

³William Charles Wake (1916–1989), his unpublished thesis was summarised in W. C. Wake, ‘Who was Hippocrates?’ *The Listener*, 19 Dec. 1966, 966–968.

⁴George Udny Yule (1871–1951), British statistician; see Frank Yates, ‘Yule, George Udny (1871–1951)’, rev. Alan Yoshioka, *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), vol. 60, 975–976.

⁵Singer et al. (eds), (1954–1958).

⁶Paradiso, the hotel section of Lugano.

⁷Reginald Affleck Greeves (1878–1966), ophthalmic surgeon; see ‘Reginald Affleck Greeves, 1878–1966’, *British Journal of Ophthalmology*, 1966, **50**: 744.

⁸Robert James Forbes (1900–1973) Dutch historian of science; see D.A. Wittopkoning, ‘Robert James Forbes’, *Janus*, 1975, **62**: 217–233.

⁹The Seventh Book of the *Fabrica* (translated by Singer, 1952a) deals with the brain.

¹⁰Singer (1952b).

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Singer to Sigerist, Par, Cornwall, 23 April 1951 (telegram)

IS LUGANO WEATHER USUALLY FAVOURABLE END APRIL STOP THINKING
OF COMING NEXT WEEK
SINGER

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, late April 1951 (telegram)

JUST BACK FROM ITALY. WEATHER BEAUTIFUL. HOPE TO SEE YOU SOON.
SIGERIST

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Singer to Sigerist, London, 30 April 1951 (telegram)

ARRIVING EDEN HOTEL PARADISO LUGANO WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON
MAY SECOND STAYING ABOUT FORTNIGHT MUCH LOOKING FORWARD
TO MEETING
SINGER

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Singer to Sigerist, London, 19 June 1951

My dear Sigerist,

I sent by post yesterday to you a copy of my "Earliest Chemical Industry".¹ Drop me a line that it reaches you safely. For some mysterious reason it was impossible to register it, and for an equally mysterious reason it could not be insured unless it was cut in two! This is the new economics! It was also necessary to fill up a form in quadruplicate. If these things go on in a free world, what must it be like in Spain!²

It was lovely seeing you amidst all your books and labours.³

With affectionate greetings from us both to Emmy and yourself,

Yours ever,

Charles Singer

P.S. I have reviewed the first volume of your History for the B.M.J. I used a good deal of the material I had used for the Bulletin, but added a few new points and took out a note of criticism.⁴

¹ Singer (1948).

² Spain was still under the Franco dictatorship.

³ Singer's first visit to Sigerist at Pura.

⁴ Charles Singer, 'Review of *A history of medicine*, vol. I, by H. E. Sigerist', *British Medical Journal*, 1951, **ii**: 587–588; Charles Singer, 'Review of *A history of medicine*, vol. I, by H. E. Sigerist', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1951, **15**: 91–93.

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 2 August 1951

My dear Sigerist,

You'd like to see the present stage of the plan for Vol. I of A History of Technology, of which I enclose a copy.¹

It really is going on very well, and it looks as though we shall be in a position to send something to the press by the end of this year.

With all good wishes to you both from us all,

Yours ever,

Charles Singer

¹ Singer et al. (eds), (1954).

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 8 September 1951

My dear Sigerist,

I am so very sorry to hear about Erica.¹ Do let us hear how she goes on. One would have thought that Switzerland of all countries would be free from typhoid. What an anxiety for you both.

I am glad you liked my note on the Hippocratic Oath.² Fischer did really collect a fine lot of essays for that number of *Gesnerus*.³

I am enclosing a copy of my review of your book in this week's *British Medical Journal*.⁴ It is largely the same though not identical with the review in the *Johns Hopkins Bulletin*.

Yours ever,
Charles Singer

¹ Sigerist's daughter.

² Charles Singer, 'An early parallel to the Hippocratic Oath', *Gesnerus*, 1951, 8: 177–180.

³ Hans Fischer (1892–1976) Swiss pharmacologist and medical historian, editor of *Gesnerus*, the Swiss Journal of the History of Medicine and Science, see Erwin H. Ackerknecht, 'Hans Fischer 15.12.1892–21.5.1976', *Gesnerus*, 1976, 33: 162–182.

⁴ Singer (1951a).

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 7 November 1951

My dear Sigerist,

How is Erica? Is her temperature and condition normal yet?

