

CANCER CONTROL

LAKE MOHONK CONFERENCE • 1926



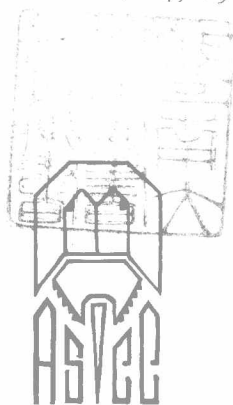
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CANCER CONTROL

REPORT OF
AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM
HELD UNDER THE AUSPICES
OF THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE
CONTROL OF CANCER

LAKE MOHONK, NEW YORK, U. S. A.

SEPTEMBER 20-24, 1926



THE SURGICAL PUBLISHING COMPANY
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1927

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EUROPEAN GUESTS AT THE MOHONK SYMPOSIUM

- PROFESSOR RAFFAELE BASTIANELLI, Rome, Italy
Associate Professor of Surgery, University of Rome
Vice-President of the Italian League for the Control of Cancer
- PROFESSOR LÉON BÉRARD, Lyons, France
Director of the Anti-Cancer Center at Lyons
Professor of Surgery, University of Lyons
- DR. ROBERT BIERICH, Hamburg, Germany
Director of the Institute for Cancer Control at Hamburg
Lecturer on Cancer Research, Hamburg University
- SIR JOHN BLAND-SUTTON, BT., London, England
President of the Royal College of Surgeons
Vice-Chairman of the British Empire Cancer Campaign
- PROFESSOR FERDINAND BLUMENTHAL, Berlin, Germany
Director of the Cancer Institute at Berlin
Professor of Internal Medicine, University of Berlin
- PROFESSOR H. T. DEELMAN, Groningen, Holland
Director of the Institute of Pathology and Pathologic Anatomy
Professor of Pathology, University of Groningen
- PROFESSOR WILLIAM DEVRIES, Amsterdam, Holland
President of the Netherlands Cancer Institute
Professor of Pathologic Anatomy, University of Amsterdam
- MR. W. SAMPSON HANDLEY, F.R.C.S., London, England
Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital; Professor of Surgery and Pathology, Royal College of Surgeons of England
- PROFESSOR HENRI HARTMANN, Paris, France
Professor of Surgery, University of Paris
Director of the Anti-Cancer Center at the Hôtel Dieu, Paris
- DR. ARCHIBALD LEITCH, London, England
Director of the Cancer Hospital Research Institute
- PROFESSOR J. MAISIN, Louvain, Belgium
Director of the Cancer Institute of the University of Louvain
Professor at the University of Louvain
- PROFESSOR T. MARIE, Toulouse, France
Professor at the Medical College of the University of Toulouse
Director of the Anti-Cancer Center at Toulouse
- DR. JAMES A. MURRAY, London, England
Fellow of the Royal Society; Director of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund
- DR. CLAUDE REGAUD, Paris, France
Director of the Pasteur Laboratory of the Radium Institute
- DR. ALBERT REVERDIN, Geneva, Switzerland
General Secretary and Treasurer of the Anti-Cancer Center of Geneva
Member of the Swiss Anti-Cancer League
- PROFESSOR GUSTAVE ROUSSY, Paris, France
Professor at the Medical School of the University of Paris
Director of the Institute for Research and Treatment of Cancer at Villejuif (Suburban Paris)

