It is grateful and sincere appreciation that I extend to the members of the Harvey Cushing Society for the honor that has been extended me in allowing me to represent you as your president during the past year. It has been a very pleasant task, and it has been made doubly so by the excellent cooperation of the other officers and of the committees of the society who have given so much time and effort to make this an outstanding meeting. May I assure you that election to this office constitutes a very great honor and marks, for me, the highest point in my career in the field of neurological surgery.

We are now embarking upon the second quarter century since the founding of the Harvey Cushing Society, and it would therefore seem appropriate at this time to review the founding and early days of this organization; to trace its development, growth and accomplishments during the past twenty-five years, to evaluate its present status; and surely most important of all, look ahead to our future—its goals and the policies we must pursue in achieving them.

First, let us examine the reasons for the formation of this particular group. The Society of Neurological Surgeons was founded by eleven neurosurgeons in 1920 and was, prior to the founding of the Harvey Cushing Society, the only one in the United States representing this particular specialty. The membership maintained in this group was restricted to a small number despite the rapid growth of neurological surgery during the next ten years. Many of the younger neurosurgeons keenly felt the need for contact with their colleagues in order to effect an exchange of ideas that would advance their knowledge and improve their skills in this chosen field. On June 24, 1931, Doctor R. Glen Spurling wrote to Doctor W. P. Van Wagenen suggesting the formation of a new society and mentioning the names of other neurosurgeons who might be interested. Following further correspondence, a meeting was held at the Hotel Raleigh in Washington, D.C., on October 10, 1931 and was attended by Doctors Temple Fay, Eustace Semmes, R. Glen Spurling, and W. P. Van Wagenen. The decision was made to form a new society, the preliminary purposes and plans, including establishment of a central brain tumor registry, were discussed and names of poten-

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* Presidential address, read at the Twenty-sixth Anniversary Meeting of the Harvey Cushing Society, Washington, D.C., April 22, 1958.
† 384 Post Street, San Francisco 8, California.
tial members were considered. Doctor Harvey Cushing was advised of the proposed formation of the new group, and he expressed his approval and invited the group to hold their first meeting at his clinic.

Thirty charter members were chosen and the first meeting was held in Boston, May 6, 1932, with twenty-three members of the charter group present. The society was named in honor of its patron, Doctor Harvey Cushing. Doctor William P. Van Wagenen was elected the first president of the Harvey Cushing Society.

At the beginning, the purpose of this society was the promotion and the advancement of the various fields of organic neurology, and this was changed later to the advancement of neurological surgery. The active membership at the beginning of the society included not only neurosurgeons but those in the fields of neurology, neuroanatomy, neuro-ophthalmology, neuropathology, psychiatry, psychology, roentgenology, and other scientific works bearing on neurology. Subsequently, the neurosurgeons have constituted the active membership and the members of the allied fields have become associate members of the society.

In order to have closer contact and allow an exchange of ideas it was felt that a small group was desirable, and the society was numerically limited to thirty-five members at the outset. The first program included various scientific papers, and the presentation of operative cases by Doctor Cushing. I could not be otherwise than amused by the title of the paper given by Doctor Stafford Warren who is now the Dean of the University of California School of Medicine at Los Angeles. The name of this paper was the "Treatment of Diseases of the Nervous System by Hyperthermia." In the past twenty-five years the mercury has fallen. The emphasis is now at the other end of the thermometer.
A diary note of one of the members at the first meeting gives us a few interesting details and sidelights of the meeting. "The membership contains men from all parts of the country. There are two from Chicago, one from Kansas City, one from the Pacific Coast, and a scattering from the Eastern seaboard. Doctor Cushing received them this morning at ten o'clock, and he said that he felt like an obstetrician bringing a new and protesting offspring into existence. He welcomed them warmly, nevertheless, asking them only to remember that in ten years' time another group would be coming along that would look upon the present one as senile and antiquated."

We see here Doctor W. P. Van Wagenen, Doctor Glen Spurling and Doctor Eustace Semmes, three of the four original founders of the society (Fig. 2).
1). I was not successful in coaxing a photograph from the fourth member, Doctor Temple Fay.

