



# Medical History Society of New Jersey

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G.F. Smith Library of the Health Sciences  
30 Twelfth Ave., P.O. Box 1709, Newark, NJ 07101-1709  
Tel: 973-972-7830 Fax: 973-972-7474  
email: [densky@umdnj.org](mailto:densky@umdnj.org) web site: [www.mhsnj.org](http://www.mhsnj.org)

## NEWSLETTER

May 2005

Volume 25, Number 1

### TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL SAFFRON LECTURE

The spring meeting of the Medical History Society of New Jersey will be held Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at The Nassau Club in Princeton and will celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society's founding in 1980. Allen B. Weisse, MD, a past president of the MHSNJ will present the Saffron Lecture entitled "*Medical History Society of New Jersey: Still Alive at Twenty-Five!!*" MHSNJ past president, Frederick C. Skvara, MD will display medical philately related to the program. Registration begins at 3:30 p.m.; the program begins at 4 p.m.

*MHSNJ Business Meeting*, Daniel P. Greenfield, MD, President

*Echoes of the Thirties: Medical Practice in New Jersey*

Alan J. Lippman, MD

*"Doing Nicely and Gaining Weight": New Jersey's Tuberculosis Hospitals on Postcards*

Lois R. Densky-Wolff, Head, Special Collections Department, UMDNJ Libraries

*There is More to Ringer Than Lactate!*

Nicole Fox, UMDNJ-NJMS Class of 2005 and Kenneth G. Swan, MD, UMDNJ-NJMS

*The Tea Burners: How a Cumberland County Doctor Became New Jersey's  
First U.S. Senator*

Henry H. Sherk, MD

**Cocktails and Dinner (6-7:30 pm)**

**Twenty-Sixth Annual Saffron Lecture:**

*Medical History Society of New Jersey: Still Alive at Twenty-Five!!*

Allen B. Weisse, MD, UMDNJ-NJMS and Past President, MHSNJ

Members, students, and friends are invited to attend the dinner meeting. Cost is \$40/members, \$50/guests; advance registration is required. For information, contact MHSNJ, c/o UMDNJ Special Collections, G.F. Smith Library, 30 Twelfth Avenue, PO Box 1709, Newark, NJ 07101-1709, (973) 972-7830, [densky@umdnj.edu](mailto:densky@umdnj.edu).

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## MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

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**Lois R. Densky-Wolff, MAL** presented "*New Jersey Tuberculosis Hospitals & Sanatoriums on Postcards*" in October to a lunchtime audience at The New Jersey Historical Society in Newark. The illustrated lecture featured over fifty images from UMDNJ Special Collections.

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**George Hill, MD** reports that his forthcoming book on Thomas Edison was featured in June at a symposium, "*Epicenter Conference on Natural Resource Damage Claims*," in Trenton. Dr. Hill also gave a talk in October entitled "*Colonial Medicine: Medicine in the Thirteen Original Colonies, 1607-1783*," to Princeton Company of the Jamestowne Society at The Nassau Club, Princeton. In March, Dr. Hill defended his dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Letters at Drew University. His dissertation is entitled "*'Intimate Relationships': Race, Religion, Rubber and Politics in the Foreign Affairs of the United States and Liberia, 1917-1947*."

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**Sandra Moss, MD** presented "*Ironclad Fever: A Naval Surgeon's Civil War*" at the American Osler Society annual meeting and "*The Time and Space Machines of the American Sphygmograph Men: A Forgotten Chapter in Cardiovascular Medicine*" held at the "History of Medicine Day," College of Physicians of Philadelphia, both in April.

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**Michael Schulder, MD**, NJMS-Neurosurgery, presented a lecture on December 15 entitled "*Who Did the First Craniotomy?*" to an audience at the UMDNJ-G.F. Smith Library in Newark.

