Objectives: With the development and rise of abdominal laparoscopic techniques, the old Reverdin needle has had a revival, because it proved to be useful for the endoscopic closure of laparoscopic access ports, in order to lower the incidence of incisional hernias. Several new modifications of the Reverdin needle, with different names, are in the market now. This new use of an old instrument, prompted a review of the life and work of Jaques-Louis Reverdin, the Swiss surgeon trained in Paris and founder of the modern Swiss surgery. Methods: Biographical and bibliographical review of Jaques-Louis Reverdin and his contributions to surgery. Results: Jaques-Louis Reverdin (1842-1929), born in Geneva, completed his medical studies in Paris, where he practised in several well-known hospitals such as La Pitié (with Goselin), Saint Louis (with Guérin), Lariboisière, and Necker (with Guyon). In 1869 he published and presented in several meetings, a pioneering experience of successful free skin graft procedure, that is still performed in some cases and constitutes the first organ transplantation. In 1870 he presented his doctoral thesis "Etude sur l'uréthrotomie interne" with the experience of his master Guyon (63 operations), gaining the Civiale prize and the bronze medal of the Paris Faculty of Medicine. He returned back to Geneva in 1872 to begin a long surgical practice and Faculty teaching, and he made seminal contributions to the knowledge of thyroid diseases, in particular on the clinical presentation of function deficiency following exeresis of the thyroid gland (postoperative myxoedema). His contributions paralleled that made by Theodor Kocher in Bern, the surgeon that received in solitary the Nobel prize for these studies in 1909. With Jean-Louis Prevost and Constant Picot, they founded the "Revue medicale de la Suisse romande", the most important Swiss medical journal of the 20th century. He is remembered in the field of Urology for a special needle designed to pass through a suture in a time were catgut and silk were the most employed sutures to control organ pedicles. Conclusions: Reverdin, that pertains to the glorious epoch were surgery - performed under anaesthesia and with the antisepsis postulates of Lister and Pasteur -, reached most of his goals, is remembered for the first human transplant (skin grafting) and, fortunately, one of the several surgical instrument he designed, the Reverdin needle, had a revival in current laparoscopic surgery.

Keywords
History of surgery, History of urology, History of medicine, Laparoscopy