book with the same title written by Steven Johnson.)

Dr. **John L. Leal** (1858-1914) of Paterson, graduated from Princeton in 1880 and then obtained his medical degree from Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons. During the Civil War his physician father had contracted amoebic dysentery from contaminated drinking water. He eventually died from it and, no doubt, this influenced his son's career. Although he also treated patients, Dr. Leal had a passionate interest in public health, particularly concerning how to kill bacteria in public water supplies. He ex-

perimented with various techniques and in 1898 concluded that the most effective chemical was chlorine, which then was called calcium hypochlorite or “chloride of lime.” Previously, it had been used as a disinfectant during outbreaks of typhoid and cholera but the characteristic smell of bleach was offensive and there was the crucial matter of correct dosage. Leal became convinced that if used in minute amounts, chlorine was the best way of killing germs without endangering humans. Eventually, he landed a job with the Jersey City Water Supply Company which gave him oversight of seven billion gallons of drinking water in the Passaic River watershed that supplied some 200,000 people. This set the stage for one of the boldest interventions in the history of public health. There had been a prolonged legal battle over contracts for reservoirs and water-supply pipes and Dr. Leal decided to put his experiments to the test.

Working in almost complete secrecy and without first obtaining permission, he built a facility at the Boonton Reservoir which allowed the first mass chlorination of a city’s water supply in history. Dr. Leal had to withstand scrutiny in two lengthy court hearings but his data was compelling and he testified that, in his opinion, Jersey City’s water supply was the safest in the world. He prevailed and chlorination quickly became standard practice across the country and, eventually, all over. A recent study estimated that the impact of chlorination, along with sand filtration and other methods of purifying drinking and bathing water, led to a 43% reduction in total mortality in the average American city and reduced infant and child mortality by more than 70% — and much of this was attributable to a mild-mannered New Jersey doctor who had the courage of his convictions. So, of all the

people I've mentioned, he may have been the least famous but made the most long lasting contribution.

Conversely, you may be surprised that probably New Jersey's most *famous* physician didn't even make our list — remember that the question we posed in our survey concerned what were the most *important* medical events in New Jersey's history and *not* who was the most famous doctor. Of course **William Carlos Williams** of Rutherford was one of the greatest American poets, some would say *the* greatest, but his medical work itself was mundane and wouldn't qualify him for a "Medical Hall of Fame" according to our ground rules. Admittedly, the term Hall of Fame suggest just that but its *not* how we worded our survey question. "Doc" Williams, as his patients called him, was predominantly a pediatrician and served on the staffs of St. Mary's, Passaic General and Hackensack hospitals. While on house calls, he often would stop his car by the roadside to scribble a few lines of verse on a blank prescription pad. William Carlos Williams published more than 3,000 poems, essays and stories and during the same four decades span, he delivered some 3,000 babies. He considered himself to be a man of the people, a doctor in the trenches, and he had no use for medical politics or pomposity. Drawing inspiration from his humble working class patients, he once wrote that medicine and literature were "nearly the same thing…two parts of a whole."

No woman doctors made our list but, of course, there've been many outstanding individuals over the years. Perhaps the most well known was the anesthesiologist **Virginia Apgar** (1909-1974) who invented the so-called Apgar Scale which measures the health status of neonates. She grew up in

Westfield and lived most of her life in Tenafly, but worked mainly across the river at Columbia Presbyterian. There also were many wonderful nurses from New Jersey including **Dorothea Dix** (1802-1881) the 19th century activist who lobbied throughout the country on behalf of the institutionalized mentally ill. Thanks to her, in 1848 New Jersey opened Trenton State Hospital which was the most modern facility for care of the insane of its time, and during the Civil War she served as the Superintendent of Union Army Nurses. And In 1901, during the Spanish-American War, while working with William Gorgas in Cuba, a 24 year old nurse **Clara Maas** (1876-1901) of East Orange volunteered to be bitten by mosquitos infected with yellow fever. After the first bite, she developed a mild case, but when re-challenged to see whether she'd developed immunity, she hadn't — and died as a result. Two other volunteers also died and this put an end to yellow fever experiments on humans.

Karen Reeds suggested that I mention **Elizabeth Bugie,** a graduate student who worked in Selman Waksman's lab at Rutgers. Her name had appeared on the landmark article in 1944 which announced the discovery of streptomycin, but it wasn't on the follow-up article which described the drug's efficacy against TB, nor did it appear on the patent application. Many years later, she explained that she was told that because someday she'd get married and have a family, it wasn't important for her name to be on the patent! The good news is that in 1952 after Albert Schatz successfully sued for his share of streptomycin's royalties, Waksman got 10%, Schatz 3% and two dozen others received token amounts - among them Elizabeth Bugie (Gregory) who received 0.2%. It amounted to only a few hundred dol-

lars a year for the duration of the patent but it was a moral victory. I'm told that she wound up becoming a librarian.