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### **Vincent Cirillo, PhD To Receive MHSNJ Cowen Award**

Vincent J. Cirillo, PhD was nominated to receive the MHSNJ 2005 David L. Cowen Award by the award committee comprised of Lois R. Densky-Wolff, Frederick C. Skvara (chair), and Allen B. Weisse. The MHSNJ Executive Committee unanimously supported nomination. Dr. Cirillo's award reflects his many contributions to the field of medical history including, most notably, his recent book *Bullets and Bacilli: The Spanish-American War and Military Medicine* (2004, Rutgers University Press), which is a fascinating account of the medical aspects of that war and how the field of military medicine was forever changed as a result of the knowledge gained during the conflict.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the committee,

Frederick C. Skvara, MD, Chair  
Lois R. Densky-Wolff, MAL  
Allen B. Weisse, MD

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### **The Medical History Society of New Jersey at Twenty-Five** By Allen B. Weisse, MD

No account of the Medical History Society of New Jersey (MHSNJ) would be complete without mention of Morris H. Saffron, MD (1905-1993) (Figure 1). Indeed the advancement of interest in medical history throughout the state even before the establishment of the MHSNJ was, in large part, due to his untiring efforts.

Saffron was born in Passaic in 1905. He received his bachelor's degree from Columbia University in 1925 and his MD from the University of Maryland in 1928. Later in his career, as his interest in medical history matured, he obtained a master's degree in history and, at the age of 63, a PhD, both from Columbia. His medical specialty was dermatology, which he practiced both in New York City and New Jersey. His knowledge of medical history was broad, although his major interest was the American colonial period.

With the opening of the first permanent medical school in New Jersey, the Seton Hall College of Medicine in Jersey City in 1956, Dean Charles L. Brown appointed Dr. Saffron professor of medical history. This became a required course at the school until Dean Brown's retirement five years later. His successor as dean insisted on

full-time faculty only on the staff, ending Saffron's appointment and the formal inclusion of medical history within the curriculum.

In 1962, with the establishment of the Rutgers Medical School, Dean DeWitt Stetten, Jr., appointed Saffron as a lecturer in medical history. Dr. Saffron continued contributing in this way until a coronary attack sharply limited his activities. He did however continue to give occasional lectures at Seton Hall (now the New Jersey Medical School) until his death in 1993. At the New Jersey Medical School for a number of years non-credit noontime electives in medical history have been offered by Drs. Francis P. Chinard and William D. Sharpe.

Before the formal organization of the MHSNJ, a number of other attempts were made by Saffron and others to stimulate interest in medical history throughout the state. In 1959 the Academy of Medicine of New Jersey established a section on Historical and Cultural Medicine, chaired initially by Dr. Saffron. The first meeting was held in 1960. Edward F. Sciorsci, MD, served as the next chairman (1964-67), succeeded by Dr. Sharpe (1967-69). After this no further mention or listing of this section appears in the bulletin of the academy.

The New Jersey Academy of Science established a section on The History of Science and Technology in 1965. Annual meetings took place for two or three years, after which such efforts petered out by 1966 or 1967.

