

Anesthesia and Analgesia—50 Years of Publication

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Editor, *Anesthesia and Analgesia . . . Current Researches*

A *nesthesia and Analgesia . . . Current Researches* is the oldest publication in the world devoted exclusively to the specialty of anesthesiology. Volume 1, Number 1, of this journal appeared in August 1922.

Because we are in the 50th year of publication, the Board of Trustees wishes to present a brief history of the organization of the International Anesthesia Research Society and its official journal—*Anesthesia and Analgesia . . . Current Researches*.

Dr. Francis Hoefler McMechan, our first editor, fostered this publication with the zealous enthusiasm of a parent, and during his lifetime probably had a greater influence on our specialty than most of us will ever realize.

It was about 1911 that Dr. McMechan was forced by progressively incapacitating arthritis to give up his active anesthetic practice, and soon thereafter he was restricted to a wheelchair. At this time, he gave serious consideration to the problem of better organization of our specialty. Even with his physical disability, he still felt he could be useful and productive.

At the May 15, 1912, meeting of the New York Society of Anesthetists, plans to form a national society of anesthetists were discussed.¹ The executive committee tried to influence the American Medical Association to create a section of anesthesia within this association at its annual meeting, held in Atlantic City in June 1912, but without success.

Because of this failure, a group of anesthetists, who had been gathering informally for five to six years, formally organized the American Association of Anesthetists at this same meeting of the American Medical Association in Atlantic City in 1912. The newly organized group held its first meeting at the same time as the Annual Meeting of the American Medical Association in Minneapolis in June 1913.

Dr. James T. Gwathmey was the first president of this new society—The American Association of Anesthetists—later becoming the secretary, only to relinquish his post to Dr. McMechan when he entered the military service in World War I.

Because of Dr. McMechan's physical disability, he was always seeking outlets for his enthusiasms, and his ardent efforts started attracting attention. His interest and eagerness made him one of the most militant figures in the history of our specialty. These attributes continued until his death in 1939.²⁻⁶

It occurred to Dr. McMechan that a journal on anesthesia was greatly needed to further the organization of the specialty and to disseminate its literature. He discussed this subject with the late Dr. Joseph MacDonald, who for years had been secretary of the American Medical Editors Association and managing editor of the *Amer-*

ican Journal of Surgery. Dr. MacDonald consented to add a Quarterly Supplement of Anesthesia and Analgesia to his *American Journal of Surgery*, and Dr. McMechan started editing the Supplement in October 1914.

Once this work was under way, Dr. McMechan began receiving the transactions of meetings of various societies of anesthetists from different parts of the world. His editorship also put him in touch with the research workers, both in the medical and dental schools and in the industrial laboratories of companies manufacturing anesthetic agents and equipment.

