

Early cancer journals 1853-1934

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The aim of this article is to identify the earliest (pre-1935) journals that contain the word cancer in their title. Although the earliest radiological journals in Europe and the USA are relatively widely known, the same cannot be said for cancer journals. The earliest journal we have been able to identify that contains the word 'cancer' was published in 1853. For the purposes of this article we consider that a journal is a publication which is issued monthly or quarterly, but not annually (although its title may contain the word 'bulletin' or 'reports' rather than 'journal'). ISSN numbers have been obtained for a few of the journals. We anticipate that these early publications will provide a useful research source for the medical historians interested in the development of cancer medicine.

Key words: cancer, early cancer journals, cancer surgery

Introduction

The earliest radiological journals (which were not sponsored by commercial companies) were the *Archives of Clinical Skiagraphy* (1896), the *American X-ray Journal* (1897), the *Archives of the Roentgen Ray* (1897), *Fortschritte auf dem Gebiete der Roentgenstrahlen* (1897), the *Transactions of the American Roentgen Ray Society* (1902) and the *Journal of the Röntgen Society* (1904). The earliest commercially organised journal was the *American Electro-therapeutic and X-ray Era* (1901) of the Friedlander Company of Chicago. The early issues of these journals were almost exclusively devoted to diagnostic X-ray applications with therapy papers and notes limited to benign conditions (such as lupus and pulmonary tuberculosis). One of the earliest papers in any radiological journal on the subject of X-ray therapy

was in 1903 in the *Transactions of the American Roentgen Ray Society* [1].

The existence of these radiological journals and their foundation dates are relatively well known [2-5]. However, this is not the case with journals solely devoted to cancer. The aim of this article is to identify all the early (we have chosen 1934 as an arbitrary cut-off year) journals which include the word *cancer** in their title.

The countries in which these journals were published include Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Cuba, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, Mexico, Poland and the USA. In the United Kingdom there was only a single journal founded during the period under review, and this was devoted only to abstracts (*Cancer Review*, 1926) although there were several annual reports on cancer from hospitals and organisations from the early 1900s.

Some of the currently most widely read cancer journals are not as old as one might assume, for example the *British Journal of Cancer* (founded in 1947) and *Cancer* (founded in 1949). Occasionally an oncology journal has originated as a radiological journal, such as the Scandinavian *Acta Oncologica* (which was founded as *Acta Radiologica* in 1921, but changed its title in 1985).

One must also distinguish between annual reports from hospitals and cancer commissions, cancer committee reports and publications which were actually journals. Examples of some early (late 19th and early 20th century) cancer reports are given in Table I. Such reports served

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* In different languages the word cancer translates as cancro (Italy), gann (Japan), krebs (German). Neoplasms translates as nowotwory (Poland).

Table I. Examples of early cancer reports from Europe and the USA. The years quoted are the first year when a report was published

1884	<i>Report of the New York Skin & Cancer Hospital.</i>
1899	<i>Annual Report of the work of the Cancer Laboratory of the New York State Board of Health conducted at the Gratwick Research Laboratory, University of Buffalo</i> (Albany: Evening Union Company).
1900	<i>Report of the Harvard University Cancer Commission.</i>
1902	<i>Report of the Imperial Cancer Commission</i> (London).
1903	<i>Report of the Ungarische Komitee für Krebsforschung</i> (Budapest).
1905	<i>Report of the Collis P. Huntington Fund for Cancer Research of the Memorial Hospital</i> (New York).

as the best method of communicating advances in cancer treatment and pathology until the establishment of *proper* journals. The description ‘Bulletin’ sometimes, but not always, referred to a journal.

Many of the journals have been identified by library holdings in Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom and USA and these invariably identify the year of first issue of the journal, but the last year of publication of now defunct cancer journals is not specified in library holdings and has to be discovered by other methods.