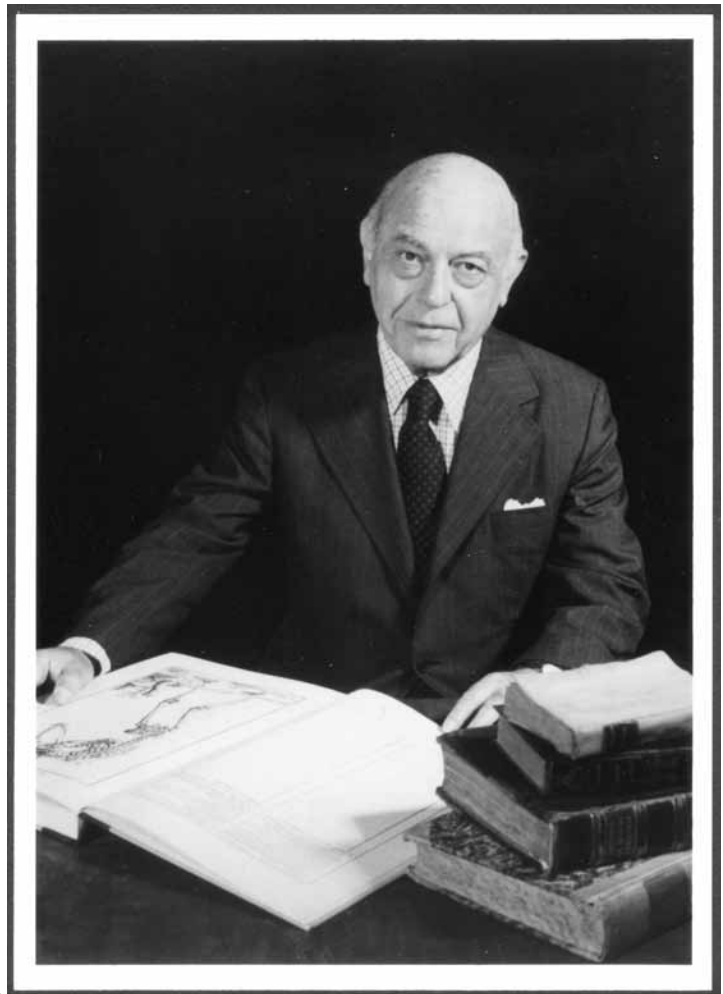


Figure 1. Morris H. Saffron, MD (1905-1993) (Courtesy of the UMDNJ Libraries Special Collections)

A New Jersey Society of Medical Historians was formed in 1970 (Figure 2). Records are available concerning two symposia, one in 1970 and another in 1973. This group thereafter also became inactive. In 1975 a noteworthy event took place, a bicentennial symposium entitled "American Medicine During the Revolution," at which a number of excellent papers were presented. The Medical Society of New Jersey, the Academy of Medicine of New Jersey, and the College of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey sponsored it jointly.

Finally, in May 1980, a group of 35 determined physicians and others formed what has become a permanent and valuable fixture in the intellectual medical life of our state: the Medical History Society of New Jersey. Some of the founders are still alive and active within the society: Francis P. Chinard, Vincent J. Cirillo, David L. Cowen, William F. Helfand, William D. Sharpe and Richard P. Wedeen, among others.

The membership of the Society has grown over the years, leveling off at approximately 100 active members. With a two-year term for the elected officers, 13 individuals have now served as president since the start of the organization (Table 1). As of this writing, all but Dr. Guthorn are alive and active. Frank F. Katz, PhD, has effectively toiled away for a number of years as secretary-treasurer. As important were the contributions of the elective officers there were those of medical archivist/librarians. Barbara Smith Irwin, MLS, performed admirably in this role for nine years (1988-1997) and has been succeeded by the equally effective Lois Densky-Wolff, MAL. Irwin also was responsible for the publication of the Newsletter until 1992 at which time Densky-Wolff took on this task. Sandra Moss, MD, following her presidency has insured, as program committee chairperson, that superb visiting speakers appear as guests at the semiannual meetings of the Society. For many years, Mr. Charles Heitzmann of the Academy of Medicine of New Jersey offered worthy support for our endeavors.

The annual schedule of meetings (in addition to executive committee meetings) was established early: a fall and spring meeting at each of which, following a business session, several short papers are delivered, usually by



Figure 2. Participants in the New Jersey Medical History Symposium, Oct. 24, 1970

First row (L-R) David L. Cowen\*, Morris H. Saffron\*, and Thomas J. White.  
 Second Row (L-R) Fred B. Rogers\*, Alfred R. Henderson, Harold D. Barnshaw,  
 William D. Sharpe and Nicholas Dewey.  
 (Reprinted from the *Academy of Medicine of New Jersey Bulletin* 1970; 16(4).  
 Asterisk indicates charter member of the Medical History Society of New Jersey.

Society members, and then a major dinner address by a national or international authority on some aspect of medical history. The location of these meeting varied for some time with the Academy of Medicine, Rutgers Medical School or the New Jersey Medical School supplying space. Thanks mainly to the efforts of Robert L. Thompson, EdD, a past-president of the Society, the Nassau Club in Princeton became the permanent dinner meeting site for the group in 1991.

