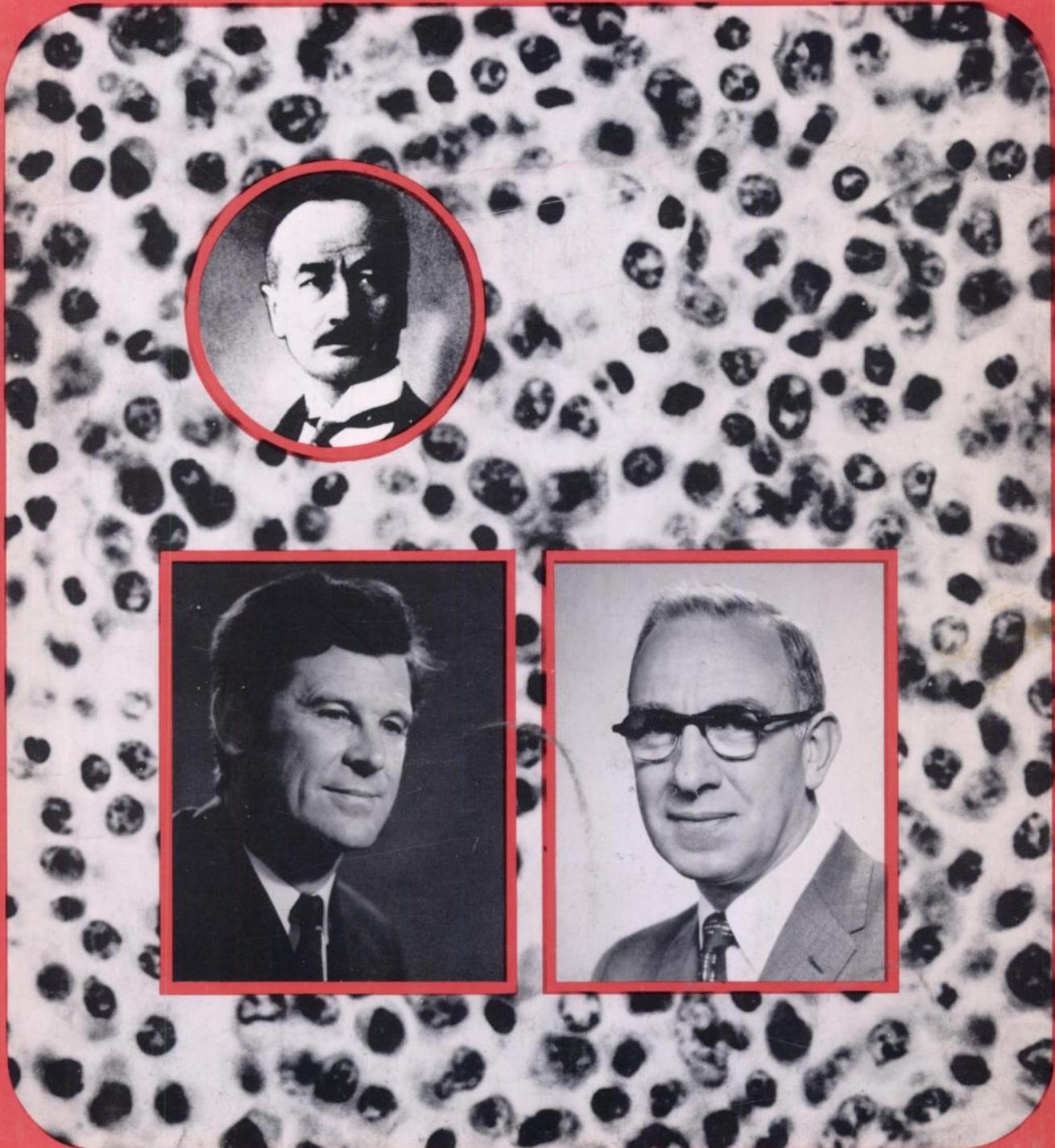


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COVER LEGEND

Marek's disease, a lymphoproliferative disease of the domestic chicken, was first described in 1907 by Joseph Marek (1868-1952) of Hungary (*Deut. Tierärztl. Wochschr.*, 15: 417-421, 1907). It has become increasingly important to the poultry industry because of a rise in incidence with increased density of the poultry population and intensity of use of this species.

The infectious nature of Marek's disease was recognized from field experience. In 1967 the causative agent was shown to be a herpesvirus. Two years later pathogenic Marek's disease virus had been attenuated by growth in cultured cells and the attenuated virus was shown to be an effective vaccine experimentally. In 1970 the results of field trials were published establishing this virus as a useful, safe, and effective vaccine when used under commercial conditions. Soon after, a naturally apathogenic field Marek's disease virus and a herpesvirus from turkeys antigenically related to Marek's disease virus were also shown to be effective and safe vaccines. For various practical and commercial reasons, the herpesvirus of turkeys is now the most widely used vaccine.

Two groups of investigators were primarily involved in these advances. Houghton Poultry Research Station at Huntingdon, England, introduced the earlier attenuated chicken virus vaccine. The station is directed by Dr. Peter M. Biggs. Biggs who was born in 1926, in Petersfield, Hampshire, received his education in veterinary science at the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in

London, and received a doctorate from the University of Bristol in 1958. He has been with the Houghton Poultry Research Station since 1959, and in 1974 became director. Important contributions to the investigations were made by Dr. A. E. Churchill, Dr. L. N. Payne, and Dr. R. C. Chubb.

Investigators at the Regional Poultry Research Laboratory of the U. S. Department of Agriculture at East Lansing, Michigan, conducted parallel studies and introduced the turkey virus vaccine. The laboratory is directed by Dr. Ben Roy Burmester. Born in Petaluma, California, in 1910, Burmester was educated at the University of California, receiving a Ph.D. in 1936, and at Michigan State University, receiving a DVM in 1951. In 1940 he joined the Regional Poultry Research Laboratory at East Lansing and since 1964 he has been its director. Important contributions to the investigations of Marek's disease were made by Dr. R. L. Witter, Dr. K. Nazerian, and Dr. H. G. Purchase.

Excellent reviews by Nazerian appear in *Advances in Cancer Research*, 17: 279-316, 1973, and by Biggs in *The Herpesviruses*, New York, Academic Press, Inc., 1973.

The portrait of Marek (*upper*) is from the National Library of Medicine. We are indebted to Dr. Nazerian for the portrait of Dr. Burmester (*lower right*), and to Dr. Biggs (*lower left*) for his portrait and for the background photomicrograph.

M.B.S.