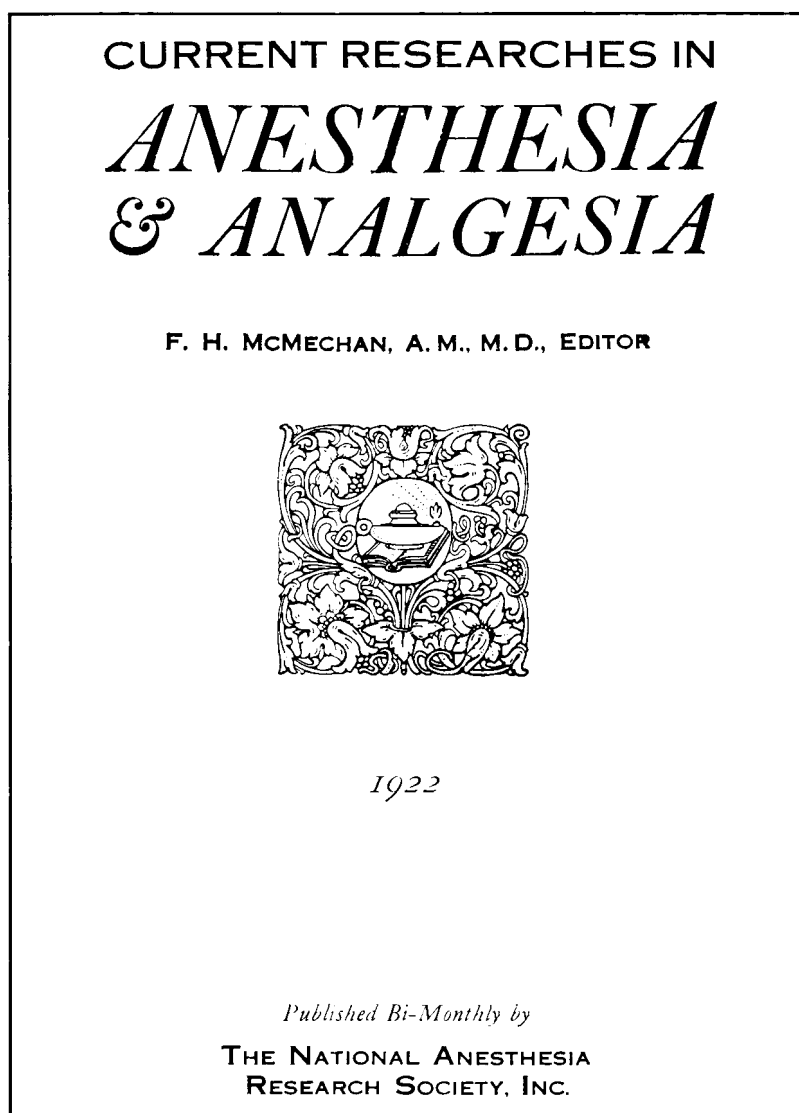


Fig. 1. Front cover of Volume 1, Number 1.

Dr. McMechan was becoming the liaison between the operating room and the laboratory. He continued to edit the Quarterly Supplement until Dr. MacDonald's death in 1922.

Because little was being done about research, a few manufacturers and Dr. McMechan met in the Union Club of Cleveland on December 18, 1919, to discuss the possibilities of starting an educational campaign, providing a bulletin, and establishing a formal organization. As a consequence, the National Anesthesia Research Society was founded. The membership included professional anesthetists as well as manufacturers, with Dr. McMechan as Executive

Secretary and chairman. At this time, a monograph on "Nitrous Oxide-Oxygen Analgesia and Anesthesia in Normal Labor and Operative Obstetrics" was published by this society.

The physician anesthetists who were members of this new society had second thoughts about the qualifications for membership. The consensus was that the manufacturers' representatives probably should not be included as members. Consequently, they deferred and withdrew from membership. Because Dr. MacDonald, the editor of the *American Journal of Surgery*, had died, Dr. McMechan felt that his debt of loyalty to him was paid and, therefore, he felt free

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Papers of Pertinent Interest and Society Transactions are desired for publication in the Journal of the National Anesthesia Research Society. Manuscripts should be typewritten double space and accompanied with photos or drawings to illustrate them. Those interested are also invited to submit Abstracts for the Current Literature of Anesthesia and Analgesia.

Membership in the National Anesthesia Research Society is open to all licensed members of the Medical and Dental Profession and to Research Workers holding Doctorates in Science of similar standing. The yearly dues are \$3.00 payable in advance and also entitle the member to the official organ of the Society.

FIG. 2. Members of the first Board of Governors, Editor, and Research Committee.

to publish the society's own journal. Thus, *Current Researches in Anesthesia & Analgesia*, the official publication of the National Anesthesia Research Society, was born—the first issue appearing in August 1922, with Dr. McMechan as editor (fig. 1).

The first Board of Governors and committee members of the National Anesthesia Research Society included many prominent anesthesiologists, physiologists, and research workers. Among them were Dr. McKesson, anesthesiologist and also designer and manufacturer of the McKesson Gas Machine; Dr. Yandell Henderson, Professor of Physiology at Yale University; Dr. Frank Mann, prominent physiologist, later Head of Section of Physiology at the Mayo Clinic; Dr. Dennis Jackson, Professor of Pharmacology, Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, Missouri, and later University of Cincinnati; Dr. A. F. Erdmann, New York; Dr. A. E. Guedel, New York; Dr. A. H. Miller, Providence, Rhode Island; Dr. Wesley Bourne, Montreal; Dr. John H. Evans, Buffalo, New York; Dr. Isabella Herb, Professor of Anesthesiology, Rush Medical College, Chicago—all prominent anesthesiologists in their own right—to name a few (fig. 2).

Dr. McMechan, with his great energy, also helped to organize and support other anesthesia societies in this country and in Canada (fig. 3). American anesthesia was becoming a standard for the world. Moreover, Dr. McMechan was building a journal that was achieving international recognition.

A glance at the editorial contents page of Volume 1 shows that the subjects and prob-

lems of 1922, in many instances, still exist today (fig. 4). The Editorial Foreword in Volume 1, Number 1, pointed out that the Journal would print papers from the transactions of the several associations of anesthesiologists, and other anesthesia societies, and special and selected articles of pertinent interest as well as abstracts from the current literature. Many of these ideas are still used in our current philosophy for publication of *Anesthesia and Analgesia . . . Current Researches* (fig. 5).

