

Sestre milosrdnice



University Hospital

HISTORICAL REVIEW

Every year, our Hospital celebrates some important anniversary, in particular those related to the beginning of work of some of our clinical departments and divisions. This year is no exception to the rule, so now, at the beginning of 2015, we celebrate the 130th anniversary of our Clinical Department of Surgery, which started working as early as 1885. At the time, our Hospital, then known as The National Public Hospital, was located in Ilica 83 and headed by Dr Ivan Kosirnik. Due to the increasing number of patients requiring surgical treatment, Dr Kosirnik invited Dr Teodor Wickerhauser, a surgeon, then assistant to Dr Josip Fon at Milosrdna braća Hospital, to take over the position of surgeon in our Hospital. Two departments were established: internal headed by Dr Ivan Kosirnik and a new one, surgical, headed by Dr Teodor Wickerhauser. Upon his taking over the

position at our Hospital, Dr Wickerhauser increased the number of operations and introduced novel methods of treatment; as early as 1892 he had two and in 1893 three assistant physicians. Surgical Department underwent intensive development when the Hospital moved to Vinogradska cesta in 1894; by the end of the 19th century, this Department had seven physicians and performed 570 major operative procedures and about 1000 minor operative procedures *per* year. Development of surgery at our Hospital is best illustrated by Wickerhauser's report on abdominal surgery, presented at the 25th anniversary of the Medical Association of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia in 1899 and the Testimonial from 1910 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his work, organized by Wickerhauser's disciples Miroslav Čačković, Dragutin Mašek, Kurt Hühn, Franjo Durst, Aleksandar Blašković and many



Surgical department

others. In the time to come, Wickerhauser's disciples were the first specialists and founders of new divisions and departments. The great role of Dr Wickerhauser and his disciples Dr Čačković and Dr Mašek not only at our Hospital but also in Croatian surgery was recognized by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy by appointing them the first professors at the newly established School of Medicine in Zagreb. After Dr Wickerhauser, Surgical Department was headed by Professor Miroslav Čačković who continued the tradition, i.e. development of surgery in practice, education and research, which has proved beyond doubt as the best way during its 130-year history. They were followed by many surgeons and heads of the Department having established new divisions, introduced novel surgical specialties, thus contributing to the Department of Surgery growing into Clinical Department of Surgery of the School of Dental Medicine. We hope that such a prosperous trend will continue through further development keeping up with advancements

in surgery worldwide, along with rich educational activity and research stimulating the search for ever better therapeutic options for our patients. The history of the Clinical Department of Surgery shows that surgeons have frequently been endangered by wars, political and in particular financial troubles; however, as Dr Vatroslav Florschütz, another Wickerhauser's disciple, said: "Wickerhauser has imbued his disciples with the ability to get along also with modest and slender means while organizing and upgrading surgical profession slowly and persistently to keep up with modern achievements in the field"¹. We do hope that such an approach will also help our surgeons in the 21st century.

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Reference

1. Florschütz V. Dr Teodor Wickerhauser i njegova škola. Lijec Vjesn. 1933;55:465-6.