Doctor Cushing conducted an operative clinic for the society at the first meeting in Boston (Fig. 2). Here he is wearing the traditional headlight used in neurosurgical operations. Dick Light's comment about the headlight was amusing, "It was a very poor source of illumination, but an excellent radiant and heat element. Anybody touching it got burned."

This picture is of the charter members attending the first meeting (Fig. 3). Doctor Cushing wrote to Doctor Tracy Putnam, the secretary of the society, on June 15, 1932: "Dear Tracy, Thanks much for your note and for the photograph of the newborn club. They look like a very serious and hard-working group, all except the three squatting figures in the center of the picture. Now, if you had been sitting where John is, you could have perhaps cooked up as coy a smile as he was able to manage. I am very proud of all of you, and the fact that I should be immortalized by having you use my name is a source of pride and gratification. Always affectionately yours, Harvey Cushing."

There is an interesting bit of history in connection with the name of the society that is not generally known. It was Doctor Temple Fay who suggested the name "Harvey Cushing" for the society. After the society had been in existence for about ten years, a move was made to change the name inasmuch as the society was composed of many more than the graduates of
Fig. 4. Dr. Cushing at his desk in the Brigham Hospital.

Fig. 5. Dr. Cushing sketching the operative findings while having tea in his dressing room.
the Cushing Clinic and inasmuch as Doctor Cushing was not personally responsible for the formation of the society. The idea seemed to be that a "name" was objectionable. However, it was pointed out that several outstanding institutions had survived being named after such characters as John Harvard, Eli Yale, William Penn, Ezra Cornell, Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Brigham Young, and so on. And the "name" remained unchanged.

The following pictures (Figs. 4-6) show Doctor Cushing in various phases of his work.

"Tea time was almost a ritual with Doctor Cushing, and the tea hour with Doctor and Mrs. Cushing in their home was for their guests a memory in hospitality. Although Doctor Cushing ate sparingly, he insisted upon his toast and tea at four in the afternoon and was the perfect host whether at a croquet match or in his dressing room at the hospital."

The second meeting was held in Louisville, and because of the efforts of the society the Brain Tumor Registry was set up under the able direction of Doctor Louise Eisenhardt who has cared for this most important project during the past twenty-five years.

Here we have a view of the Surgical Laboratory at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston and Doctor Eisenhardt (Fig. 7).

The following is a view of the eighteen members who attended the Louisville meeting in 1933 (Fig. 8). The next view includes some very pleasant
scenery. It seems that considerable progress has been made, at least along certain lines, and instead of tea we now have a picture of the members partaking of something a mite more fortifying and, while I will withhold a prognosis, I can say that perhaps this is a hint of things to come in the Harvey Cushing Society. Here we have some members and some mint juleps at Louisville (Fig. 9).
Fig. 9. Some members and some mint juleps at Louisville.

Fig. 10. Dr. Cushing and Chimpanzee Lulu, New Haven, 1935.
The next two meetings were held in St. Louis and in New Haven with an increased membership level to fifty and a required three-fourths affirmative vote to elect.

I refuse to give any commentary at all on the next picture, taken at the 1935 meeting in New Haven (Fig. 10), but perhaps a little information about the two distinguished citizens shown here would be in order. Doctor Cushing you all recognize, and the other is Lulu.

In 1936 we met at Rochester, and Doctor Ernest Sachs (Fig. 11) was elected to honorary membership, the first to follow Doctor Cushing.

Doctor Sachs told the society that Doctor Cushing had taught him that, “The way to keep young is to keep in contact with young men.” He also expressed the wish that he “... might live long enough to see in twenty-five years what extraordinary things you and your students will be doing in neurosurgery.” We are delighted to note that he has already watched twenty-two of those years with their fruitful developments.

