

Then and Now

What can we learn?

Introduction

Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe

HG Wells, *The Outline of History*. 1920

This brief series of articles serves as a kind of historical documentary, witnessing changes in our modus operandi of NHS healthcare over a period of fifty years. The source 'documents' are diarised notebooks I started writing after medical qualification in 1969. These were not written in a form for publication, rather they served as a screen for my reflection and anchorage for my memory. Over the years these notebook-reservoirs have been periodically siphoned off, duly disguised and published as case histories.

Apart from these necessary disguises, the events portrayed in the vignettes of *Then and Now* are factual, as I witnessed them.