

investigations for organisms that cannot readily be isolated by conventional culture methods such as *Coxiella burnetii*, *Chlamydia* spp and the recently recognised *Bartonella* (previously *Rochalimaea*) spp, which incidentally give serological cross reactions with *Chlamydia* spp.¹⁰

In conclusion, it is important to emphasise that the greatest advances in the successful management of infective endocarditis since the advent of penicillin have come from cardiology and cardiac surgery. Remarkably, some hospital clinicians are still reluctant to refer patients for specialist care; this is quite unacceptable. As we approach the millennium it would be gratifying if the UK guidelines on prophylaxis and treatment (to which the BSAC working party devote much time) could be followed by more doctors.

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STAMPS IN CARDIOLOGY

Rudolf Karl Virchow (1821–1902)



(A)

In 1960 East Germany issued a set of five stamps to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Berlin Charity and the 150th Anniversary of Humboldt University in Berlin. The 10 pfennig stamp depicted Robert Koch and the 20 pfennig stamp the University building and statues of William and Alexander von Humboldt. The 5 pfennig value featured Rudolf Virchow (A).

As part of the Celebrities' Birth Anniversaries issue appearing in 1971 East Germany again honoured Virchow with a stamp (B) to mark the 150th anniversary of his birth.

Rudolph Karl Virchow was a great pathologist whose worldwide fame was first established by his concept that cells are the basic unit of life and that a study of cell changes must be the cornerstone of pathology. He pioneered the use of the microscope for this purpose and wrote an acclaimed book *Die Cellularpathologie*.

Virchow was the first to realise and prove that clots in pulmonary arteries had not been formed there but came from leg and pelvic veins. He noted that the symptoms of pulmonary embolism ranged from sudden death to silent emboli and he related these to the pathological findings. He produced experimental emboli in the dog and later showed that phlebitis was a mechanical and not, as was then thought, an infective process. The terms "embolism" and "thrombosis" were invented by him to describe these processes. Virchow's triad identifies the three main causes of venous thrombosis. He was the first to show that arterial obstruction was often due to emboli, especially with endocarditis. In 1846 he founded the famous journal *Archiv fur*



(B)

Pathologische Anatomie und Physiologie und fur Klinische Medizin which has been published continuously ever since. It is usually known as Virchow's Archiv and the full title indicates the breadth of his interests. Authors can still benefit from his dictum "Brevity is the best guarantee of being read". He was a politician, serving in the Reichstag for 13 years as leader of the Radical party and was an outspoken opponent of Bismarck. Finally one can note that he pronounced his name "Veer-show", and was unhappy when Lord Lister referred to him in public as "Wir-chov".
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