In Philadelphia at the 1937 meeting there was much discussion about the size of the society and reports were at hand that a third neurosurgical group was in the process of being formed. The suggestion was made that active members be retired after seven years but that they be allowed to attend meetings and to dine as senior members. John Fulton was then the President and went on record with some very pertinent comments concerning the
proposed farm system for the more mature element of the membership. He wrote as follows: "Senior members can, of course, dine, and that is probably all they would be good for. It would be better to chloroform the senior members than to rally them. In short, I am not very much in sympathy with the idea of retiring people after seven years and then trying to keep them in good humor with dinners and rallies, and invitations to speak now and again at meetings. Such an arrangement would, it seems to me, ruin the present spirit of the society." An outstanding event of this meeting, and I have no way of knowing if it were in any way connected with the controversial issue of how to dispose of the older members, was John Fulton’s successful efforts to intoxicate some pet trout in Doctor Temple Fay’s pool with martini cocktails. Louise Eisenhardt has recorded the official resolution relative to the event and the spontaneous death of six drunken trout on the edge of the pool, discovered early the next morning. There is no mention in the official record of the condition of the neurosurgeons on the following morning.

At Memphis in 1938 there was much discussion concerning the establishment of a neurosurgical board, and a report favoring the formation of such a board was given by Doctor Winchell McK. Craig. Abandoned at this meeting was the proposed formation of regional neurosurgical societies under the sponsorship of the Harvey Cushing Society.

Our eighth meeting at New Haven marked an historical date in the progress of the society. At this time, on April 18, 1939, we celebrated the seventieth birthday of Doctor Cushing. On this happy occasion, Doctor Louise Eisenhardt, president of the society, presided as toastmistress when a host of Doctor Cushing’s friends, pupils and admirers paid tribute in person, by letter and telegram to the “Chief.”

![Fig. 12. Dr. Semmes, President-Elect, Dr. Cushing, and Dr. Eisenhardt, President, New Haven, 1939.](image-url)
On behalf of the society, Doctor Eisenhardt presented him with a complete bibliography of his own writings. A few of the pictures taken at that time remind us of his last official meeting with the Harvey Cushing Society. The first view is of Doctor Cushing, Doctor Eisenhardt, president, and Doctor Eustace Semmes, president-elect (Fig. 12). The next view is of Doctor Cushing's birthday cake (Fig. 13).

It is with regret that I mention the next important date in the history of the society, October 7, 1939, which marks the death of Doctor Harvey Cushing (Fig. 14).

He had pioneered our specialty, and he had inspired and taught an entire generation of doctors. His friends and admirers were countless, and his contribution to the medical profession is legend. His fraternity was mankind. I would like to read a paragraph from a letter written by Doctor Paul Bucy to Doctor Louise Eisenhardt following Doctor Cushing's death. "Death comes to all men. But few of us can look back upon a career of worthwhile endeavors. And fewer still are permitted the opportunity to see the world-wide ripening of the fruits of their labors. Yet to Harvey Cushing all these were accorded. We cannot begrudge him his rest."

The American Board of Neurological Surgery was incorporated on August 1, 1940 and the following three members of the Harvey Cushing Society
were appointed to it: Doctors Leo Davidoff, Temple Fay and Winchell McK. Craig. This society has continued to participate in the important functions of this board since that time.

At the meeting in Kansas City in 1940, there was further discussion of expansion, and a committee was appointed to report on this important problem in 1941. A somewhat solemn note prevailed at this meeting because of the recent death of Doctor Cushing, and the society paid its respects to his memory in a very appropriate ceremony at the formal banquet. There were now fifty-two active members, and here we see a picture of that group (Fig. 15).

The report of the committee rendered at the Rochester, New York meeting in 1941 recommended that the society be expanded into a neurosurgical organization of national scope, that the membership include repre-
sentative members from related fields, and that the members of the other two neurosurgical societies be admitted to membership. All active members of the Harvey Cushing Society must be certified by the American Board of Neurological Surgery.

The necessary changes in the by-laws were made at New York City in 1942, and the real expansion of the society began. Who could have dreamed of the veritable legion of neurosurgeons to come? I am reminded here of a remark made by one of the charter members after his return from a recent meeting of the Harvey Cushing Society at which time he said he was continually amazed at the large number of members and commented that he wondered if any one had found out yet what was causing neurosurgeons.

At New York in 1943 it was recommended that a Journal of Neurosurgery be established under the auspices of the Harvey Cushing Society. An editorial board was appointed under the chairmanship of the late Doctor Gilbert Horrax. The Journal started publication on a bi-monthly basis in 1944 and has been a success from the beginning. It has constantly been improved under the guiding hands of Doctor Louise Eisenhardt and the editorial board.