1853

Western Medical News & Cancer Journal

The earliest cancer journal we have identified with the word ‘cancer’ in its title was the *Western Medical News & Cancer Journal*, published in Cincinnati in 1853, but which began publication in 1851 as the *Western Medical News*. Although self-described as a ‘journal’, this publication should be considered a pamphlet. It was written by a single author, a Dr Newton, who identified himself as Dean and Professor of Surgery in Memphis, Tennessee. The entire publication of 43 pages was devoted to self-promotion of his ‘non-surgical, infallible treatment’ of maladies (mostly cancer) utilising a method ‘unknown to medical jurisprudence’. We believe from the text that he was promoting the application of caustics. This ‘journal’ continued publication as the *New York Medical News & Cancer Journal* between 1864 and 1876 or 1877.

1877

New York Quarterly Cancer Journal

This journal only existed between 1877 and 1880, with its first issue published in April 1877. Its mission, as described on its front cover was ‘Devoted to the investigation and treatment of cancer and allied diseases’. All its contents were written, edited and published by Robert S. Newton (presumably the editor of the *Western Medical News & Cancer Journal*) or Robert S. Newton Jr., from offices at 137 West 47th Street, New York City. The contents were divided into two sections termed **I**. Original Department and **II**. Review & Miscellany.

The descriptor ‘eclectic’ appears in the title of the third paper and the contents of sections **I** are listed in Table II. (Eclectic medicine was a botanical-based alternative to allopathy that was quite popular in the American South and Midwest during the 19th century [6].

Two advertised texts, *An Eclectic Treatise on the Diseases of Children* and *The Eclectic Practice of Medicine* were also authored by Newton.

Table II. Contents termed Original Department, of the April 1877 issue of the *New York Quarterly Cancer Journal*

1	Exploration of cell pathology.
2	Cancer hospital report.
3	A word of advice to eclectic surgeons.
4	Tobacco as a cause of blindness.
5	Cancer – how treated – cases cured.
6	Woman’s Hospital of New York.
7	Hemorrhoids or piles.
8	Medical college hospitals and clinical teaching in Paris.

1893

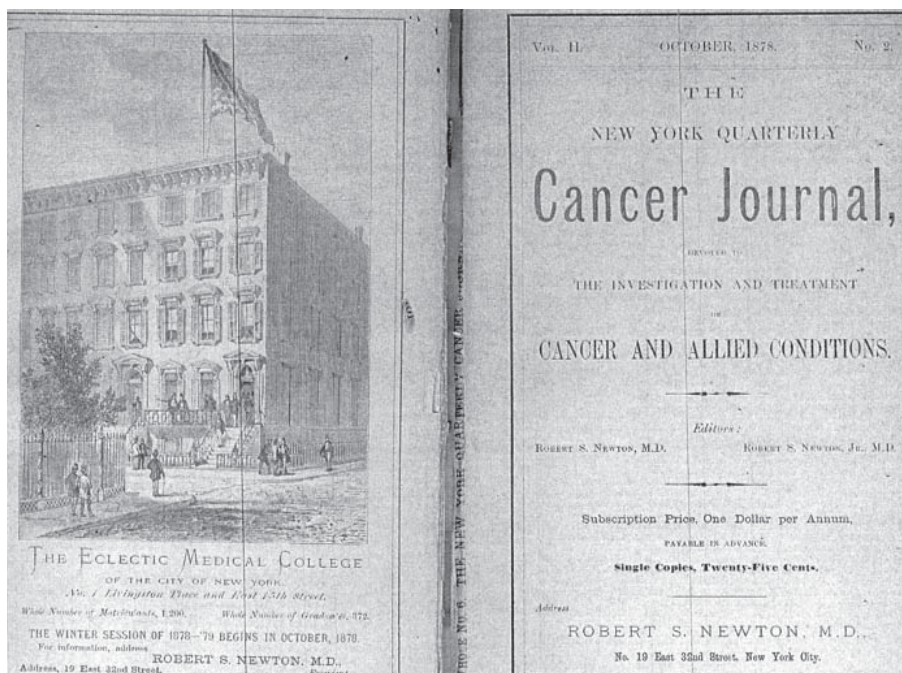
Archives d’Électricité Médicale et de Physiothérapie du Cancer

This journal was from Bordeaux and appears to have been the first French journal on cancer. It predates by two years the *Revue des Maladies Cancéreuses* which was founded in Paris. It was discontinued in 1939 when it was absorbed into the *Journal de Radiologie et d’Électrologie*.

