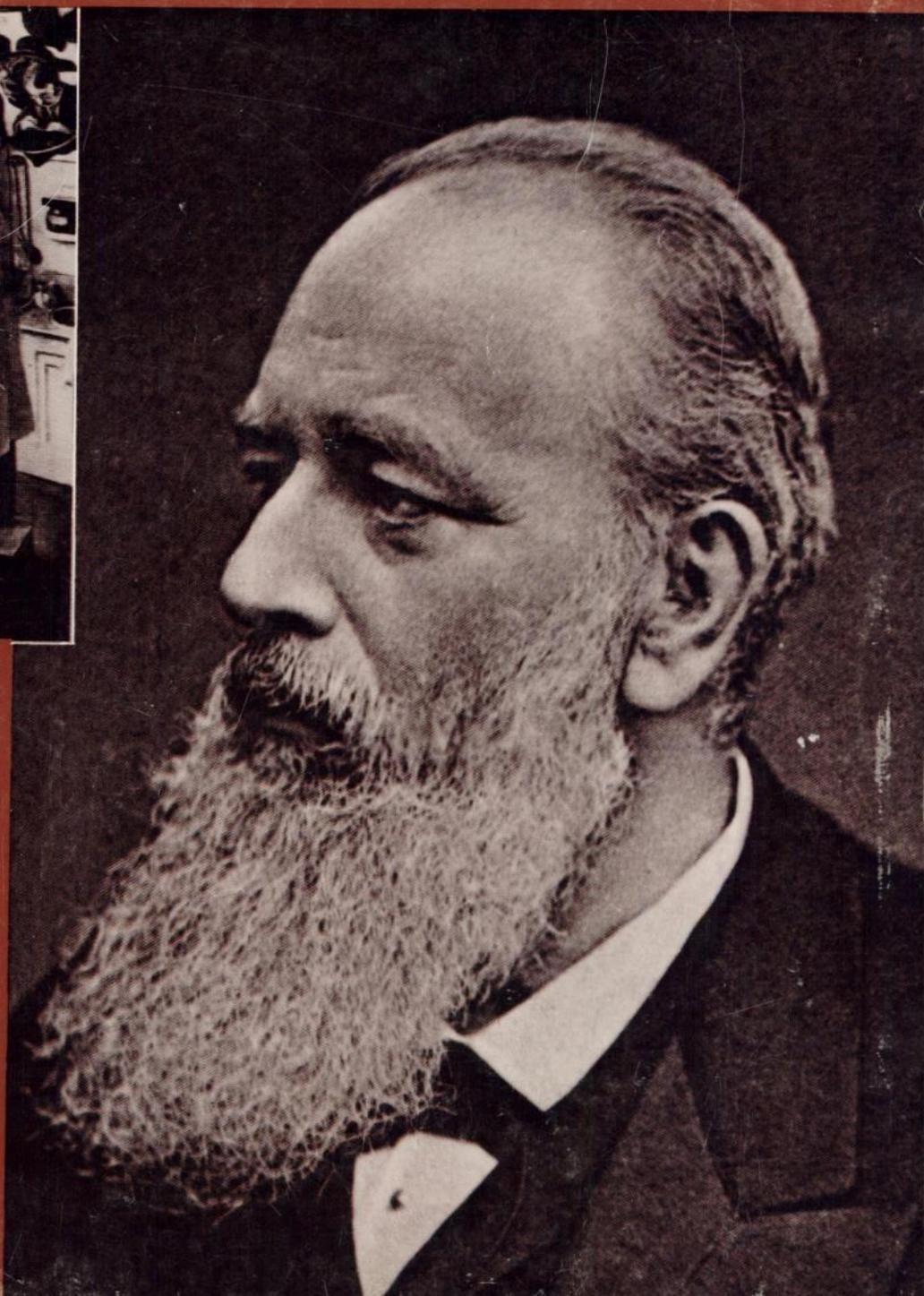
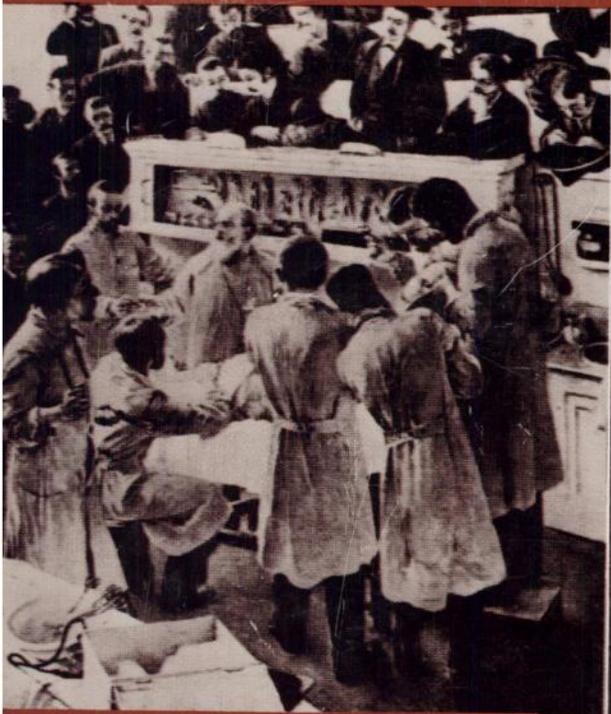