I hope that this whirlwind review will inspire some of you to delve deeper into our medical past by visiting Special Collections which is hidden away in a corner of the George F. Smith Library. And if you do, I'm sure that archivist Bob Vietrogoski will be happy to introduce you to all manner of fascinating material that's contained there. (And I'd like to acknowledge Bob's enormous help in preparing my Powerpoint display.) Medical historians like to celebrate our heroes and, I suppose, that in a way we all enjoy basking in their reflected glory. But New Jersey also has had its share of rogue doctors whose stories sometimes are more colorful than those of their conventional colleagues. Time permits me to only briefly mention a few candidates for my Medical Hall of **Shame** — like at Cooperstown, no doubt questions will arise about what qualifies or disqualifies someone for eligibility, but I'll let you judge that for yourselves.

For example, we've had a few notorious murderers such as **Mario Jascalevitch** who during the 1960s gained fame as "Dr. X." He was chief of surgery at a small osteopathic hospital in Oradell and allegedly disposed of rival surgeon's postoperative patients by injecting them with curare. Events caught up with him nearly a decade after the actual deaths, but after many months of deliberation, a Grand Jury failed to find sufficiently clear and convincing evidence to convict him and Dr. X fled back to his native Argentina. Nevertheless, his nickname persists in infamy.

Less fortunate was the so-called “Angel of Death,“ male nurse **Charles Cullen** who confessed to killing up to 40 patients between 1988 and 2004 at at least five facilities.. He didn’t keep records and there’ve been estimates that he may have murdered as many as 400 people usually by injecting them with digoxin or insulin. Currently nurse Cullen is serving eleven consecutive life sentences totaling about 400 years.

New Jersey also has had its fair share of quacks and charlatans. My favorite was **Dinshah Ghadiali** of Hillsdale and later Malaga. Born in Bombay, he claimed to have a dozen doctoral degrees including in engineering, law, chiropractic and electrohydrotherapy. He said he had one in medicine, too, but never produced a diploma. He certainly was versatile also being an inventor, musician, linguist, mystic, yogi and pioneer aviator. When he arrived in Bergen County in 1911, he practiced his own unique form of medicine using what he called “spectochrome” therapy. It involved shining bright light passed through colored water in glass vials and aimed at the afflicted body part — naturally, he guaranteed marvelous results. Dinshah sold his projectors through the mails and for years battled the AMA and the US Postal Service. Although he spent two years in a Federal Penitentiary, that didn’t stop him from running for Governor of New Jersey in 1925. Running from jail on a platform in which he asserted that he would promise nothing — he received more than 1000 votes!

In one of my books I described a man whom I dubbed “Dr. Evil.” Dr. **Edwin Katzen-Ellenbogen** was a German born psychiatrist who moved to Boston where he became a naturalized American citizen, converted from Judaism to his wife’s Catholicism and was an occasional lecturer at Harvard. He

moved to New Jersey in 1911 working for about two years at Skillman Village for Epileptics and then for another year at Trenton State Hospital. In 1914 he abandoned his family and returned to Europe where he developed a reputation as a bigamist, extortionist, forger and thief. During World War II, the Nazis arrested him because of his Jewish roots and he was sent to Buchenwald where he collaborated with his captors. At trials after the war, other prisoners accused him of being responsible either directly or indirectly for the deaths of more than a thousand inmates. Although he claimed innocence, a U.S. Army tribunal at Dachau convicted him to a life sentence and he died in military prison. That's an unusual narrative for a Jewish born psychiatrist - a Harvard professor no less. Indeed, this psychopathologist was a psychopath.

When Katzen-Ellenbogen left Skillman for Trenton, his new medical director there was Dr. **Henry Cotton**. He wasn't really a villain — more a misguided megalomaniac and self-promoter who promoted the once popular idea that psychosis was due to focal infection from an occult source with toxins travelling upstream to the brain. The challenge was to find the offending pocket of pus and then cut it out. Dr. Cotton claimed 85% success in curing psychosis and various other disorders. The NY Times praised him for what they described as "the most searching, aggressive and profound scientific investigation that has as yet been made in the whole field of mental and nervous disorders." The president of New Jersey's medical society declared that future generations "will rise up and call him blessed. Dr. Cotton's quest for occult focal infection began in the mouth where all of every patient's teeth were extracted. And if that didn't work, next to go were the tonsils which started a national craze for prophylactic tonsillectomies. If

mental symptoms still persisted, next various internal organs were removed - culminating with the large intestine. In 1919 alone, Dr. Cotton ordered more than 6000 dental extractions, more than 500 tonsillectomies and 79 total colectomies on his mental patients. The colectomies had a mortality of between 30 and 40%, but he insisted that these were desperate end-stage cases - that it was their last chance. Alas, it was all too good to be true. Inevitably, there were investigations - his results couldn't be replicated and there'd been shoddy documentation. Henry Cotton's crusade against pus ended in 1933 when he suddenly died from a heart attack. Nevertheless, tonsils continued to be wacked out everywhere — including my own — as prevention against whatever.

It's evident that all wasn't medical glory in the Garden State. However, in closing, I'd be remiss if I didn't state the obvious - that the vast, vast majority of New Jersey's physicians neither qualified for a Hall of Fame nor a Hall of Shame, but worked diligently and honorably — and it is those, perhaps under appreciated, colleagues whom we really should celebrate. So let's raise a *virtual* toast to our long forgotten predecessors who served New Jersey well.

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