

## Letters to the Editor

### **Invention of flexible fiberoptic endoscope**

Dear Sir,

In Albizzati and Mills recent article from Dundee on outpatient examination of the upper airway (JLO March 1989) the authors state that the principle of light transmission through glass fibres was first described by Lamm, in 1930, in a German publication. In fact, the principle was first described, and patented, by a famous Scot, John Logie Baird, in 1927. Baird never exploited his invention, perhaps because he was too busy with television, but his contribution was acknowledged by Professor Hopkins in his paper describing the invention of the first flexible fibrescope. It is interesting that Hopkins name has been attached only to the rigid quartz-air rod system, when he was also responsible for the invention of the fibrescope.

Yours faithfully,

J. W. Fairley, F.R.C.S.

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### **References**

- Baird, J. L. (1927) British Patent Specification No. 285738.  
Hopkins, H. H. and Kapany N. S. (1954) A flexible fibrescope, using static scanning. *Nature*, **173**: 39–41.

Dear Sir,

We are indebted to Mr. Fairley for correcting the inadvertent error in our recent paper. As representatives of a Scottish E.N.T. Department, albeit an Italian and an Englishman, we are suitably chastened.

Yours faithfully,

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