NEUROLOGICAL STAMP

Julius Wagner-Jauregg (1857–1940)

The Austrian neuropsychiatrist Julius Wagner-Jauregg was born in Wels in 1857. He studied medicine in Vienna, where he earned his “venia legendi”, an advanced doctoral degree required for university lecturers, in 1885. He spent four years at the University Clinic in Graz before becoming head of the Viennese Department of Psychiatry, a position he held from 1893 to 1928. His intensive study of cretinism served as a basis for his specialisation in the problems of goitre. In 1887 he published a paper on the influence of feverish illnesses on psychoses, and 30 years later, during the first world war, introduced the use of iatrogenic Plasmodium vivax infection in the treatment of late symptomatic neurosyphilis. He was awarded the Nobel prize in 1927 for discovering the therapeutic value of this “malaria vaccination” in the treatment of progressive paralysis. Julius Wagner-Jauregg died in Vienna on 7 September 1940. Austria issued a commemorative stamp in honour of the 100th anniversary of the Nobel prizewinner’s birth.

FRANZ ALLERBERGER
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F Allerberger

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