This letter finds both Dorothea and myself in bed with some mild infection of the usual respiratory type. My temperature has quite gone down and has now been normal for two days but hers is still hovering. I suppose we shall be living a half-cock sort of life for another week. We both had or are having injections of penicillin, which certainly take immediate effect.

I have just had a letter from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine asking my advice on a point. They tell me that one of their staff has prepared an English translation of :

PETTENKOFER (Max) *Über den Luftwechsel in Wohngebäuden*. München 1858.¹

I wrote to them saying that I thought it was of value but that I required to ask your opinion. They say there is no copy of the German edition in any library of this country. This is an enquiry as to your view on the subject. There is no difficulty about getting it printed at an early date if you think it advisable.

1951

The History of Technology is really going better than I could possibly have hoped. It looks as though we can get a substantial part of it into the press in January.² I wish I could see any chance of getting my various other works out of the press!

With all kind wishes to Emmie and yourself from us both,
Yours ever,
Charles Singer

P.S. My friend Greeves, whom I often see, always asks to be remembered to you both.

¹ Max Pettenkofer (1818–1901) German hygienist, see Claude E. Dolman, ‘Pettenkofer, Max Josef von’, *Complete dictionary of scientific biography*, vol. 10 (Detroit: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 2008), 556–563.

² See letter 354.

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 20 November 1951

My dear Singer,

Thanks for your letter of 7th November. I was very sorry to hear that Dorothea and yourself had been ill, but I hope that you have recovered entirely by now. Erica is fine and back at work. She was very sick in spite of chloromycetine, and her recovery was very slow.¹ She was with us in Pura for seven weeks, but has completely recovered by now.

I also had a letter from Cyril C. Barnard concerning Pettenkofer.² I am sorry to say that I have never read his treatise “Uber den Luftwechsel in Wohngebäuden”. I am trying to get a copy from Zurich or Basle, and will let you know what I think of it.

It was good news to hear that the History of Technology is progressing so well and so rapidly. I shall of course be most anxious to see the first volume.³

Warm wishes to Dorothea and yourself in which Emmy joins,
Yours as ever,
Henry E. Sigerist

¹ Chloromycetine, an early antibiotic, no longer in use.

² Cyril C. Barnard (1894–1959) British medical historian.

³ See previous letter.

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 25 January 1952

My dear Singer,

What a charming little book.¹ Thank you ever so much for it. Of course I knew most of your essays, but those from the Times Literary Supplement were new to me, and I see that you have made a good many changes in the others. Those on Graeco-Roman subjects are particularly useful to me at the moment, and I am very glad to have them collected in one volume.

I am also delighted that you included chapters from The Christian Failure.² I think I wrote you at the time that I liked this little book very much and devoted two hours of a seminar to its discussion.

I think one should publish collected essays more often, because it is so much more convenient to the reader to have them together in one volume instead of scattered in journals. Besides it gives the author a chance to revise some of his earlier writings. We never stop learning and after many years it is good to be able to take a subject up again.

We are having a beautiful winter, rather cold for this section of the country, although night temperatures of 28–32°F are not formidable. For many weeks we have had glorious sunshine almost every day and it will be spring very soon. I am sure that in Cornwall the spring flowers are beginning to bloom also. We very much hope that you will come to Lugano again, even without the excuse of a pneumonia. This certainly would be a very great pleasure.

Warm wishes to Dorothea and yourself in which Emmy joins.

Yours as ever,
Henry E. Sigerist

¹ Charles Singer, *New worlds and old* (London, 1951).

² Charles Singer, *The Christian failure* (London, 1943).

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 12 February 1952

My dear Singer,

I am sending you enclosed a carbon¹ of my letter to Mr. Barnard, which I think is self-explanatory. Pettenkofer's book makes rather dull reading,² but it undoubtedly is a

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landmark in the history of the subject, and if funds are available for the publication of an English translation, I would recommend to go ahead with it.

With kind regards, I am,
Yours as ever,
Henry E. Sigerist

¹ Carbon copy.

² Pettenkofer (1858).

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 19 February 1952

My dear Sigerist,

Many thanks for having written about that book of Pettenkofer.¹ I am sure they will be very glad to have your opinion.

I enclose a copy of the lecture which is the formal announcement of A History of Technology. It has only just become accessible. We are having a conference here on the subject this coming weekend and I am presenting copies at that time.

