

Wenzel Leopold Gruber

In 1859, Wenzel Leopold Gruber. described the presence of an osteofibrous canal at the [petrous apex](#), which he called the “foramen petrosphenoideum” ¹⁾.

Although the level of anatomical detail found in [Primo Dorello's](#) work was previously unmatched, the first description of the [Dorello's Canal](#) was made by [Wenzel Leopold Gruber](#), almost 50 years prior to Dorello's landmark publication.

In his book he stated that under the “ligament petrosphenoideum” is an osteofibrous “foramen petrosphenoideum” through which the [abducens nerve](#) passes. This foramen measured 6 to 12 mm in length and 1 to 3 mm in width and contained the [inferior petrosal sinus](#) and [sixth cranial nerve](#). His observations were not acknowledged until [Giuseppe Conte Gradenigo](#) in 1904, described a syndrome related to infection and inflammation of the apex of petrous temporal bone ²⁾.

The [abducens nerve](#) lies within the [Dorello's Canal](#), coursing toward the [cavernous sinus](#) below a strong fibrous trabecula known as the petrosphenoidal ligament or [Gruber's ligament](#).

Wenzel Leopold Gruber was born in Krukanice, a small village near to Pilsen on September 24, 1814. He started his medical studies in Prague at 1834. He became doctor of surgery in 1842, and in 1844 was conferred doctor of medicine. He was prosector of normal anatomy at the University of Prague in 1842-1847. Although qualified, he was unable to achieve a professorship in his native country. Therefore, in 1846, on the initiative of Pirogov, he was invited to become the first prosector for normal, practical, and pathological anatomy at the Medical Academy in St. Petersburg. From 1855, Gruber was entrusted the directorship of practical anatomy, remaining at that position for some 30 years. He died on September 30 1890 of stroke in Vienna. Gruber played an active role in the establishment of the anatomical-physiological institute in Petersburg and founded here a museum. As one of the most experienced and active anatomists, Gruber published, over a period of 41 years, almost 500 scientific works.

¹⁾
Gruber W L. Leipzig: Verlag Von Otto Wigand; 1859. Beitrige zur Anatomic des Keilbeins und Schlifenbeins

²⁾
Gradenigo G. Über circumscripte Leptomeningitis mit spinalen Symptomen und über Paralyse des N. abducens otischen Ursprungs. Arch Ohrenheilk. 1904;62:255-270.

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