1895

Revue des Maladies Cancéreuses: Clinique, Expérimentale et Bibliographiques

According to Cushman Haagensen [7] who in 1933 described a selection of the New York Academy of Medicine’s important books, papers and memorabilia of the knowledge of cancer, the first cancer journal was the *Revue des Maladies Cancéreuses: Clinique, Expérimentale et Bibliographiques*. It was established on 20 October 1895 and was claimed by Haagensen to be the first medical periodical devoted exclusively to cancer. It did not receive active support from the medical profession and it lapsed in 1901. It was established largely due to the efforts of Professor Emmanuel Simon Duplay (1836-1934) who was a surgeon at the Hôtel Dieu in Paris.



1903

Zeitschrift für Krebsforschung

This German journal on cancer appears to be the longest running journal we have been able to identify, although like most early journals its title has been altered from the original. In 1979 it became the *Zeitschrift für Krebsforschung und Klinische Onkologie* (Journal of Cancer Research & Clinical Oncology).

Locating the first issue of a non-English language cancer journal, such as the German *Zeitschrift für Krebsforschung* can be difficult. Although the first issue was published in 1904 there was also a publication in 1902 reviewing work of 1900-1902, commencing with the Constitution of the Society which was agreed on 18 February 1900 at the Culture Ministry in Berlin [8].

The first two issues of the first volume of the journal [9] are dated 1903 (no months) and concluded with an index, in February 1904. The volume contained six sections, Table III. Volume 2 began to be published in February 1904. Future issues were then published separately, volume 3, number 1 in March 1905, volume 3, number 2 in June 1905, etcetera.

Table III. Sections in the first volume of the *Zeitschrift für Krebsforschung*

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- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Original papers. |
| 2 | Reports on meetings, congresses of institutes & hospitals. |
| 3 | Papers presented. |
| 4 | Overview of scientific papers concerning cancer, published in books or in journals from October 1902 to September 1903. |
| 5 | Miscellaneous. |
| 6 | Figures and tables. |
-

1907

GANN

Although printed in Tokyo, this journal was published as a German language journal up to volume 12 in 1918. In 1985 *GANN* became the *Japanese Journal of Cancer Research* and then in 2003 became *Cancer Science*.

GANN
 Japanische
 Zeitschrift für Krebsforschung
 Begründet von
 Prof. Dr. K. Yamagiwa
 Herausgegeben von der
 Japanischen Gesellschaft für Krebsforschung

 Redigiert von
 Prof. Dr. Mataro Nagayo
 Geschäftsstelle: Pathologisches Institut der Kaiserlichen
 Universität zu Tokyo

 Band XII, Heft 1.
 Mai 1918

1908

Bulletin de l'Association Française pour l'Étude du Cancer

The famous French oncological physician Claudius Regaud (1870-1940) of the Institut du Radium, Paris, published 11 papers in this journal as first author. The titles (1-11) obtained from the cumulative index for the first 17 volumes, 1908-1928) are listed in Table IV and give an indication of the spectrum of cancer studies relating to radium to the end of the 1920s, a period when deep X-ray therapy machines were not generally

Table IV. Papers by Claudius Regaud published 1908-1928 in the *Bulletin de l'Association Française pour l'Étude du Cancer*