I enclose a letter from the Secretary of our History of Science Society.² It would be delightful if you could accept this invitation. The Royal Academy has organised a series of lectures on Leonardo da Vinci on his quincentenary, and I am closing the course on May 29th with a talk on his knowledge of the structure and action of the body.³ It is thus certain that I shall be in London on the 26th May. If you and Emmy would consider coming down here just after 29th we should be delighted. Alternatively I am sure Nancy would be very pleased to put you up at Esher.⁴

With fraternal greetings,
Yours as ever,
Charles Singer

¹ Pettenkofer (1858).

² Singer was the President of the newly founded British Society for the History of Science.

³ Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) Italian scholar and artist; Charles Singer, 'Leonardo da Vinci', *British Medical Journal*, 1952, ii: 804–805.

⁴ Esher, a town south of London.

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 26 February 1952

My dear Singer,

Very many thanks for your letter of 19 February, and for your very interesting lecture.¹ Now the cat is out of the bag and everybody is waiting for the first volume of your History of Technology.²

I deeply appreciate the very kind invitation to address the British Society for the History of Science on Monday, 26 May, and deeply regret that I cannot possibly accept it. I plan to be in Florence at that time where I want to get pictures from Alinari and other dealers for the second volume of my History. Moreover, I cannot get away too often, as I must finish the volume as soon as possible. If all goes well, I should like to attend the International Congress in France in September,³ and I think I wrote you before that I will be in England in November for the Heath Clark Lectures at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. This is about all I can do this year.

Is there a chance of seeing you in the Ticino this year? I remember with so much pleasure your last year's visit. We had a perfectly delightful winter and spring has come by now, as I suppose it has in Cornwall. In about ten days our camellia bushes should be in bloom.

I am returning Mr. Butler's letter as it is addressed to you.⁴

With warm greetings to Dorothy and yourself, I am,

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

¹ See previous letter.

² Singer et al. (eds), vol I (1954).

³ The International Congress of the History of Medicine, held in Nice, France.

⁴ Mr. Butler, Secretary of the British Society for the History of Science, see previous letter.

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 21 April 1952

My dear Sigerist,

It occurred to me that you would find it convenient to have my translation of Galen's De anatomicis administrationibus.¹ Underwood has sent you a copy of the proof. Of

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course this is uncorrected and is, in fact, the first proof. I am not getting any galleys. There are fairly extensive notes and a number of figures, but you would hardly need these.

I am just going off to London, where the Athenaeum, Pall Mall, S.W.1 will reach me for the next month or two.

With all kind wishes to you both from us both,
Yours ever,
Charles Singer

¹ Singer (1956a).

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 27 January 1953

My dear Singer,

I was much distressed to hear from Underwood that you had another touch of pneumonia, and I only hope that you have recovered by now. You should not specialise on viruses, as other pneumonias can be killed so much more easily. I really wish that this attack of pneumonia will give you a chance to recover in Lugano as it did last time, and that we shall meet again in Pura.

I am just reading Sarton's *History of Science* and I thank heaven that I do not have to review it.¹ It is a strange book, highly personalised, capricious and pedantic in parts, but of course written by a man who has a profound erudition. When is your first volume coming out? Then we shall all be on the stage in the limelight and open to criticism.²

Warm wishes for a prompt recovery, and hoping to see you in this region, I am,
Yours as ever,
Henry E. Sigerist

¹ George Sarton, *A history of science* (Cambridge, MA, 1952-).

² "We shall all be on the stage" refers to Sigerist, Sarton, and Singer. with their opera magna.

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 30 January 1953

My dear Sigerist,

Many thanks for your letter of January 27 received this morning. I got back from hospital yesterday. Neither influenza nor the subsequent (virus) pneumonia were really much to worry about. The troublesome feature is convalescence, as I have heard you remark

yourself. It cheered me up, however, to receive your letter. I have begun to be at work, though, of course, shall be taking things slowly for another week or so still.

Upon my word, I have forgotten whether or not I have sent you Anglo-Saxon Magic and Medicine by Grattan and myself and my own Vesalius on the Human Brain.¹ Both have been published and if you have not received any, I would gladly send you copies.