The war years caused curtailment and finally cancellation of the 1945 meeting. Many of our members served in the armed forces at home and abroad, bringing great credit to the field of neurosurgery.

A post-war reunion was held in Boston in 1946. At this time the members of the Society of Neurological Surgeons were elected to membership en bloc.
In 1947 the society met in Hot Springs, Virginia. Here is a photograph of the past presidents at Hot Springs (Fig. 16).

By 1949, there were one hundred eighty-eight members, and changes were made in the by-laws in 1951 providing for a president-elect to give greater efficiency in the activities of the society. A membership committee was formed to carry out the major task involved in screening the many applications for membership each year.


There is no doubt about the role our ladies have played in helping to build and to strengthen our society. With their cooperation, we have been able to hold our meetings at many different and sometimes quite distant places which has indeed added to the over-all interest in the attendance. A sort of “Join the Harvey Cushing Society and See the World” or “Have Wife—Will Travel” operation. The ladies were officially recognized by our group when the Ladies Auxiliary was added to the Constitution in 1951. Seriously, the ladies have contributed much help since they were first organized with Mrs. Paul Bucy acting as their first president. We are very appreciative of their support and of their infinite patience with their neurosurgeons. Most of all, we are deeply appreciative of their charm. We welcome them here today and wish them many happy years to come with the organization.

Neurosurgical training since the end of World War II has expanded at an amazing rate, and the number of trained neurosurgeons in this country has grown at approximately sixty to seventy a year as indicated by the figures of the American Board of Neurological Surgery. The membership in this society has increased steadily and by 1952 there were three hundred forty-two members listed. Even the long trek to Honolulu enticed a goodly number to the enchanting islands of the Pacific—a meeting that will long be remembered by those present.

Now we have grown to an over-all membership of 593. It would seem
that we have increased as efficiently as bacteria in five-day-old potato salad, and it is certain that the "new and protesting offspring" that Doctor Cushing mentioned bringing into the world has been well nourished throughout its pediatric years, survived remarkably well its growing pains, and has emerged strong and healthy into its present maturity at twenty-six years of age.

This, then, is our present status—a large neurosurgical society representing neurosurgery throughout the Americas, and with associations abroad as well—a society that has contributed a great deal to the guidance, growth and stature of neurosurgery over the past quarter century.

Now, we must look ahead and consider our future plans. I believe that most of you will agree that our continued growth is already presenting a problem from the standpoint of future meetings—their location and the physical requirements of hotels such as assembly rooms, dining areas, and the space for exhibitors. There are two questions paramount at this time. First: Can the society reasonably continue with a single-meeting assemblage on an annual basis or will it be desirable to have sectional meetings on a geographical basis? Second: Should we divide the annual meeting into sub-groups for special discussion or panel discussions so that a closer participation of the members may be obtained than is now possible in a large assembly? The currently functioning geographically located neurosurgical groups would seem to weigh strongly against any such geographical division of this society. Therefore, it would seem advisable for the Executive Committee and the membership to investigate the possibilities of some changes in the program. These should be designed to further enhance the value of these meetings and to promote closer contact and an exchange of ideas among its members as was originally suggested by the founders of the society.

Further future plans include the enlargement of the Journal of Neurosurgery commensurate with the increase in the material available for publication, traveling fellowships for young neurosurgeons to be sponsored by the society and to be based upon winning essays by the contestants, and contributions to the Harvey Cushing collection of books in the Historical Library of Yale University School of Medicine, in memory of departed members of the Harvey Cushing Society. It will be of great interest to us all to observe the future course of this society and of neurological surgery in the years to come.

The past twenty-five years have witnessed tremendous progress and development in our chosen field. Neurosurgery has come of age in these years, and one can visualize great things for it in the future. I am personally sure that victory over tumors and vascular lesions of the nervous system will be won by the keen minds of our young neurosurgeons who are now embarking upon their careers.

I, like Doctors Sachs, sincerely hope that I may be given the opportunity to see some of these accomplishments fulfilled in the years to come.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to three good friends who have given me invaluable assistance in the preparation of this address—Dr. Louise Eisenhardt, Dr. Richard U. Light, and Mrs. Donald F. Coburn.