- 1 Tuberculose et cancer (Tuberculosis and cancer).
- 2 Sur la technique dans le cancer du col de l'utérus (On technique in cancer of the corpus uteri).
- 3 Mode de notation en radiumthérapie (Notation in radium therapy).
- 4 Cultures de tissus et tumeurs (Tissue cultures and tumours).
- 5 Röntgenthérapie d'un spino-cellulaire (X-ray therapy of a squamous cell cancer).
- 6 Tubes et aiguilles chargées de radium pour le traitement de certains cancers (Radium tubes and needles for the treatment of certain cancers).
- 7 Réflexions à propos de la poursuites des localisations excentriques du cancer de l'utérus par la radiumpuncture abdominal (Remarks about the treatment of an asymmetrical uterine cancer by interstitial radium using an abdominal approach).
- 8 Présentation de cancers de la lèvre guéris par le radium ou les rayons X (Appearance of cancers of the lip which can be cured by radium or X-rays).
- 9 Sur le traitement des cancers des lèvres par les rayons X et le radium (On the treatment of cancer of the lips by X-rays and radium).
- 10 Curiothérapie des cancers malpighiens (Radium therapy of renal glomerules (of Maalpighi) cancer).
- 11 A propos de la durée d'applications en curiothérapie et sur la valeur pratique de l'index karyocinétique (On the duration of radium therapy and on the value of the mitotic index).

available. The journal was published in Paris (by Masson) and in 1996 part of the journal was split off to become *Bulletin du Cancer: Radiothérapie*.

1909

Cancer (Journal of the International Association for Cancer Research)

This publication was edited in Berlin by George Mayer (1860-1923), who stated in the introduction to the first issue (September 1908), 'The International Association for Cancer Research at the organising meeting on Monday 23rd 1908, resolved to issue an international monthly periodical in German, French and English, for the primary purpose of bringing the reports of the meetings of the International Association and of the national committees and central organisations for cancer research belonging to the International Association, information on the important proceedings in the sphere of cancer research in the various countries and associations'. This journal was published at least until volume 6 in 1914. It probably ceased in 1914 because of World War I.

1916

Journal of Cancer Research

The *Journal of Cancer Research* was published quarterly in Baltimore by Williams & Wilkins, beginning in 1916, (see Table V). It was the official journal of the American Association of Cancer Research. It suspended publication from October 1922 to April 1924. The last volume with this journal title was volume 14 in 1930. It became the *American Journal of Cancer* in 1931 (volume 15).

Table V. Contents of the first two issues in 1916 of the *Journal of Cancer Research*

Issue 1, January 1916

- 1 Further investigations on the origins of tumors in mice.
- 2 The mortality from cancer in the Western hemisphere.
- 3 The effect of phloridzin on tumors in animals.
- 4 Pathological aspects of some problems of experimental cancer research
- 5 Transplantable sarcomata of the rat liver arising in the walls of parasitic cysts.
- 6 Chemotherapeutic experiments on rat tumors.
- 7 Proceedings of the American Association for Cancer Research, 8th annual meeting.

Issue 2, April 1916

- 1 Tumor immunity.
- 2 Renal tumors in the rabbit.
- 3 Tissue cultures in the investigation of cancer.
- 4 Thyroid tumor in the sea bass.
- 5 Further observations on so-called carcinoma of the thyroid in fish.
- 6 The effects of cancer tissue and of normal epithelium on the vitality of protozoa.
- 7 The effect of phlorhizin on tumors in animals.
- 8 Studies on the crown gall of plants. Its relation to human cancer.

1918

Campaign Notes (American Society for the Control of Cancer)

Volume 1, number 1 is dated 15 January 1918 and is described as follows. 'A bulletin issued once a month for the information of members of the Society, state and local committees, cancer committees of medical charities, women's clubs, health officer, nurses, lecturers, editors and field workers generally'. The national headquarters of the Society were at 25 West 45th Street, New York City. Although titled *Campaign Notes* it can be *loosely classified* as a journal on the basis that 12 issues were published annually, with yearly volume numbers. Summaries of

meetings and symposia were included in the Campaign Notes.