Sarton is a queer psychological case. I expect the gods think that we are all queer psychological cases! Of course his History of Science is a tour de force,² but it is so badly printed and in such small type that I cannot think anyone will ever read it. Personally I found it most trying to study, though he expresses himself remarkably well at times. It is a very individual project. I suppose I shall have to review it, chiefly because he will be so frightfully offended if I do not.³

Is there any chance of your coming to the International Congress of the History of Science in Jerusalem in August next? We are making up a party on a boat which goes all the way by sea and calls at Naples. There are twelve cabins and we are trying to fill them all with our group. It would be marvellous if you could join it. Sarton thinks of joining it at Naples. I am sure you and he would not be incompatibles!

You might like to see one or two of my recent reviews in the *British Medical Journal* which I enclose.⁴

With most cordial greetings to Emmie and yourself from us both,
Yours ever,
Charles Singer

How goes your Vol. II? You do not say a word about it.⁵

¹ Singer and Grattan (1952); Singer (1952a).

² Sarton (1952);

³ A review of this book by Singer does not show up in his bibliography.

⁴ In 1952 fourteen book reviews by Singer appeared in the *British Medical Journal*; a further thirteen in 1951.

⁵ Sigerist (1961), which appeared after Sigerist's death

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 3 February 1953

My dear Singer,

Underwood just sent me your last two books and I wish to tell you how delighted I am with them.¹ Anglo-Saxon Magic and Medicine will be most useful to me when I write the 3rd volume of my history, which I hope will be soon, and I need not tell you that I am vitally interested in all that concerns Vesalius. I think that detailed studies like yours, are most revealing, and give us a better idea of Vesalius' actual knowledge, than general studies possibly could. Congratulations on these new contributions. A few years ago you told me that you had had a vintage year, but it seems to me that you have had one ever since.

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I sincerely hope that you have overcome your pneumonia, and that you are at home again.

With warm wishes, I am yours as ever,
Henry E. Sigerist

¹ Singer (1952a), Singer and Grattan (1952).

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 4 February 1953

My dear Singer,

My letter of yesterday's date had just been posted when I received your letter of the 30th January, and I want to tell you how delighted I am to know that you are back from the hospital. I have a perfect horror of hospitals, and this reminds me that I probably never sent you an article in which I touch this subject. It was written for a book that was published in America last year under the title When Doctors are patients. My essay had an advance publication in the Atlantic Monthly.¹

I do not plan to join the Congress in Jerusalem.² August is the best month here when all our American friends come. The trip besides is expensive, and if I went to Israel I would like to spend more than 10 days there; I would like to study their social organisation, and spend some time in the neighbouring countries like Lebanon, Syria, Egypt etc. August, however, is hardly the season for it. If I go East again it will be India, where they plan to establish an Institute of the History of Medicine, and where I was very happy in 1944.³

You enquire about my second volume. It is coming, and I hope to complete the manuscript very soon. What delayed me particularly was not Greece, but India. You know yourself how confused the chronology is. Sarton says that he is not discussing Indian Science, since it did not influence our Science. This Europa [sic]-centre point of view is just what I am trying to avoid, and I am giving Indian Medicine almost as much space as to that of Greece. I think that to the time of the renaissance Western, Arabic, Indian and Chinese medicine were probably equally efficient, or rather inefficient. It is only in the renaissance that our medicine became scientific and that the centre of development from then on, was in the West. Ackerknecht⁴ once remarked, that the English naval surgeons who came to America were hardly more successful in their treatments than the Indian Medicine Man: they knew about the circulation of the blood, they had more anatomical knowledge, but in the treatment of patients and particularly of the wounded the Indian often had much better results.

Of course I was most interested in your book reviews, and am very glad to have them. I just read Chauncey Leak's [sic] little book, and I do not think that it advances our knowledge very much. It gives and [sic] excellent survey, as you very correctly say, but I did not find much that was not in my book also, except his chapter on weights and measures, which is by far the best.⁵ Weights and measures were important in the case of a few

expensive drugs, but otherwise had little significance as most of the materia medica was inefficient anyway.

I very much hope that Chauncey Leak [sic] will soon give us a new edition of the Hearst Papyrus. This, undoubtedly, would be the best contribution he could make to Egyptian Medicine.

With all best wishes for your further recovery, I am,
Yours as ever,
Henry E. Sigerist

¹ Henry E. Sigerist, 'Living under the shadow', *Atlantic Monthly*, 1952, **189**: 25–30.

² International Congress of the History of Science.

³ Sigerist's study tour in India.

⁴ Erwin H. Ackerknecht (1906–1988) medical historian in the U.S. and Europe.