As the Society has matured and grown it has become a constituent society of the American Association for the History of Medicine (1988). A number of steps have been taken to improve and expand our scope:

### Lecture Related Activities

From the time of the first meeting, thanks to the generosity of Dr. Saffron, a lecture endowed by him and carrying his name is featured at every spring meeting. The first

of these was delivered by Prof. Genevieve Miller and entitled "The Control of Smallpox in Colonial America." For the fall meeting support for the invited lecturer has been provided from various sources. New Jersey based firms for a time supported this as the Corporate Lecture. This was succeeded by our own support as the Society Lecture. Since 2002 the Foundation of UMDNJ has underwritten this event. Outstanding medical historians who have appeared before the Society include Lester King, Gert H. Brieger, Gerald I. Geison, W. Bruce Fye, Nancy Tomes, Sherwin Nuland, Michael Bliss and Charles E. Rosenberg.

Since 1992, video recordings of the talks have been recorded by Christine E. Haycock, MD. These have been made available to members unable to attend a meeting and are retained as a permanent record of each event. In the same year, Frederick C. Skvara, MD, began to present philatelic exhibits dedicated to the subjects to be discussed, adding another important dimension to the proceedings.

In the future the MHSNJ will assume responsibility for the Annual Weiss Lecture on the History of Medicine, held at the New Jersey Medical School and endowed through the Foundation of UMDNJ.

### Awards and Prizes

In 1984, a student essay prize was established to honor Dr. Stephen Wickes (1813-1889), a New Jersey pioneer in the field of medical history. This is open to undergraduate and graduate students at the college level. In 1994, the Pasteur Prize for an essay on a subject or subjects chosen for the year by the MHSNJ was opened to high school students. This is currently inactive.

In 2001, the Society established the David L. Cowen Award for Achievement in Medical History and named Prof. Cowen as the first recipient.

### Other Support

In another contribution to the cause of medical history, Dr. Saffron left an endowment "to enhance the study and teaching of medical history at UMDNJ". In 2001, an Education Fund was established to insure the financial solvency of the society, make special purchases possible, and allow for it to meet unanticipated expenses.

**Other Activities**

In 1982, an oral history project was initiated to record the reminiscences of prominent New Jersey medical figures during the period of the Great Depression, 1929-1939. These interviews, however, also included many other aspects of New Jersey medicine during this time.

A number of symposia have been held to highlight special aspects of medicine. One was a Symposium on Women in Medicine (1988); another a Salute to Radiology (1995); another dedicated to Civil War Medicine (2000). Also in 2000, there was held a symposium entitled "First Do No Harm," dedicated to the evolution of human consent in the performance of medical research. A combined session was held with the Theobald Smith Society in 1991. In 1993, a book entitled *Toxic Circles: Environmental Hazards from the Workplace into the Community* was published to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Society. (1)

The year of 1999 was a banner one for the Society. Although the American Association for the History of Medicine had held several meetings in Atlantic City between 1926 and 1946 to coincide with the clinical meetings held there, it was in 1999 that the MHSNJ hosted the AAHM for the first time in New Brunswick, combining our spring meeting with that of the larger organization. In addition to the regular program of the AAHM special lectures on New Jersey medicine were held along with an optional tour of the Ellis Island medical facilities. An added feature was an exhibit developed by Karen Reeds, PhD, and entitled "A State of Health: New Jersey's Medical Heritage," and resulting in a book by the same name. (2) In the same year, a *Guide to Resources in Medical History in New Jersey* was published with Frank Katz as the project director. (3)

Keeping up with the times, we established a website that went online in February 2001 ([www.mhsnj.org](http://www.mhsnj.org)). This provides access to the Newsletter, the officers, and other important information for interested parties.