In 1925, the National Anesthesia Research Society changed its name to the International Anesthesia Research Society. Its aims and ideals, however, have remained the same. The Editorial Board of the Journal and the Board of Trustees of the Society changed the name of the journal from *Current Researches in Anesthesia & Analgesia* to *Anesthesia and Analgesia . . . Current Researches*, the new name appearing with the first issue in 1957.

Although the words "Current Researches" carry the connotation that the contents of the journal are primarily research in nature, this is misleading. The journal publishes information on many facets of our specialty, recent advances in clinical practice, laboratory research clinically oriented, medicolegal considerations, and many other interesting and informative items. The French journal carrying the title *Anesthésie et Analgésie*, Paris, precludes us from shortening our title by dropping the last two words.

In 1957, the size of the journal page was changed from the previous pocket-size edi-

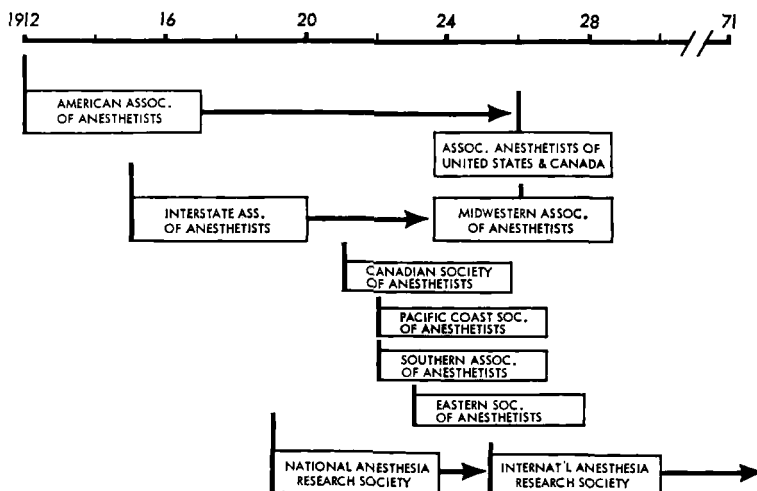


FIG. 3. Societies in which Dr. McMechan was actively interested.

CURRENT RESEARCHES IN ANESTHESIA AND ANALGESIA

Vol. I, Nos. 1, 2, 3 NATIONAL ANESTHESIA RESEARCH SOCIETY 1922

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Fig. 4. Editorials and original articles appearing in Volume 1, Numbers 1, 2, and 3, 1922.

tion to a 7 inch by 10 inch page. The front and back covers are a distinctive yellow, with mastheads on the cover appropriately lettered; the title of each article in the text is an attractive shade of blue. The physical appearance of the cover and the editorial pages immediately identifies the journal to our readers. Approximately 25 original papers and several special features appear regularly. About 8,000 copies are distributed bimonthly to our members and subscribers.

The International Anesthesia Research Society has held 45 congresses where important research work has been reported and advances in clinical anesthesia have

been presented. Foreign visitors, not infrequently, have participated in these programs.

In 1951 the International Anesthesia Research Society held its annual congress in London, England, in joint session with the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland. Two weeks after the London congress, the French society held another international congress in Paris. It was the consensus at these two meetings that anesthesia had advanced most when the status of the anesthesiologist was recognized. From this observation the concept followed that, for a worldwide organization

CURRENT RESEARCHES IN ANESTHESIA & ANALGESIA

AUGUST NATIONAL ANESTHESIA RESEARCH SOCIETY 1922
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Editorial Foreword



WITH this issue the former Bulletin becomes a regular Journal to carry on the organization and educational campaign of the National Anesthesia Research Society. As in the past, the Journal will print papers from the Transactions of the several Associations of Anesthetists, special and selected articles of pertinent interest, as well as abstracts from the current literature of anesthesia and analgesia. It is hoped that the innovation of the advertising sections will be favorably received as this additional support will enable the officers and editor of the Society all the more rapidly to achieve its purposes. The make-up of the Journal is such that for permanent binding the advertising pages may be withdrawn without discarding any of the context. Your continued cooperation and the securing of as many new members as possible will enable the Journal to rapidly enlarge its scope and utility and eventually to cover and exhaust the international field in Current Researches in Anesthesia and Analgesia.

