

Introduction to Hans Eidig and Robert C. Gallo

An introduction to Bob Gallo, as a person and a scientist, would certainly be superfluous. I would therefore simply like to draw a parallel to the life of the lectures eponym, Hans Eidig. The name of this special lecture reminds us not only of particular historical circumstances but, more importantly, of this man's life.

Hans Eidig was born in 1804 in the village of Klein Klecken. It was originally intended that he should become a forest ranger, as was his father. However the yearning for freedom and independence, which was to influence his entire life led him to become a poacher rather than a forester. He was very good at this, and there was a great demand for his services. But his desire for freedom and independence was too strong for the restraints of his way of life, not afraid of this risking his life for others, he became the Robin Hood of the Lüneburger Heide. He had good friends and advisors as well as many enemies. In 1835 he agreed to the king's offer to accept the cash reward on his head and to emigrate to America. He arrived in New York with his girlfriend, dreaming of freedom and independence. Thereafter we largely lose track of his life in the new continent. However, those of us from this region believe that he traveled to the West Coast of the United States where he discovered gold.

Although I do not know whether this legend is true, it remains very much alive here, and today's inhabitants of this village remember him as a local hero who always tried to protect our ancestors from humiliation at the hands of their feudal masters. In the New World Hans Eidig gained the freedom and independence that he had always sought.

Against the background of these words honoring the memory of Hans Eidig, I should like now to present Bob Gallo, who will explain the origin of human leukemia.

Rolf Neth