The MHSNJ is somewhat unique when compared to other medical history societies throughout the country. Although we have some interaction with UMDNJ and a number of our members have been or are employees of the university, the Society is a completely independent, freestanding organization. A recent polling by e-mail and the internet of the other 49 states and the District of Columbia revealed that only two other medical history societies in the nation seem to fit this description: The Charles F. Reynolds Medical History Society in Pittsburgh and the Beaumont Medical Club of New Haven, Connecticut. Like us, these two societies seem to be thriving. No doubt such success derives from a similar determination and enthusiasm; a dedication that has guided us for the first 25 years of our existence and promises to propel us into many more years of fruitful endeavors in the interest of medical history.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: Over a period of twenty-five years papers can become lost or misplaced; memories can dim or distort. A number of people have helped in dealing with these problems in the preparation of this paper. I am especially indebted to David L. Cowen, Vincent J. Cirillo, William D. Sharpe, Lois Densky-Wolff and Frank F. Katz.

## References:

1. Helen E. Sheehan and Richard P. Wedeen, Eds. *Toxic Circles: Environmental Hazards from the Workplace into the Community* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1993)
2. Karen Reeds. *A State of Health: New Jersey's Medical Heritage* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001)
3. Frank F. Katz. *A Guide to Resources in Medical History in New Jersey* (Princeton Junction, NJ: The Medical History Society of New Jersey, 1999)

## About the author:

Allen B. Weisse, MD, retired from his full-time appointment as professor of medicine at the UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School in 1997 but continues there as clinical professor of medicine while pursuing an interest in various aspects of medical history.

**The Medical History Society of New Jersey  
Presidents, 1980 - 2005**

1980-1982	Peter J. Guthorn, MD
1982-1984	David L. Cowen, MA, LittD
1984-1986	Francis P. Chinard, MD
1986-1988	Francis P. Chinard, MD
1988-1990	Richard P. Wedeen, MD
1990-1992	Robert L. Thompson, EdD

1992-1994	Sandra W. Moss, MD
1994-1996	William C. Campbell, PhD
1996-1998	Murray Rosenberg, MD
1998-2000	Helen E. Sheehan, PhD
2000-2002	Allen B. Weisse, MD
2002-2004	Frederick C. Skvara, MD
2004-2006	Daniel P. Greenfield, MD

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### What's New at UMDNJ Special Collections?

Tracy Holster, a Rutgers University undergraduate, recently completed a one-semester internship at Special Collections. Tracy, a junior majoring in history, worked 112 hours processing manuscript collections. Tracy organized, arranged, and described records of the American Association for Cancer Education, New Jersey Neurosurgical Society, and Medical History Society of New Jersey so that these materials will be more accessible to researchers.

A number of rare and out-of-print books were acquired for the collection with funding provided by the Morris S. Saffron Book Endowment. Acquisitions include *A Leechbook or Collection of Medical Recipes of the 15th Century* by W.R. Dawson (1934), William H. Reed's *Hospital Life in the Army of the Potomac* (1866), Austin O'Malley's *The Ethics of Medical Homicide and Mutilation* (1919), Thomas A. Mapleson's *A Treatise on the Art of Cupping: in Which the History of the Operation is Traced; the Various Diseases in Which it is Useful Indicated; and the Most Approved Method of Performing it Described* (1813), Charles Mills' *The Nervous System and its Diseases* (1898), S. Weir Mitchell's *Clinical Lessons on Nervous Diseases* (1897), and Richard Upton Piper's *Operative Surgery Illustrated: Containing More than Nineteen Hundred Engravings; Including Two Hundred Original, and Fifty Colored Drawings: with Explanatory Test, Also a Chapter on the Use of Ether in Surgery* (1852).

Four original watercolor artworks for various publications of the Woodbury, NJ patent medicine firm, G.G. Green, were acquired with funding from Saffron Book Endowment. The firm's publicity company based in Toronto produced these late 19<sup>th</sup> century artworks. The beautiful watercolors document a G.G. Green almanac (1883-84) and several other types of advertising publications.

For more information on medical history resources, contact [densky@umdnj.edu](mailto:densky@umdnj.edu) or (973) 972-7830.

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### MEMBERS' PUBLICATIONS IN THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE, 2004

**Cirillo VJ.** *Alfred Alexander Woodhull*. In: *Encyclopedia of New Jersey*, eds. Maxine N. Lurie and Marc Mappen. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, p. 884.