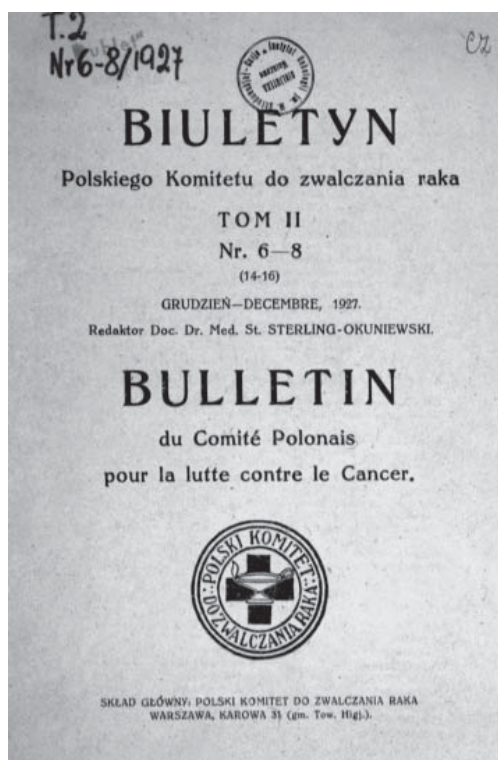
1922

Néoplasmes

This journal was published in Paris by Vigot and described as a 'Revue internationale exclusivement consacrée à la littérature, à l'étude et à la thérapeutique des tumeurs et des cancers'. The first volume was published in 1922 and the journal remained in existence until at least volume 14 in 1935. [ISSN 0369-3791]

1923

Bulletin of the Polish Committee Against Cancer



The *Bulletin of the Polish Committee Against Cancer* was first published in 1923, renamed *Nowotwory* (Neoplasms) in 1928 and in 2001 became *Nowotwory Journal of Oncology* [10]. [PL ISSN 0029-540X]

1923

Cancer

This journal was first published in Philadelphia with the first volume in 1923/1924 and was described as 'a practical quarterly journal devoted to the best interests of cancer'. At least five volumes were issued: to 1927/1928.

1923

Le Cancer, le Journal Belge D'Études Cancérologiques

This journal is the first Belgian cancer journal. The first issue was in January 1923 and the second issue on

15 March 1924. It changed its title around 1937, to *Le Cancer* and again in 1973, to *Cancer*. The contents of the first issue are listed in Table VI.

Table VI. Contents of the first issue, January 1923

-
- 1 Cancer caused by tar and arsenic.
 - 2 Deep beta-ray therapy.
 - 3 Genital cancer in women treated by curietherapy: case reports.
 - 4 Diagnosis and treatment of oesophageal cancer.
 - 5 Larynx cancer.
 - 6 Maxillary cancer.
 - 7 Epithelioma in a laparotomy scar.
 - 8 Recurrence of cancer of the stomach treated with radium needles: survival time of 9 months
 - 9 Sarcoma of the shoulder.
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1924

Journal of Cancer

This journal was published quarterly by the Cancer Research Fund (Ireland). An example (from the second issue) is listed in Table VII.

Table VII. Contents of the second issue in 1924

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- 1 Concerning the limits of deep X-ray therapy and operation in the treatment of malignant growths.
 - 2 Treatment of malignant growths by combined diathermy and deep X-ray therapy.
 - 3 Radium in the treatment of cancer.
 - 4 The beginnings of disease.
 - 5 Oral sepsis as a predisposing cause of cancer.
-

1924

Boletín del Instituto de Medicina Experimental para el Estudio y Tratamiento del Cáncer

This Buenos Aires journal began publication in 1924/1925, and continued to at least volume 21, in 1944. It was also known as *Estudio y Tratamiento del Cáncer: Anales del Instituto de Medicina Experimental*. [ISSN 0366-1865]

1926

Boletín de la Liga Contra el Cáncer

This journal was first published in 1926 in Havana, Cuba, and continued to at least 1960 with volume 35. Its name was later altered to *Archivos Cubanos de Cáncerología*.

1926***Cancer Review***

This United Kingdom publication, described as ‘a journal of abstracts’, was first published in 1926 and continued to at least 1932 with volume 7. It was originally published by John Wright (Bristol) who were eventually taken over by Institute of Physics Publishing who published the book *Cancer Statistics* in 1983 [11].