AMERICAN GUESTS AT THE MOHONK SYMPOSIUM

- DR. FRANK ADAIR, New York City
Associate Attending Surgeon, Memorial Hospital
Assistant Surgeon, Hospital for the Ruptured and Crippled
- DR. R. J. BEHAN, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Surgeon to St. Joseph's Hospital; Director of Cancer Department, Pittsburgh
Skin and Cancer Foundation
- DR. HERBERT M. BERGAMINI, New York City
Assistant Visiting Surgeon, Reconstruction and Bellevue Hospitals
- DR. JOSEPH C. BLOODGOOD, Baltimore, Maryland
Associate Professor of Clinical Surgery, Johns Hopkins University School of
Medicine
- DR. WILLIAM BORDEN, Washington, D. C.
Professor of Surgery and Dean of Medical Department, George Washington Uni-
versity; Surgeon-in-Chief, George Washington Hospital
- DR. JAMES T. CASE, Battle Creek, Michigan
Professor of Roentgenology, Northwestern University Medical School
Director, Roentgenological Department, Battle Creek Sanitarium
- DR. H. R. CHARLTON, Bronxville, New York
Adjunct Assistant Surgeon, Woman's Hospital, New York City
Attending Obstetrician, Lawrence Hospital, Bronxville, New York
- DR. FRED E. CLOW, Wolfeboro, New Hampshire
Medical Director, Huggins Hospital
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Chief Surgeon, Southern Pacific Hospital, San Francisco; Surgeon to St. Francis'
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Professor of Clinical Cancer Research Cornell University Medical School; At-
tending Surgeon, Memorial Hospital
- DR. MARY M. CRAWFORD, New York City
Attending Physician, Booth Memorial Hospital, New York City
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- DR. ANDRE CROTTI, Columbus, Ohio
Surgeon-in-Chief, White Cross Hospital; Chief of Columbus Free Cancer Clinic
- DR. BOWMAN CROWELL, Chicago
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- DR. HERBERT DUCRET, Brooklyn, New York
Visiting Surgeon, Cumberland Hospital; Assistant Visiting Surgeon, Peck Memorial Hospital
- DR. EDWIN C. ERNST, St. Louis, Missouri
Radiologist, Barnard Free Skin and Cancer Hospital, St. Louis
President-Elect, Radiologic Society of North America
- DR. JAMES EWING, New York City
Professor of Pathology, Cornell University Medical School
Director of Memorial Hospital
- DR. K. GEORGE FALK, New York City
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- DR. LOUIS H. FLIGMAN, Helena, Montana
Attending Internist, St. Peter's Hospital, St. John's Hospital, and United States Veterans' Bureau
- DR. F. E. GENDREAU, Montreal, Quebec
Professor of Radiology, University of Montreal; Director of the Radium Institute and Cancer Institute of the University of Montreal
- DR. WILLIAM P. GRAVES, Boston, Massachusetts
Professor of Gynecology, Harvard University Medical School
Surgeon-in-Chief, Free Hospital for Women, Brookline, Massachusetts
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Junior Gynecologist, Roosevelt Hospital
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Assistant Director, Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency
- DR. HEINZ LANGER, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Director of Roentgenotherapy and Physiotherapy, The Western Pennsylvania Hospital
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Clinical Professor of Surgery, Cornell University Medical School
Attending Surgeon, Memorial Hospital
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Attending Radiotherapist, Montefiore Hospital; Associate Radiotherapist, Mount Sinai Hospital
- DR. I. D. LE ROY, Pleasant Valley, New York
- DR. ELISE S. L'ESPERANCE, New York City
Assistant Professor of Pathology, Cornell University Medical School
Serologist, Memorial Hospital
- DR. ISAAC LEVIN, New York City
Director, New York City Cancer Institute
Professor of Cancer Research, New York University Medical School
- DR. FIELDING O. LEWIS, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Professor of Laryngology, Jefferson Medical College
Otolaryngologist to Radiological Department, Philadelphia General Hospital
- DR. HOWARD LILIENTHAL, New York City
Professor of Clinical Surgery, Cornell University Medical School
Consulting Surgeon, Mount Sinai and Bellevue Hospitals
- DR. JENNINGS C. LITZENBERG, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Professor of Gynecology and Obstetrics, University of Minnesota
- MR. VICTOR LOGAN, New York City
Fourth Year Medical Student, Johns Hopkins University
- DR. H. L. LOMBARD, Boston, Massachusetts
Epidemiologist, Cancer Section, Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- DR. LE ROY LONG, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Dean and Professor of Surgery, University of Oklahoma School of Medicine
- DR. WILLIAM C. MACCARTY, Rochester, Minnesota
Chief of Section of Bio-Pathology and Diagnosis, Mayo Clinic
- DR. WARD J. MACNEAL, New York City
Director of Department of Laboratories, New York Post-Graduate Medical School and Hospital
- DR. CHARLES L. MARTIN, Dallas, Texas
Assistant Professor of Roentgenology, Baylor College

