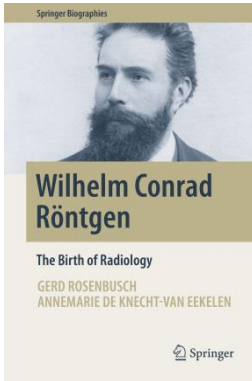


Book shelf**Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen: The Birth of Radiology**

Rosenbusch, de Knecht-van Eekelen

REVIEW INFO

Publisher:
Springer

ISBN:
978-3-319-97660-0

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prices.*

REVIEW

Book reviewed by Dr Arpan K Banerjee, past chair of the British Society of the History of Radiology.

Wilhelm Röntgen has been the subject of numerous articles and biographies, the most famous perhaps being the Otto Glasser publication of 1933. This new biography penned by Dutch authors is part of the Springer biography/autobiography series celebrating the lives of scientists and scholars of the past.

Röntgen was born in Lennep, Germany, in 1845. His mother was of Dutch origin and he spent a significant part of his childhood in Apeldoorn in the Netherlands where he attended school. In 1862 aged 17 he moved to Utrecht where he attended the technical school. He did not pass the entrance examination to get into Utrecht University and moved to Zurich, Switzerland, to attend the polytechnic to study engineering. Having obtained a diploma in engineering his interests turned to physics following meeting professor of physics August Kundt and, in 1869, he obtained a PhD for his thesis 'Studies on gases'.

He married Anna Berthe Ludwig in 1872 and moved to Strasbourg as an assistant in physics. He moved to Hohenheim, then back to Strasbourg as chair in physics for three years before moving to Giessen. In 1888 he eventually settled in Würzburg, Germany, as the professor of physics. It is there of course that, on November 8, 1895, he conducted his famous experiment which resulted in the presentation on 'A new kind of rays' that was to change everything and result in his Nobel Prize for Physics in 1901 (he did not deliver a lecture).

Today, November 8 is celebrated as the International Day of Radiology. In 1900 Röntgen moved to Munich to take up the chair in physics there. He retired in 1920 and died in 1923. He and Anna had no children.

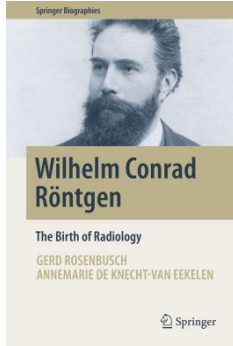
review continues ...

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This superb biography covers his early period of life before fame in detail and the text is well illustrated with an extensive bibliography. His period at Würzburg and the discovery is described, and the chapter on how the discovery was greeted around the world makes interesting reading.

Röntgen liked outdoor pursuits, hunting and holidays in the mountains as well as being with friends, and the human aspects of his character are well presented. His time in Munich is also well chronicled.

The appendix includes a list of his publications, including an English translation of his classic paper. There is also a list of supervised theses.

As with other books in the Springer series, this edition is beautifully produced, with a pleasing layout, nice illustrations and tables and is a delight to read. The authors should be congratulated for their efforts and I am sure the book will appeal to a wide readership and not just those professionally connected with Röntgen's legacy.

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