1926***Revue Dentaire Internationale d'Électrologie et de Physiothérapie des Cancers Buccaux***

This journal was first published in 1926 in Paris and continued to at least 1931 with volume 6. It is the only journal totally devoted to cancers of the oral cavity.

1930***Il Cancro***

This quarterly journal (rivista trimestriale) was published in Turin and organised by the Istituto di Oncologia dell'Ospedale Maggiore di San Giovanni Battista a della Città di Torino. The first five volumes were for the years 1930-1934. It then ceased production for some 20 years, with volume 7 appearing in 1954 and then lasted until at least 1974 to volume 27. [ISSN 0008-5480]

1933***Revista Mexicana de Cirugia y Ginecologia y Cáncer***

The only volume of this journal appeared in 1933. It was edited by surgeons and gynaecologists of the Mexican Clinic of Surgery & Radiotherapy. [ISSN 0034-9984]

Table VII. Cancer journals 1854-1934

[1853] Western Medical News & Cancer Journal [USA]
[1864] New York Medical News & Cancer Journal [USA]
[1877] New York Quarterly Cancer Journal [USA]
[1893] Archives d'Électricité Médicale et de Physiothérapie du Cancer [France]
[1895] Revue des Maladies Cancéreuses : Clinique, Expérimental et Bibliographiques [France]
[1903] Zeitschrift für Krebsforschung [Germany]
[1907] Gann [Japan]
[1908] Bulletin de l'Association Française pour l'Étude du Cancer [France]
[1909] Cancer (Journal of the International Association for Cancer Research) [Germany]
[1916] Journal of Cancer Research [USA]
[1918] Campaign Notes (American Society for the Control of Cancer) [USA]
[1922] Néoplasmes [France]
[1923] Bulletin of the Polish Committee Against Cancer [Poland]
[1923] Cancer [USA]
[1923] Le Cancer, le Journal Belge D'Études Cancérologiques [Belgium]
[1924] Journal of Cancer [Ireland]
[1924] Boletín del Instituto de Medicina Experimental para el Estudio y Tratamiento del Cáncer [Argentina]
[1926] Boletín de la Lliga Contra Càncer [Cuba]
[1926] Cancer Review [United Kingdom]
[1926] Revue Dentaire Internationale d'Électrologie et de Physiothérapie des Cancers Buccaux [France]
[1929] Journal of the Cancer Research Committee of the University of Sydney [Australia]
[1930] Il Cancro [Italy]
[1933] Revista Mexicana de Cirugia I Ginecologia y Cáncer [Mexico]
[1933] Monatsschrift für Krebsbekämpfung: Verhütung, Erkennung und Behandlung Bösartiger Geschwülste [Germany]
[1933] Blätter zur Erforschung der Krebsentstehung und Krebsverhütung [Luxemburg]
[1934] Acta Cancrologica [Hungary]

1929***Journal of the Cancer Research Committee of the University of Sydney***

The first volume of this Australian journal was for 1929/30. At least eight volumes were published, to 1937/38. [ISSN 0368-1599]

1933***Monatsschrift für Krebsbekämpfung: Verhütung, Erkennung und Behandlung Bösartiger Geschwülste***

This *Monthly Journal for the Fight Against Cancer: Prevention, Detection and Treatment of Malignant Ulcers* was published in Munich by Lehmann with the first issue appearing in 1933. It lasted at least to volume 12, in 1944. [ISSN 0369-0466]

1933***Blätter zur Erforschung der Krebsentstehung und Krebsverhütung***

The Luxemburg publication *Papers on Research on the Origins and Prevention of Cancer* published its first issue in January 1933. It appears that it only lasted for a total of 11 issues, closing in November 1934.

1934***Acta Cancrologica***

This Hungarian journal was published in Budapest with the first volume in 1934. It lasted until at least volume 3, in 1937.

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Conclusions

We have probably identified all the major cancer journals which were founded during the ~ 80 year period 1853-1934, Table VII. The information presented will provide a useful research source for the study of cancer by medical historians.

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