Books

**Intestinal fistulas** By J Alexander-Williams and Miles Irving. (Pp. 230; illustrated; price not stated.) Bristol: John Wright. 1982.

This book is an admirable attempt to cover all the problems of every type of intestinal fistula, as well as their associated metabolic and nutritional disorders.

The book is not a long one and is divided into 13 well selected chapters, including one on 'general management' and another on 'organisation and care'. But each chapter on the various types of fistula (pancreatic, biliary, gastric, etc) includes advice on skin care and nutritional requirements in each case. Because the prose style is admirably concise and the illustrations informative, there are few situations that are not covered by the book, and as one might expect from them, the authors give sensible dogmatic guidance when it is required.

If for nothing else, I would recommend this book for the way in which it presents the evidence for a 'conservative' – that is, nonoperative – approach to most fistulas, because modern appliances and nutritional support systems can maintain the patient in reasonable health while the fistula is given every chance to close spontaneously.

I suspect that the authors, in writing this excellent book, have also established that some of the bad cases should be managed in centres with special experience of such problems, especially if surgical re-intervention seems likely. But the book should be available to all gastrointestinal departments, and read by the surgeons whether they are 'aspirants' or established consultants.

**Books received**


An appreciation: Dr Harry Bockus

Perhaps it is only once in a lifetime that one meets a really great teacher and clinician, and so it was with Dr Harry Bockus, who sadly died earlier this year in his 84th year. He graduated in 1917, served in the US Medical Corps from 1917 to 1919 in Cuba, and it was there that he first learnt Spanish, which was to serve him so well in the South Americas. Early he came under the influence of Max Einhorn, and then settled down in Philadelphia and joined the staff of the Graduate Hospital, which was to be his medical home for the rest of his professional life.

In 1944–46 the first edition of his world-famous book *Gastroenterology* was published. The book was written by Bockus, his colleagues, and
graduates, and subsequent editions have been revised over the years. There are four volumes now, and a seven-volume edition is to be published in the future by authors from all over the world.

In 1958 he was chairman of the first World Congress of Gastroenterology, which was held in Washington. As a teacher he was superb. He ran excellent postgraduate courses, his students coming from some 35 different countries, and he affectionately became known to them as ‘El Maestro’ or ‘The Silver Fox’. He was meticulous in his observations and delighted in ‘needling’ his students, but always appreciated a firm answer from them, even if he did not agree with it.

He was invariably gracious in acknowledging the help of others, such as radiologists and pathologists, and always sufficiently humble to admit a mistake.

He received innumerable awards and honorary degrees from all over the world, in particular from South America. He was a tireless writer and wrote some 200 papers.

Some of the magic he possessed fell onto nearly all his students and those with whom he came into contact. A really kind and generous-hearted man, he was not only a very great teacher and mentor, but a wonderful friend who will be missed by many, including his patients, who loved him deeply, and he will be remembered by all with deep gratitude and respect.

It is appropriate indeed that the first Bockus Medal honouring the father of American Gastroenterology should have been awarded recently in Stockholm to the father of British Gastroenterology, Sir Francis Avery Jones.

C FOSTER COOPER

Gastrointestinal Pathology Club
The Gastrointestinal Pathology Club was founded in 1979 to unite persons with an interest in the morphologic study of the GI tract and liver, to disseminate and increase knowledge about the pathology of these organs, and to encourage the development of gastrointestinal pathology as a subspecialty. The club currently meets once a year immediately preceding the annual meeting of the International Academy of Pathology (USA-Canadian Division). For further information and application form, contact: Dr Gerald Abrams, Secretary-Treasurer, GI Pathology Club, Department of Pathology, University of Michigan Medical Center, 1335 East Catherine Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109, USA.

Radiology of the Small Intestine
A one day course will be held on 12 May 1983 at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford. Topics will include barium studies with particular reference to duodenal intubation techniques, plain radiographs, and angiography. It is intended for consultants, senior registrars, registrars and research workers in gastroenterology, radiology and surgery. Fee: £25.00 including coffee, lunch, and tea. Details from Dr D J Nolan, Department of Radiology, John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford OX3 9DU. Tel. 0865-817238.

The British Digestive Foundation
The Foundation is pleased to announce that Princess Michael of Kent has kindly agreed to become its Patron. Also that the Thomas Hunt Memorial Grant has been awarded to Dr A J Hall at Southampton Hospital, and the Hurst Travel Grant to Dr J F Mayberry at the Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport, Gwent.

News

Dr C C Booth
It is with great pleasure we record that the name of Dr C C Booth appeared in the 1983 New Year Honours list as Knight Bachelor. Dr Booth, who is Director of the Clinical Research Centre at Northwick Park Hospital, served as editor of Gut from 1976–1981.

Third Italian Week on Digestive Diseases
The third Italian Week on Digestive Diseases will be held in Bari (Fiera del Levante) from 27 June to 1 July 1983. Details from Istituto di Clinica Medica 1a dell’Università di Bari, Piazza Giulio Cesare 11, 70124 Bari, Italy.