



The Special Field: A History of Neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins

Neil A. Grauer

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That Johns Hopkins was the birthplace of modern neurosurgery is indisputable, with Harvey Cushing and Walter Dandy as its founding fathers. When Harvey Cushing, then an associate professor of surgery at Hopkins, published "The Special Field of Neurological Surgery" in the March 1905 issue of the widely circulated *Bulletin of The Johns Hopkins Hospital*, he essentially provided neurosurgery's combined birth certificate and declaration of independence, asserting that it was a unique specialty requiring the undivided attention of its prospective practitioners. In part, it is the 110th anniversary of Cushing's "The Special Field" that this book commemorates. When Walter Dandy, Cushing's one-time resident and subsequent rival, took over Hopkins neurosurgery in 1912, he succeeded in ensuring that excellence in neurosurgery and impressive advances in its practice would become synonymous with Johns Hopkins. The founding of neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins and its extraordinary development over the ensuing decades has been among the greatest accomplishments of Johns Hopkins Medicine. Today, the Johns Hopkins Department of Neurosurgery is one of the largest of its kind in the world. Indeed, its prodigious growth over the past 15 years also inspired the writing of this book. During this period, the Department of Neurosurgery has experienced exponential expansion in the size of its faculty, its fundraising for research and endowed professorships, its number of clinical trials and major operations. The scope of its impact continues reaching far beyond Baltimore. It now has become a regional even international presence, influencing the care of more and more patients every year. Lavishly illustrated, *The Special Field* provides a lively and riveting account of the history of Johns Hopkins neurosurgery particularly its advances in this immensely challenging field over the past 15 years, as Hopkins has remained in the forefront of neurosurgical research, education and patient care.

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