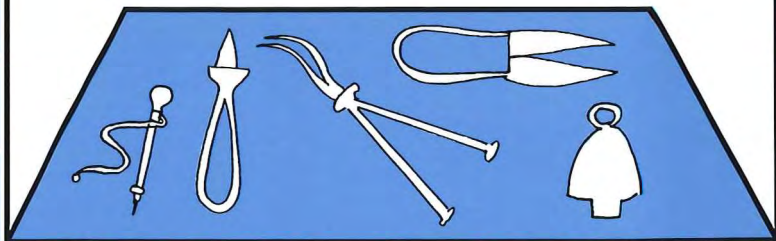


# GALEN

AND THE GATEWAY  
TO MEDICINE



JEANNE BENDICK



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G A L E N

*and the Gateway to Medicine*

by JEANNE BENDICK

Pictures by the author

Sample

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## Who Was Galen?

Galen was a doctor who practiced medicine almost 2,000 years ago.

He was doctor to four Roman emperors, so Roman history could have changed if he made mistakes.

He was a doctor who tended the wounds of gladiators — wounds by sword, spear and the teeth of wild animals.

## WHO WAS GALEN?

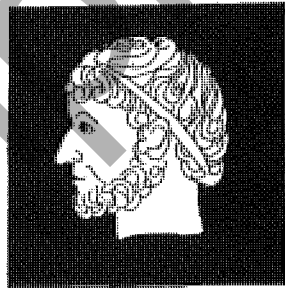
He was a doctor who had to learn about the human body from studying pigs and monkeys.

He was a doctor who invented and recorded so many medicines that some are still used today.

He was a doctor whose theories seemed so accurate that his ideas were taught and followed for almost 1,500 years.

He was Dr. Galen (GAY-len), the most famous doctor and scientist in the Roman empire.

Galen was born on September 22, in the year 129 (or maybe 130) in the Greek city of Pergamum (PUR-gum-um). In Galen's time, Greek people had only one name, but Romans had a string of names. The Roman emperor, in 129, was named Publius Aelius Hadrianus. But he is known, simply, as Hadrian. (HAY drey-an)



HADRIAN

About 250 years before Galen was born, the last ruler of Pergamum had given his city-state to Rome on the condition that Rome would protect its independence. But the people who lived there still considered it a Greek city.

By the time Galen was born, the Romans had conquered all the lands around the Mediterranean Sea, much of Europe (including England), part of Africa, the whole Middle East and some of Asia. If

## WHO WAS GALEN?

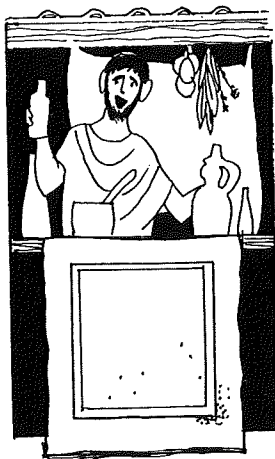


you look at the map you can see how huge the Roman Empire was. You can see the city of Pergamum on the map, twenty miles from the Aegean (ih-JEY-en) Sea. (Today, Pergamum is called Bergama. It is in Turkey.)

What was so special about being a doctor in the second century? There were a lot of doctors then, but many of them had little medical training. A few did go to medical school. Others learned to be doctors by following other doctors around as apprentices, in much the same way as ironsmiths or weavers learned their trades. They learned by watching. There were no formal requirements for being a doctor — you just announced that you were

## WHO WAS GALEN?

one and that you were in the doctoring business. If you were fortunate enough to cure somebody you attracted more patients, otherwise you soon tried another profession.



Doctors might wander from place to place like traveling tradesmen. Some set up stalls in the marketplace, where they gave advice, sold cures, and offered first aid for simple problems.

In the second century people had many of the same health problems and diseases we have now, but there weren't many ways of treating them. Garlic and honey were the most trusted cures. Everyone ate garlic, raw and cooked. They drank garlic juice, rubbed it on, and wore garlic cloves around their necks. Honey was eaten, made into drinks, and smeared on wounds.

Doctors were only beginning to have ideas about what caused diseases. And even if they had known, they didn't have the medicines we have today. There were no vaccines, antibiotics, penicillin or sulfa drugs. There were no anesthetics. There wasn't even aspirin.

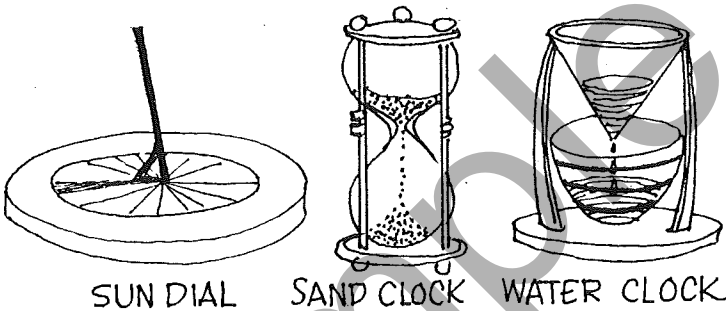
No one could see inside a living body.

X-rays and body scans were thousands of years in the future. It would be more than a thousand years



## WHO WAS GALEN?

before someone invented the thermometer for taking temperatures or the stethoscope for listening to hearts and lungs. Nobody had even invented a proper clock with which to time a pulse. (You couldn't time a pulse with a sun dial, a sand clock or a water clock.)



The workings of a human body were a mystery.

Was there some spirit inside that made people alive?

What, really, did the heart do? Did it control thinking? Or was it just a furnace to heat the blood?

Where did blood come from? How did blood begin? How did it move through the body? Were there different kinds of blood?

Where was air in the body? Was it in the veins?

What did the lungs do? Did they cool the heart?

Did something in the liver make you brave?

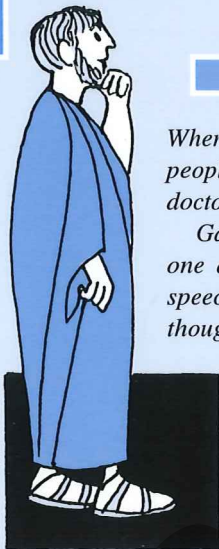
Was gloominess centered in the stomach?

There was so much to figure out.

Galen's ambition was to learn everything about

# GALEN

GREATEST  
DOCTOR OF THE  
ROMAN EMPIRE



*When Eudemus recovered, suddenly important people all over Rome wanted Galen to be their doctor. . . .*

*Galen gave lectures to explain his ideas. . . . In one demonstration, Galen wanted to prove that speech came from the brain, not the heart, even though sound seems to come from the chest. (The ancient doctors thought that thinking, too, came from the heart.) He tied off the vocal chords of a live pig and immediately the loud squeals stopped. When he released the ties the pig began to squeal again, so Galen had proved an important point.*

—From the book

**MEET THE MEDICAL RESEARCHER (BORN IN 129 A.D.)** whose work and writings would be revered as a standard of authority by both Christian and Muslim worlds for the next 1300 years. One day some of Galen's theories of human physiology would be corrected. But the foundation of all his work, a respect for the unity of the human person in body and spirit, would be handed on—as he himself had received it in the Hippocratic tradition.

**In this fascinating biography for young people, Jeanne Bendick brings Galen's Roman world alive with the clarity, humor, and outstanding content we enjoyed in *Archimedes and the Door of Science*. An excellent addition to schools, libraries, and homes; ideal for home education.**



RL 8.0 • Ages 10-up

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