⁵ Chauncey D. Leake (1896–1978) pharmacologist and medical historian, friend of Sigerist; see Gert Brieger, 'Chauncey D. Leake', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1978, **52**: 121–123. Chauncey D. Leake, *The old Egyptian medical papyri* (Lawrence, KS, 1952), reviewed by Charles Singer, *British Medical Journal*, 1952, **ii**: 1201.

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 6 March 1953

My dear Singer,

What an excellent idea to translate Galen's little work on bones,¹ I am particularly pleased to have it at this moment, when I am nearing the end of my second volume. You certainly have done more than anybody else to make Galen's anatomy known. His anatomical works require translations because they are not easy to understand. It would be foolish to wait for the Corpus Medicorum Graecorum. The new critical editions improve the text in very minor points and I am sure that for most of our purposes the early editions are quite adequate. You probably saw the English translation of Galen's Hygiene which Charles C. Thomas brought out some time ago.² The translation is not very good, but I and other reviewers felt that we should not discourage Sydney [sic] Licht who gave the money for such translations. Of course I need not tell you that I was not responsible for his foolish idea of publishing Le Clerk's [sic] biography of Galen,³ nor am I responsible for the Claudius.⁴

I hope that you have recovered entirely by now, I had my wife and the maid in bed with the flu. It is strange that this year's epidemic although extraordinarily widespread has a totally different character from that of 1918–19.

With warm wishes I am,
Yours as ever,
Henry Sigerist

¹ Charles Singer, 'Galen's elementary course on bones', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 1952, **xlv**: 25–34.

² Robert Montraville Green, *A translation of Galen's Hygiene : (De sanitate tuenda)* with an introduction by Henry E. Sigerist (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, [1951]); see letter 346.

³ The volume included a translation by Sidney Licht of Daniel Le Clerc's 'The life of Galen', taken from his textbook, *Histoire de la medecine* (Amsterdam, 1723).

⁴ Claudius, Galen's questionable first name

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 10 March 1953,

My dear Sigerist,

Many thanks for your letter of March 6. I am sorry to hear that you also had flu. My experience of this epidemic is that the convalescence is worse than the acute stage. We found that with quite a number of people. We are all right here now but everyone in the house had it in turn.

Of course I knew at once that you were not responsible for letting Licht publish that old biography of Galen or for the use of the name Claudius! The translator of the *Hygiene* should either have put no notes at all or made them more adequate. I feel as you do that the thing was to encourage Licht and I gave it a very favourable review in the B.M.J.¹

I am glad you can find some use for my Galen's work on bones.² The larger work is now quite complete, but there are about half a dozen passages as to the rendering of which I am still doubtful.³ I am having a conference on them next week when I hope to be rid of it at last. It is in page proof. Going over it again, I feel that the manuscript text has probably been confused in places by the binder. There are also quite a number of obvious scribal errors which are easy to correct, such as writing "above" for "below" and "three" for "four", but I have made no attempt to do any drastic re-arrangement, though I have put in their right places several obviously displaced passages. So far as I can make out, the only two MSS that are worth having are that in the Medician Library and one in Paris.⁴ Both must have been available to the Renaissance editors. There is thus little hope of any substantial improvement in the text. Considering that the MS was copied for hundreds of years without anyone having the slightest idea of its meaning, the real marvel is that so much has survived. I suppose, to have done my duty, I should really have got someone to translate the first 8 1/2 books from the Arabic, but life is too short for that.

I have just seen the page proofs of the first volume of the presentation to me on my 70th birthday – now 6 1/2 years ago!⁵ I see your contribution, and I will read it during the next few days.⁶ It is very good of you to have contributed and I am deeply grateful. Why I have not been allowed to see this volume earlier is a mystery to me, but so it is.

With cordial greetings to you both from us both,

Yours as ever,
Charles Singer

¹ Charles Singer, 'Personal hygiene in Ancient Rome. Review of *A translation of Galen's Hygiene* by Robert Montraville Green', *British Medical Journal*, 1952, i: 1404.

² Singer (1952e).

³ Singer (1956a).

⁴ The Two MSS are Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana 74,10, and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale gr. 1849.

⁵ First volume of the Singer Festschrift, Underwood (1953).

⁶ Sigerist (1953a).

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 25 March 1953

My dear Sigerist,

We have now got Vol. I safely in the press and are trying to run Vols. II and III simultaneously. I enclose a table of contents of Vol. I and rough drafts of Vols. II and III.¹ We should so much like something from you.

