NEURILEMMOMA OF THE ORBIT*

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WHEREAS Schwann-celled tumours occur commonly enough on the peripheral nerve distribution of the body and along the auditory nerve, a solitary orbital tumour of this nature is a rarity: perhaps sufficiently so to warrant recording.

Case Report

A man, aged 41 years, who looked and considered he was a perfectly healthy person in every respect, was sent by his doctor to my out-patient clinic because of a painless swelling of which he had recently become aware presenting in the left orbit beside the nasal orbital

Fig. 1.—Whorl formation of bundles of elongated cells. $\times 100$.

Fig. 2.—Elongated fibre-like Schwann cells sectioned at various angles in a very fine connective tissue reticulum. $\times 200$.

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margin. He had noticed it was increasing in size and prominence, but of its presence he had no other complaint.

Examination.—By finger-tip palpation one felt subcutaneously the end of a firm, but not hard, rounded tumour like a marble, lying in left orbital tissues beside the nasal bony margin and wall, with its rounded end making an obvious swelling in the nasal end of the upper eyelid immediately above the medial palpebral raphe. The tumour could be felt to be rounded and elongated and to move freely in the loose orbital tissues deep to the fascia orbitalis.

A provisional diagnosis was made of a dermoid tumour or cyst. Under local anaesthesia, enucleation of the soft-firm tumour, the size and shape of a pigeon's egg, was a simple operation and the vascular stalk and perhaps nerve at its deeper end gave no trouble; but no particular associated nerve was identified. Post-operative healing was perfect and the small incisional scar has rapidly become inconspicuous. No evidence of any other tumour was found in either orbit or elsewhere on the body.

Macroscopically the tumour was fairly solid and well circumscribed or encapsuled, and had a mucinoid cystic formation at its superficial end.

Microscopically the section appeared to be composed of fasciculated masses of elongated cells and what look like nerve fibres, in interweaving bundles or whorl formation (Figs 1 and 2).

This appearance is typical of a tumour of the neural sheaths of Schwann cells, or neurilemmoma.