Table 2  Details of patients with confirmed diaphragmatic palsy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
<th>Operation</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15 months</td>
<td>Fallot, LMABT, WS</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>L. Palsy</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Fallot, DS, AVSD</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>L. Palsy</td>
<td>Plication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8 months</td>
<td>Fallot</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>L. Palsy</td>
<td>Plication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16 months</td>
<td>Fallot</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>L. Palsy</td>
<td>Plication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>22 months</td>
<td>Fallot, DA</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>L. Palsy</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

L, left hemidiaphragm; LMABT, previous left modified Blalock-Taussig shunt; WS, previous Waterston shunt; DS, Down syndrome; AVSD, atrioventricular septal defect; PAB, pulmonary artery banding; DA, ductus arteriosus.

We thank Dr Ian James, Dr Edward Sumner, and Dr Duncan Macrae of the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit for allowing us to study patients under their care.

Children and adults, but diaphragmatic palsy is hardly ever the cause of major respiratory morbidity in this group and they rarely require plication.


VIEWS FROM THE PAST  Ernest Henry Starling

Starling had already published his law of the heart (see page 4) before his military service during the first world war. Using cardiac catheterisation, John McMichael, Peter Sharp-ey-Schafer, and Sheila Howarth questioned the general applicability of this law in studies started during the second world war (Lewis collection).

DENNIS M KRICKLER