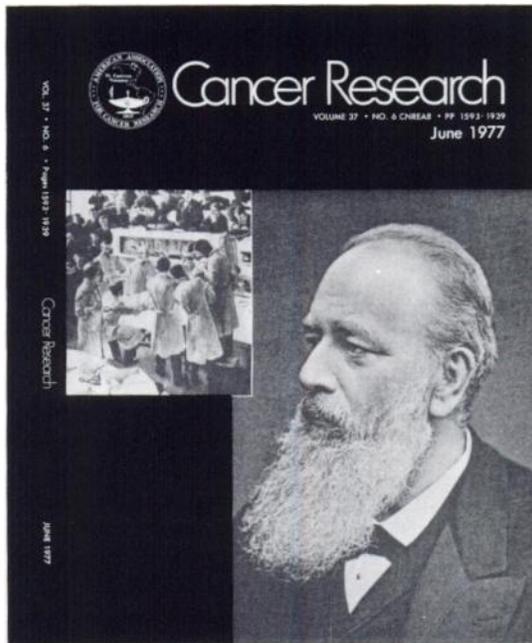
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COVER LEGEND



Surgery remains the chief modality in the successful treatment of most types and sites of cancer.

Christian Albert Theodor Billroth (1829–1894) occupies an unchallenged place among the greatest of surgeons, and was a pioneer in the surgical treatment of cancer of internal organs that anesthesia and aseptic surgery made possible.

Billroth, born on the island of Rügen, graduated in medicine from Berlin in 1852, and became an assistant to Langenbeck at Göttingen. He was appointed professor of surgery at Zürich in 1860, and then at Vienna in 1867, where he spent the rest of his life and achieved his surgical triumphs. These

included resection of the esophagus in 1871 (*Arch. Klin. Chir.*, 13: 65–69, 1871), complete excision of the larynx in 1873, partial gastrectomy in 1881 (*Wien. Med. Wochschr.*, 31: 161–165, 1881), and gastrojejunostomy in 1885. He performed many intestinal resections and enterorrhagies, as well as pelvic operations and mastectomies.

Among Billroth's many pupils were Mikulicz, Czerny, Wölfler, Kocher, Hacker, Eiselberg, and Narath. He was a prolific writer, a good artist, and a talented musician; his friendship with Johannes Brahms was one of his attachments to Vienna.

It was Billroth's practice to publish annually his complete surgical results. Alexandre von Winwarter (1848–1916) of Belgium, one of his assistants, compiled these data into one of the first statistical reviews of operative results in cancer, especially in patients with mammary and gastric cancer (*Beiträge zur Statistik der Carcinome*. Stuttgart: Enke, 1878). The end results on 548 patients with carcinoma treated in Billroth's clinic between 1867 and 1876 were presented; in cancer of the breast, only 4.7% of 170 patients were alive and well 3 or more years later.

The photograph of Billroth at the age of 59 is from *Briefe von Theodor Billroth*. Ed. 2. Hannover and Leipzig: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1896. The 1890 painting of Billroth operating, by R. Seligman, is from "Theodor Billroth, le savant et le chirurgien," *Histoire de la Médecine* Vol. 10, p. 37, 1960.

We are indebted to Ruth J. Mann, of the Mayo Clinic Library, Rochester, Minn., for the illustrations and information from her article on Billroth (*Mayo Clin. Proc.*, 49: 132–135, 1974).

M.B.S.