

# Epilepsy Surgery in 1909

In 1909 new ground was clearly being broken in relation to the surgery of epilepsy. In that year Sir Victor Horsley delivered the Linacre Lecture at Cambridge University, titled 'Function of the So-called Motor Area of the Brain'. He reported an operation on a boy who had developed uncontrollable, violent movements of his left arm. Horsley used a bipolar electrode to obtain responses from the cortex in front of the central fissure; these ranged from movements of the face at the inferior portion, then of fingers, elbow and shoulder, as he went upward on the precentral cortex. Also in 1909, Fedor Krause published his



Horsley's sketches of stimulation points on the motor cortex at operation



Horsley's sketches of stimulation points in excised cortex

5-page article titled 'Die operative Behandlung der Epilepsie' in a Berlin medical journal. And Harvey Cushing's seminal paper in *Brain* reported for the first time sensory responses and the sensory auras of focal attacks, produced by electrical stimulation of the postcentral cortex, in two patients awake under local anaesthetic. These were the leaders of the field at the time, but the great war of 1914–18 provided a new generation of neurosurgeons with the opportunity to study post-traumatic seizures.