Coming Meetings



PLANS for the Congress of Anesthetists, at the Hotel Deshler, Columbus, Ohio, October 30 to November 1, are rapidly maturing and a very interesting meeting and program are assured. Aside from the two leading conferences on the Teaching of Anesthesia and the Development of Hospital Anesthetic Service, there will be Special Sessions devoted to Anesthesia in Oral Surgery and Dentistry, as well as in Relation to Cardiology, Pressure and Re-breathing. It is also expected that some noted foreign anesthetists will be in attendance. The Interstate and N. A. R. S. join in urging your attendance at this Congress so that its influence may materially aid international progress in the specialty. Those wishing to present papers are requested to get in touch with the Editor at once; and those desiring space for commercial exhibits

FIG. 5. Editorial Foreword in Volume 1, Number 1, issue.

to be effective for anesthesiologists, it must be controlled by anesthesiologists.

At the Paris meeting a committee was formed to study the possibility of a world-wide organization of our specialty. The committee included Dr. Jacques Boureau of Paris; Dr. John Gillies of Edinburgh; Dr. Alex Goldblat of Brussels, Secretary; Dr. Torsten Gordh of Stockholm; and Dr. Harold R. Griffith of Montreal, Chairman, who also was the chairman of the Board of Trustees of the International Anesthesia Research Society. The world was "divided" between Dr. Goldblat and Dr. Griffith. Each

gathered, by his own effort and finances, as much data as were available from his half of the world.

It soon became apparent that sufficient information was available, and Dr. Goldblat invited the members of the committee to meet in Brussels, Belgium, in June 1953. The Council for International Organization of Medical Societies donated some funds, and the International Anesthesia Research Society of the United States was exceedingly generous in its financial support. Later the International Anesthesia Research Society underwrote a considerable portion of the organizational expenses.

In addition to the original committee members (Drs. Boureau, Gillies, Goldblat, Gordh, and Griffith), others were invited. Those in attendance were Drs. A. W. Low, Goeffrey Organe, and R. P. W. Shackleton, representing the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland; Dr. C. R. Ritsema van Eck of Groningen in the Netherlands, representing the Netherlands Society of Anesthesiologists; Dr. Enrico Ciocatto of Turin, Italy; Drs. R. J. Whitacre, A. W. Friend, and T. H. Seldon, representing the International Anesthesia Research Society; Dr. Ellis Gillespie of Melbourne, Australia; and Dr. Wesley Bourne of Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

The American Society of Anesthesiologists, the largest anesthesia society in the world, did not choose to join at this time. Despite the fact that the International Anesthesia Research Society really did not represent anesthesia for the United States, it nevertheless supported, financially and otherwise, this new worldwide effort. Without this support the United States would have played relatively no part in the growth of this federation.

The original organizing committee and Dr. C. J. Durshordwe of Buffalo, New York, a member of the Board of Trustees of the International Anesthesia Research Society; Dr. Rudolf Frey of Heidelberg, Germany; Dr. L. A. Boeré of Leiden, the Netherlands; and Dr. Francis F. Foldes of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, held another meeting in Scheveningen in June 1954 in preparation for the 1955 congress. Dr. Harold R. Griffith presided at the meeting.

The First World Congress of Anesthesiologists was held in Scheveningen, the Netherlands, September 5 to 10, 1955, under the able chairmanship of Dr. Harold R. Griffith who was still the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the International Anesthesia Research Society aided by Dr. van Eck, President of the congress, Dr. Goldblat, and many local dignitaries.

The International Anesthesia Research Society published the *Proceedings of the First World Congress* under the editorship of Dr. T. H. Seldon of Rochester, Minnesota. This gratuitous service was provided to aid and encourage the growth of this new worldwide organization.^{7,8}

During its fifty years, the journal has had three editors: Dr. Francis McMechan—

1922 to 1939; Dr. Howard Dittrich—1940 to 1953; and Dr. T. H. Seldon—1954 to the present date.

The various editorial boards enjoyed the loyalty and valuable assistance of Laurette Van Varsveld McMechan as assistant editor until her death in June 1970.⁹

The society and the journal have had the loyal support of many individuals as committee members, members of the Board of Trustees, Editorial Board, authors, and reviewers of articles for publication, and able and accepted constructive critics of our efforts. It would be appropriate to have every participant's name appear in this article, but it is obvious that this is impractical. For all this help, the present members of both the Board of Trustees and the Editorial Board are grateful.

The International Anesthesia Research Society and the journal, *Anesthesia and Analgesia . . . Current Researches*, will continue to provide a forum for presentation of research and clinical information, and a medium for dissemination of this material for our thousands of readers.

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