- DR. ERNST A. MAY, Newark, New Jersey
Director, Metcalf Institute for Radiotherapy, Orange, New Jersey
Attending Roentgenologist, Sea View Tuberculosis Hospital of the City of New York
- DR. CHARLES H. MAYO, Rochester, Minnesota
Professor of Surgery, University of Minnesota Medical School
Surgeon, St. Mary's Hospital and Mayo Clinic
- DR. P. E. MCSWEENEY, Burlington, Vermont
Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Vermont Medical School;
Attending Surgeon, Mary Fletcher and DeGoesbriand Hospitals
- DR. WILLY MEYER, New York City
Professor Emeritus of Surgery, New York Post-Graduate Medical School and Hospital; Consulting Surgeon, New York Skin and Cancer Hospital
- DR. ARTHUR H. MORSE, New Haven, Connecticut
Obstetrician and Gynecologist-in-Chief, New Haven Hospital and Dispensary
- DR. JAMES B. MURPHY, New York City
Director of Department of Biophysics, Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research
- DR. JOHN J. MORTON, Rochester, New York
Professor of Surgery, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry;
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- DR. WILLIAM NEILL, JR., Baltimore, Maryland.
Associate Professor of Surgery, Howard A. Kelly Hospital
- DR. O. L. NORSWORTHY, Houston, Texas
Member of Committee on the Study of Cancer for the State Medical Association of Texas
- DR. THOMAS ORDWAY, Albany, New York
Dean and Associate Professor of Medicine, Albany Medical School
Attending Physician, Albany Hospital
- DR. ANNA C. PALMER, Milton, Massachusetts
Cancer and Narcotic Adviser to the Department of Public Health of the General Federation of Women's Clubs
- DR. JAMES T. PILCHER, Brooklyn, New York
Attending Surgeon, Brooklyn State and Unity Hospitals
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- DR. ALEXANDER PRIMROSE, Toronto, Canada
Professor of Clinical Surgery, Toronto University Medical School
Surgeon to Toronto General Hospital
- DR. DOUGLAS QUICK, New York City
Attending Surgeon, Memorial Hospital
- DR. C. I. REDFIELD, Middletown, New York
Surgeon to Thrall Hospital, Middletown; Consulting Surgeon, Middletown Sanitarium
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Professor of Gynecology, Albany Medical College
- DR. JOSEPH W. SCHERESCHEWSKY, Boston, Massachusetts
Assistant Surgeon-General, United States Public Health Service
Surgeon-in-Charge of Field Investigations of Cancer
- DR. GEORGE H. SEMKEN, New York City
Attending Surgeon, New York Skin and Cancer Hospital
Consulting Surgeon, Institute of Cancer Research, Columbia University
- DR. BURTON T. SIMPSON, Buffalo, New York
Director, New York State Institute for the Study of Malignant Diseases
- MISS MAUD SLYE, Chicago
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- DR. G. M. SMITH, Waterbury, Connecticut
Visiting Surgeon to Waterbury Hospital
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Surgeon to Grand Rapids Clinic
- DR. GEORGE A. SOPER, New York City
Managing Director, American Society for the Control of Cancer
- DR. ROLLIN H. STEVENS, Detroit, Michigan
Dermatologist and Roentgenologist, Grace Hospital
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Professor of Clinical Gynecology, College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York City
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- DR. FREDERICK J. TEES, Montreal, Canada
Associate Surgeon, Montreal General Hospital; Lecturer in Surgery, McGill University
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Visiting Surgeon to Ithaca General Hospital; formerly Assistant Professor of Surgery, Cornell University Medical School
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Pathologist, Palmer Memorial Hospital, Boston; Instructor in Pathology, Harvard University School of Medicine

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Consulting Surgeon, New York Eye and Ear Infirmary; Professor Emeritus,
University and Bellevue Hospital School of Medicine
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Bacteriology and Immunology, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
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Assistant Surgeon, Radiological Department, Philadelphia General Hospital
Instructor in Cancer Surgery, Postgraduate School of the University of Pennsylv-
vania
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- DR. WILLIAM H. WOGLOM, New York City
Associate Professor of Cancer Research, Columbia University
- DR. FRANCIS C. WOOD, New York City
Professor of Clinical Pathology and Director of Institute of Cancer Research,
Columbia University

*The cost of publishing this Report is borne
by the Harry M. Lasker Memorial Fund*

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GENERAL ACCOUNT OF THE SYMPOSIUM

THE International Symposium on Cancer Control, held under the auspices of the American Society for the Control of Cancer at Lake Mohonk, New York, September 20 to 24, 1926, was for the purpose of considering the prevention and cure of cancer from a practical standpoint, and of expressing in concise language the fundamental groundwork of fact and opinion upon which the collective effort now being made in the United States and other countries for the control of cancer should be continued and extended.

It was believed that there were many things which physicians and surgeons could agree upon and that, if these agreements could be expressed in simple, concise language, the results would be of much value.

THE CALL FOR THE MEETING

The preliminary announcements and invitations were sent out in May, 1926, although the feasibility and desirability of presenting the Symposium had been discussed with many of those who were expected to attend more than a year before the meeting took place.

The notice calling for the meeting stated that the need of bringing about the Symposium had arisen from the seriousness of the cancer problem. According to statistics issued by the United States Census Bureau, 1 in every 10 adults now living in the United States is destined to die of cancer. Between the ages of 45 and 65, 1 in every 5 deaths among women is due to this disease. Cancer is now a greater menace to adult life than tuberculosis and its death rate is rapidly increasing.