**Cowen DL.** Apothecaries. In: *Europe 1450-1789: Encyclopedia of the early modern world*. V. 1. NY: Scribners, 2004, pp. 81-6.

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\_\_\_\_\_. Peptic ulcer in twentieth-century America. *NJ Med* 2004; 101 (Jan-Feb): 19-28.

**Jöchle, W.** Chaldean pedigree chart, indicating selective breeding of horses circa 4000 BC: something is wrong. *J Equine Vet Sci* 2005; 15: 6-7.

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The *Newsletter of the Medical History Society of New Jersey* is published in May and October by the Society, and is a benefit of membership. **Deadline for the next newsletter is September 1, 2005.** Short articles (250 words) on medical history topics are especially welcome. Please send correspondence and submissions to:

Lois Densky-Wolff  
 Editor, *MHSNJ Newsletter*  
 UMDNJ-George F. Smith Library  
 30 12th Avenue  
 Newark, NJ 07101-1709  
 (973) 972-7830; FAX (973) 972-7474  
[densky@umdnj.edu](mailto:densky@umdnj.edu)

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# Philatelic Sketches in Medicine

Frederick C. Skvara, M.D.

## ➤ The TB Sanatorium: A Salubrious Environment ➤

A number of countries over the past 100 years have issued stamps to help in the fight against tuberculosis, a disease that has been common since ancient times. Hippocrates named it phthisis or wasting disease and described it as the most common and fatal disease of his time. The Roman physician, Claudius Galen thought that it was incurable and noted that it was almost always fatal, but nevertheless recommended that consumptives be treated with fresh air, rest and good food.

The first major breakthrough in the treatment of tuberculosis, actually echoed Galen's recommendations and was the concept of the TB sanatorium in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Hermann Brehmer (1826–1889), a botany student from Silesia who had developed tuberculosis traveled to the Himalayan Mountains on the advice of his doctor, where he studied botany and recovered from his disease. He returned to Prussia deciding to study medicine and after receiving his degree in 1854, opened the first TB sanatorium in Gorbardsdorf, a village in the Prussian province of Silesia. Situated in a deep valley of fir trees 1900 feet above sea level in the Waldenburg mountain range, patients were exposed to abundant fresh air and sunlight, given good nutrition and ample periods of rest. This institution and Brehmer's principles became a model for the development of other sanatoriums around the world.

In the United States, Edward Livingston Trudeau (1848–1916) was diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1873, two years after graduating from the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons. After several attempts to arrest the disease failed, he moved to Saranac Lake in the Adirondack Mountains of New York to rest and probably to die. While spending several summers and winters there and practicing the principles of Dr. Brehmer, he recovered from his disease. In 1884, he founded the Adirondack Cottage Sanatorium at Saranac Lake, the first sanatorium for tuberculosis in the United States.

The concept of TB sanatoriums was quickly accepted and began to appear around the world in salubrious environments and offering patients lots of sunlight and fresh air, nutritious food and plenty of rest. Although at first they were private institutions for the wealthy, it wasn't long before sanatoriums were established for the less wealthy and even the poor.

In 1897, the first semipostal stamps were issued with the surcharge being used to raise money for a TB sanatorium. The initial issuance of Christmas Seals by Denmark in 1904 and the United States in 1907 was also driven by the need to raise money for these institutions.



Hungary 1987  
Hippocrates  
(460–377 BC)



Yemen Arab Republic 1966  
Claudius Galen (c 130–200 AD)



Netherlands 1906  
The 4 therapies for TB:  
sunlight, water, air, food



France 1945  
TB patient in  
chaise longue



United States Christmas  
Seal 1938  
Edward Trudeau



United States Christmas  
Seal 1934  
"Little Red Cottage" sana-  
torium at Saranac Lake



New South Wales 1897  
World's first semipostal stamp



Latvia 1930  
TB sanatorium,  
Riga



Romania 1932  
TB sanatorium