Would you consider Chapter 11 of Vol. II, on 'Mechanics of Urban Life', by which we mean the sanitation of cities, their paving and the general conduct of human life within them? We thought of an article of about 7,000 words. It would describe the mechanics of urban life in classical antiquity and its remains and/or revival in medieval times. There will, of course, be an article on 'Building Construction' and we should have to be careful that yours did not overlap that too much. The story would begin, we hope, by being concentrated on the Mediterranean, gradually diffusing toward the North-West.

We make a special point of illustration and you could have as many as you are likely to ask for. They would be specially prepared for you.

Will you consider taking this on? You must have gone over the area very thoroughly in working on your second volume.²

With all kind wishes,

Yours as ever,
Charles Singer

¹ Singer et al. (eds), vol I (1954); vol. II (1956); vol III (1957).

² Sigerist (1961).

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 7 April 1953

My dear Singer,

I was delighted to hear that the first Volume of your History of Technology is in the press, and I[,] like many others[,] am of course most anxious to see it.¹

The outline of vols. 2 and 3 looks very promising. These two volumes will certainly cover an enormous field. I wish I could contribute an article, but at the moment I do not see any possibility of doing it. As you know I must bring out three books this year and have promised an infinity of articles for Festschriften so that I cannot commit myself to anything new. However, why don't you ask Leon Homo to write the article on Mechanics of Urban Life. He recently published an excellent book, Rome Impériale et l'Urbanisme [sic] dans l'Antiquité in Henri Berr's series L'évolution de l'humanité.² It is an excellent book of 700 pages and Homo is at the moment professeur honoraire de la faculté de lettres de Lyons [sic], has all the materials available so that he could write you an excellent article in next to no time. I am making extensive use of his findings.

With warm wishes, I am,

Yours as ever,

Henry E. Sigerist

¹ Singer et al. (eds), vol I (1954).

² Léon Homo, *Rome Impériale et l'urbanisme dans l'antiquité* (Paris, 1951); Henri Berr (1863–1954) French historian. See Agnès Biard, Dominique Bourel, Eric Brian (eds), *Henri Berr et la culture du XXe siècle: histoire, science et philosophie actes du colloque international, 24–26 octobre 1994, Paris* (Paris: Albin Michel/Centre International de Synthèse, 1997); and Suzanne Delorme, 'Henri Berr', *Osiris*, 1952, **10**: 4–9.

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Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 21 April 1953

My dear Singer,

I very much appreciate that you would like to have me represented in the next volume of your History of Technology¹ and I myself would very much like to contribute an article to it, but at the moment it is just impossible. I cannot undertake anything until I have the manuscripts of three books in the hands of the publishers. I am sorry, but I just cannot write more than a certain number of pages a day.

We are expecting the Edelsteins in a few days, you probably heard that he is teaching at Oxford for a year and he and his wife just spent their spring vacation in Greece. They are both very fine scholars. He is always full of ideas and I am sure that you will see them sooner or later. He behaved splendidly at the University of California, refusing to sign the outrageous oath that the university authorities required all faculty members to sign.² He

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declared that this was just the kind of oath that Hitler and Mussolini had forced on their professors. He has a chair at the Johns Hopkins now and I know that he is very happy to be in Oxford for the time being. England is the only liberal country in the world, and I only hope she will be able to remain so.

With all good wishes,
Yours as ever,
Henry E. Sigerist

¹ Singer et al. (eds), vol II (1956).

² A measure of McCarthyism.

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 31 August 1953

My dear Sigerist,

A line to introduce my friend and Co-editor of A History of Technology, Dr. E. J. Holmyard. You will already know him as editor of Endeavour.¹ You will, I am sure, have much to discuss with him and he is looking forward to seeing your beautiful home.

In the October number of Endeavour I have written a short essay-review on Sarton.²

I do hope we shall meet again. I had intended to go abroad this year and would have gone to the Jerusalem Congress but I just could not afford it.³ Had I done so I might have called on you on the way. Maybe an opportunity may arise next year.

With kindest wishes to Emmy and yourself in which Dorothea joins,
Yours as ever,
Charles Singer

¹ A British scientific journal established in 1942 as "a quarterly review designed to record the progress of the sciences in the service of mankind".

² Singer reviewed Sarton's *A history of science* (1953) and *A guide to the history of science* (1952) in *Endeavour*, 1953, 12: 217–218.