Cancer is in many respects a unique disease. Against it no sanitary or public health measures have had any effect. It has not been affected by preventive measures such as have been employed against infectious diseases. The upbuilding of bodily health and the improvement of social and economic conditions are incapable of reducing its prevalence. There is no example of the successful control of any other disease which affords any prospect of success if employed in a campaign against cancer.

The only effective measures which offer any promise are personal ones. People must learn the symptoms and apply to competent physicians upon the first suspicion of the presence of cancer. On their part physicians must give prompt and skilful attention to the patients who come to them. Otherwise, practically every case must prove fatal.

It appears that the direction in which efforts can most hopefully be employed to cope with the scourge of cancer is through education. Apparently there should be: (1) a widespread campaign to teach the public what everyone should know about cancer; (2) a dissemination among the practitioners of medicine of information that would help them in diagnosing and treating the cases which come to them; (3) adequate hospital provision for the care of curable and incurable cancer patients; and (4) continued research into the cause, prevention, and cure of cancer.

The organized efforts made throughout the United States for the past 12 years, under the leadership of the American Society for the Control of Cancer, have been based upon these principles. There appears to be substantial agreement that they are the soundest which present scientific knowledge permits. Opinions differ, however, as to the detailed procedures which ought to be employed in carrying the principles into effect.

The announcement declared that the meeting was to discuss not only the principles but the most effective methods of applying them in a practical way. The experience gained in different countries would be reviewed. By bringing the best information and wisest judgment anywhere obtainable to bear upon this question, it was hoped that substantial improvements in the methods for the control of cancer could be accomplished.

THE MEETING PLACE

The meeting was held September 20 to 24, 1926, at the Lake Mohonk Mountain House, Lake Mohonk, Ulster County, New York. Mohonk is about 75 miles north of New York City. The place is well known for the many meetings on humanitarian and philanthropic subjects which have been held there. Among these were the Annual Conferences on the Indian and Other Dependent Peoples, begun in 1883, and the Conferences on International Arbitration, begun in 1895, with the object of perfecting the mechanism of arbitration and adapting it for the settlement of international differences. These annual meetings ceased at the time of the World War.

The hotel accommodates about 400 persons and is beautifully situated in the midst of an estate of over 6,000 acres, with about 70 miles of road and 25 miles of picturesque and rugged mountain trails.

The total number of persons officially present was 109; of these, 16 came from the principal countries of Europe. The names of all who were present will be found elsewhere in this account.

The Europeans were guests of the Society. They were met on the arrival of their ships and escorted to the Hotel Roosevelt in New York City, where they stayed until the morning of September 20. Through the courtesy of the United States Department of State the freedom of the port was extended to all the visitors.

Various hospitalities were offered by individuals and clubs in New York City. The Society entertained its guests at dinner on the evening of September 19, and assisted them in seeing the principal points of interest in and about New York City before and after their stay at Mohonk.

On the morning of September 20, the European guests with about an equal number of Americans, chiefly members of the Society's Executive Committee, were escorted to Mohonk. Through the courtesy of Mr. Vincent Astor, the yacht *Nourmahal* was used to go up the Hudson from New York City to Bear Mountain, a distance of 45 miles. Luncheon was served at Bear Mountain, after which the party was taken by automobiles, headed by New York State Police, to West Point. At West Point the cadets were paraded, through the courtesy of Major General Stuart, Commandant of the Post, Lieut. Colonel Hodges, in command of the Cadets; and Colonel Ashforth of the United States Medical Department. After the parade the journey was continued by motor to Mohonk.

The program of the Symposium included formal ceremonies on Monday evening followed by executive meetings on the morning and afternoon of Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. There was a meeting open to all the guests of the hotel on Wednesday evening.

The two general meetings were presided over by Dr. Taylor, president of the American Society for the Control of Cancer. The executive sessions were under the chairmanship of two of the principal officers of the Society, Dr. Francis Carter Wood, vice-president, and Dr. Robert B. Greenough chairman of the Advisory Council.

At the beginning of the Symposium it was announced that a committee had been appointed consisting of Professors Hartmann, Deelman, Blumenthal, Handley, and Dr. Soper, to whom all resolutions or other action proposed to be taken in the name of the Symposium should be referred in advance of a general vote. Three propositions for formal action were brought up and referred to this committee, discussed by them, reported back and, after discussion by the whole Symposium, passed.

After the Symposium, the party returned to New York in a special car attached to a fast train on the New York Central Railroad. On Friday evening a dinner was held at the Hotel Astor in honor of the foreign guests at which 228 prominent physicians were present by invitation of the Society. This function concluded the official ceremonies connected with the Symposium.

