

Foreword to the 1983 *Wave Length* book

The 11th International Congress of Electroencephalography and Clinical Neurophysiology held in London on 25–30 August 1985 marks a return after 38 years to the site of the meeting now called the 1st International Congress, and the return of its sponsor, the International Federation of Societies for Electroencephalography and Clinical Neurophysiology, to the place of its conception. Fortunately, many of “The Founders”, those who attended the 1st International Congress, are still active and will attend the 11th.

Since almost two generations have passed, the Executive Committee of the International Federation decided that it was none too soon to record the history of the Federation and of its better known organ, the journal *Electroencephalography and Clinical Neurophysiology*, in some formal and permanent fashion. This book is the result.

No better choice of author could have been made than William A. Cobb, who was present at the conception and has been continuously active in Federation affairs ever since, serving as a member of the early organizing and planning groups; as Treasurer of the Federation from 1957 to 1962; Chairman of the Committee on amendment of the Statutes of that Fiscal Period and principal author of the 1961 Constitution; variously as European Editor, Managing Editor, Publications Manager, and Publications Editor of The EEG Journal from 1961 until 1985, save for the 4 years of his Presidency of the Federation, 1973–1977. No one has more firsthand knowledge of the business of the Federation and of the Journal over the years, and he is in possession of the bulk of the Federation’s archives. Indeed, no one can be said to have contributed more to the Federation and to the Journal, as will be evident by reading this book, despite Bill Cobb’s rather matter-of-fact references to his own role(s). This history will be of value as a contribution to the broader history of the biomedical sciences and to future officers and members of the Federation, who will gain a deeper understanding of its traditions and how it all came about. The value of his narrative is strengthened by the author’s frankness, his unwillingness to gloss over the difficulties, disappointments, and human controversies that are inevitable in the development of complex organizations. I believe you will find it a balanced account, brief but thorough, and felicitously embellished here and there by personal touches.

We are grateful to Dr. Cobb for yet another of his many contributions to the Federation.

R.J.Ellingson
President, IFSECN
25 April 1985