³ The Jerusalem Congress of the International Society of the History of Science; Sigerist did not attend the congress either.

Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 1 April 1954

My dear Sigerist,

It is a long time since I have heard of you. I hope all goes well.

The first volume of our History of Technology is advertised by the Clarendon Press for May of this year.¹ I enclose the account of it. So far as I can see, there is not the slightest chance of getting it out within at least six months and, I think, probably a year of that date. The Clarendon Press, like other printers, is the slave of the unions. My Galen has made no appreciable progress for at least a year.² Everything seems to be stuck with the printer.

There is a technical point I wanted to get right with you. One of the troubles of the History of Technology is its frontiers. I have always said we do not want to do what other people are obviously likely to do better. Thus we have kept off medicine, except so far as sanitation involves certain constructional factors, which are naturally included in our book. A point has been raised in connection with drugs. We have several excellent articles on industrial chemistry. I have, however, erased all that is concerned with drugs except by indirect reference. I have always said that since your History of Medicine³ is on a larger scale than our History of Technology it is obvious that drugs come in your province and not ours. I hope you will agree with this.

Have you made any arrangements for attending the Congress in Rome this year?⁴ If so, I wonder if we could meet and perhaps spend a day or two together. I would like to go all the way by sea to Naples. If you have any work to do in that region, I wonder if we could not meet in Naples and then go together by train to Rome. I should like to return again by sea. I enjoy the sea and it makes a holiday for me. I am not quite sure yet whether Dorothea will come with me or not.

When is your Volume II coming out? I have not seen any notices of it.⁵

With best regards to Emmy and yourself from us both,

Yours as ever,
Charles Singer

¹ Singer et al. (eds), vol I (1954).

² Singer (1956a).

³ Sigerist (1951).

⁴ Congress of the International Society of the History of Medicine in Rome.

⁵ Volume II, Sigerist (1961), appeared posthumously.

Sigerist to Singer, Pura, 6 April 1954

My dear Singer,

Many thanks for your letter of the 1st April. All goes well here. My health obviously does not improve with the years, but as long as I can carry on I have nothing to complain about and like you, I love living in the country. Sometimes one misses a large library just to look up a few references, but then I must go to Zürich and Basle from time to time just as you go to London.

Congratulations on the completion of your first volume of the History of Technology.¹ The description of it in the Oxford catalogue sounds very promising indeed. You were very wise to make it a co-operative undertaking so you will be sure that the work will be completed, while Sarton and I will probably not have enough years left to finish our histories.² I am anxious to have the first four volumes written by myself, that is up to and including the Renaissance because these are the volumes that require knowledge of ancient and oriental languages that the young people usually no longer have. The last four volumes could always be written by my former students and co-workers, who would be well prepared to handle the period from the 17th century to the present. I think you should include the drug industry as I will not be able to go very much into detail on this subject.³ You should do it particularly when you come to the modern period when the pharmaceutical industry developed so tremendously. It is besides, so closely tied up with the dyes industry that it can hardly be separated from it.

Yes, I have made arrangements to attend the International Congress in Rome. The [sic] asked me to give one of the main addresses on The Influence of Medicine upon Civilisation. I am not a friend of these international gatherings but the lure of Rome and Salerno is hard to resist and I know that our Italian colleagues are working very hard to make the Congress a success. Now that Laignel-Lavastine is dead there may be a chance to re-organise the International Society and to divorce it from Aesculap, which I think is a very unholy alliance.⁴ It would be very nice to meet in Naples and let us try to have a few nice days there.

I think I never mentioned how much I loved the two volumes presented to you.⁵ They took a long time to come out, but the final result is good. Your picture in Volume II reminded me of the time when we first met soon after world war I. What an excellent idea of yours to send out those facsimile letters. I wish I had done the same at the time of my 60th birthday because it took me months to acknowledge all the messages I received at that time.

Warm wishes to you and Dorothey [sic] in which Emmy joins,
Yours as ever,
Henry E. Sigerist

¹ Singer et al. (eds), vol I (1954).

² Sarton (1952).

³ See previous letter.

⁴ International Society of the History of Medicine; *Aesculape*, its journal, founded in 1923 in Paris, continued in 1995 as *Vesalius*.

⁵ The Festschrift, Underwood (ed.), (1953).

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Singer to Sigerist, Kilmarth, Cornwall, 15 April 1954

My dear Sigerist,

Many thanks for your letter of April 6.

