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William P. Longmire, Jr., *Alfred Blalock – his life and times*. Privately printed, 1991. XVIII, 293 S. Ill. \$22.– (plus postage). (Available from: Johns Hopkins Hospital, Departement of Surgery, Development Office, 1131 Reed Hall, 1620 McElderry Street, Baltimore, Md. 21205, USA).

Historically Blalock symbolizes the beginning of modern cardiovascular surgery – just as his hospital, Johns Hopkins, with his famous predecessor Halsted is considered to be the birthplace of the meticulous 20th century surgical technique. One should certainly not forget Alexis Carrel, Robert Gross, Bailey, Gibbon and Lillehei, but Blalock was indeed an exceptional combination of an outstanding clinical surgeon, research oriented scholar and inspiring teacher. The worldwide publicity surrounding the “Blue Baby Operation” started a tremendous movement towards cardiovascular surgery everywhere. Longmire was meant to write this book about Blalock and his times. Blalock’s chief-resident during World War II, he assisted Blalock for his first epochmaking Tetralogy-Operation in November 1944. Longmire, a surgical pioneer in his own right, remained a lifelong friend of his teacher – even after having moved to California to establish a new surgical department at U.C.L.A. By a fortunate coincidence Longmire kept a diary all through these fascinating years. His entries, combined with recent comments from family members and devoted trainees, are the basis for this living recollection of this complex man’s life. His early fight with tuberculosis, the frequently close personal relationship with his former residents, his unsuccessful interference in the choice of his successor and the tragic end from an undiagnosed and rare cancer provide a very human touch to this important historical document.

In the surgical history the tremendous impact of the Blalock-Taussig operation on the development of a new discipline obscures Blalock’s in some way more important contributions. The results of his research on hemorrhagic shock saved thousands of allied soldiers. His thymectomy for myasthenia gravis is a major breakthrough and his experimentation with pulmonary hypertension was the basis for the Blalock-Taussig shunt.

Blalock was an inspiring teacher, and of 40 chief-residents he trained, 14 went on to become professors and department chairmen themselves.

The extremely well written, richly documented book of Longmire on the life and times of Blalock provides posterity with an authentic picture of this man, who created the Hopkins School of Surgery and who stands for surgical progress during the second half of our century. Blalock said: "Fortunate are those who have the proper combination of enthusiasm, critical judgement and an open mind", essential qualities at a time when unpredictable technical advances provide unforeseen developments in the art of surgery.

Andreas P. Naef

Leopoldina-Meeting zur Edition naturwissenschaftlicher Texte der Goethezeit vom 22. bis 23. Mai 1992 in Halle (Saale). Wissenschaftl. Vorbereitung und Organisation: Wolf von Engelhardt, Ilse Jahn, Dorothea Kuhn. Halle (Saale), Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina, 1992. 158 S. Ill. (Acta Historica Leopoldina, Nr. 20/1992). DM 38,-. ISBN 3-335-00367-5.

Die Tagung feierte die «50jährige Wiederkehr des Beschlusses einer Herausgabe von Goethes naturwissenschaftlichen Schriften» durch die Leopoldina (1942, unter dem damaligen Präsidenten Emil Abderhalden). Die Dienstälteste der Unternehmung und Editorin (u. a.) der *Morphologica*, Frau Professor D. Kuhn (Marbach a. N.) rekapitulierte einleitend die (nicht ganz selbstverständliche) Geschichte «zwischen Ost und West». Die Edition ist aufgeteilt, I. in Texte (fast alle schon von Goethe selber publiziert): sie liegen in 11 Bd. seit 1970 vollständig vor; II. in (bislang nicht oder fragwürdig veröffentlichte) Materialien und Zeugnisse: hier fehlen noch 5 (von 11), 3 sind «in Vorbereitung»; ein Gesamtregister soll das Ganze abschliessen. Über Problemata ihrer Spezialitäten berichteten die Herausgeber der *Geologica* und *Mineralogica* (W. von Engelhardt, Tübingen), der «allgemeinen» sowie meteorologischen Papiere (Dietrich von Engelhardt, Lübeck) und der, übrigens als unwissenschaftlich taxierten, Goetheschen Farbenlehre (Horst Zehe, Tübingen). Besonders goutierte ich die anschliessenden Erörterungen über unterschiedliche Ausgangslagen und Editionsprinzipien: Ulrich Joost (Darmstadt) erläuterte sie am Lichtenberg-Briefwechsel (1985–1994), I. Jahn (Berlin) u. a. an der Senckenbergstiftung zu Frankfurt a. M. und am zerstreuten Nachlass Alexander von Humboldts, Manfred Wenzel (Giessen) sodann an der angelaufenen Soemmerring-Edition der Mainzer Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur. Die Diskussion (Einführung: Wolfgang Pross, Bern) drehte sich vor allem um Fragen der Kommentierung und der Auswahl, wobei am Rande auch die Leibniz-Edition (nicht aber Euler oder