

VF Gray, Henry, 1827-1861

... book news and views

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The Henry Gray Award

At the suggestion of Charles Mayo Goss, editor of *Gray's Anatomy*, and with the enthusiastic support of the officers of the American Association of Anatomists, Lea & Febiger has established The Henry Gray Award.

This award, to be made annually at the meeting of the Association of Anatomists, is given "in recognition of sustained and outstanding service to the entire community of anatomists through scholarly accomplishments in original investigation, teaching, and writing in one of the fields of anatomy."

Edward Allen Boyden, Ph.D., Research Professor in the Department of Biological Structure, University of Washington, Seattle, was the recipient of the 1970 Henry Gray Award.

Henry Gray, whose father was private messenger to George IV, and also to William IV, was born in 1827, but of his childhood and early education nothing is known.

On May 6, 1845, he entered as a perpetual student at St. George's Hospital, London, and he is described by those who knew him as "a most painstaking and methodical worker, and one who learned his anatomy by the slow but invaluable method of making dissections for himself."

While still a student he secured, in 1848, the triennial prize of the Royal College of Surgeons for an essay entitled, "The Origin, Connections and Distribution of the Nerves to the Human Eye and Its Appendages, Illustrated by Comparative Dissections of the Eye in Other Vertebrate Animals."

At the early age of twenty-five he was, in 1852, elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and in the following year he obtained the Astley Cooper prize of three hundred guineas for a dissertation, "On the Structure and Use of the Spleen."

He held successively the posts of demonstrator of anatomy, curator of the museum, and lecturer on anatomy at St. George's Hospital, and was in 1861, a candidate for the post of assistant surgeon. Unfortunately he was struck down by an attack of confluent smallpox, which he contracted while looking after a nephew who was suffering from that disease, and died at the early age of thirty-four. A career of great promise was thus untimely cut short. Writing on June 15, 1861, Sir Benjamin Brodie (to whom the first edition of the *Anatomy* was dedicated) said, "His death, just as he was on the point of obtaining the reward of his labors ... is a great loss to the Hospital and School."

In 1858 Gray published the first edition of his *Anatomy* which covered 750 pages and contained 363 figures. He had the good fortune to secure the help of his friend, Dr. H. Vandyke Carter, a skilled draughtsman and formerly a demonstrator of anatomy at St. George's Hospital. Carter made the drawings from which the engravings were executed, and the success of the book was, in the first instance, undoubtedly due in no small measure to the excellence of its illustrations. The first edition of Gray's *Anatomy* was published in London by John W. Parker and Son in 1858 and in June of the following year in Philadelphia by Blanchard and Lea who had purchased the American rights for the book.

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