On the subject of drugs in connection with your History of Medicine and our History of Technology.¹ I do not think we ought to treat drugs until we get to the nineteenth century when, of course, we must deal with fine chemicals. This will not be until Volume V. The volume we are particularly concerned with at the moment is Volume II which involves the classical civilisation and its outcome in the north-west up till renaissance times. There was in that period, of course, nothing in the way of fine chemicals. We are naturally dealing with industrial chemical processes and drugs come in there now and again incidentally. For the most part, since they are of vegetable origin, they represent an economic factor with which I do not think we ought to deal. In fact, economics is exactly the subject that we want to keep away from because there is the Cambridge Economic History appearing neck and neck with ours and yours.² When it comes to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries of Volume III we shall have something to say, of course, about true chemical processes, and some of them, e.g. Glauber salts, are of medical application. This, however, will not involve a chapter or section on drugs. I think you will agree with this decision.

Quite apart from all this, your own studies on the early receipts and antidotaries make you far more efficient in dealing with this subject than anyone we could find for it. I need hardly say that if you were to consider doing a short section yourself on early processes of drug preparation for our Vol. II we should be delighted, but I really think that it would go better in your book.

I was very sorry not to have a more cheerful letter about your health. Maybe the advance of summer will bring a different outlook. I do hope that Emmy will be able to come to Naples. I shall come all the way by sea, possibly with my friend Greeves. I am really not sure about Dorothea and do not quite know what to say about her. She suffers a good deal with high blood pressure, and three weeks ago had some rather bad nose-bleeding which frightened us a good deal. She was in hospital for a fortnight under sedation and slept almost the whole time. She is back home now distinctly better, but still has a strong tendency to turn night into day. We have a nice nurse in the house – an old friend – who manages her very well and does everything also to make me comfortable. We are rather hoping to keep her with us, but really do not quite know yet. My general impression is that Dorothea will not come to Naples. She does not like the sea and the heat does not suit her as it does me.

I am very glad that you liked my volumes.³ They certainly were a surprise. I knew, of course, that they were coming but I really did not know what impressive productions they

would be. Their production and especially their indexing really does Underwood great credit. I am still very worried about the whole Wellcome layout.⁴ It is so obvious that the whole thing should be made a University department, and that it will not go properly until it is. It appears that there are technical difficulties arising out of the terms of the Wellcome Trust in turning the thing over to the University, but I cannot for the life of me see why they should not establish a department next door to University College so as to make it a University department in everything but name. I do not think that we shall persuade Dale to this but I am, in fact, seeing him in the near future and will just drop a hint.⁵ The trouble is that he gets angry at the very suggestion.

I had a nice card from Fischer in Zürich from Greece this morning.

Have you seen Ffrangcon Robert's pamphlet Medical Terms: Their Origin and Construction, William Heinemann Medical Books, London 1954?⁶ What an excellent bit of work. Like all good ideas, one thinks when one sees it, "Why on earth didn't I do that years ago?"! You ought to look at it. It should be in the hands of every medical student and, more especially, of every American medical student, that is of everyone who knows no Latin or Greek. I commend it heartily.

Again, my dear friend, I am most eagerly looking forward to our meeting. I do not think we could meet more comfortably from the point of view of both of us than at Naples. Where do you propose to put up there? Is it worth being vaccinated and inoculated for typhoid at my age?

In the current number of Endeavour you will find an article by me with a coloured picture which I believe to be a historic one.⁷ It is of the inner coffin of Tutankhamen, and it is the first one that I have seen which represents contoured gold properly. An immense amount of technical skill has gone into its production. Let me know if you do not see it and I will ensure that a copy is sent to you.

With all good wishes to you and yours,
Yours as always,
Charles Singer

¹ Sigerist (1951); Singer et al. (eds), (1954–1958).

² J. H. Clapham and E. E. Power (eds), *Cambridge economic history*, 9 vols (Cambridge, 1951–89).

³ Underwood (ed.), (1953).

⁴ Wellcome Library and Museum of the History of Medicine

⁵ Henry H. Dale (1875–1968) English pharmacologist, Nobel Prize winner; chairman of the trustees of the Wellcome Trust between 1938 and 1960.

⁶ Ffrangcon Robert, *Medical terms: their origin and construction* (London, 1954).

⁷ Charles Singer, 'Some early goldwork', *Endeavour*, 1954, **13**: 86–93.