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**A description of syndromic cryptophthalmos
by poet Daniel Hermann in “De monstroso partu...”
published in Riga, 1596.**

Cryptophthalmos is a congenital condition that is defined as a hidden eye behind the skin continuing from the forehead to the cheek and with no recognizable lid structures. The condition can be syndromic or isolated and it has quite a long written history. An isolated cryptophthalmos was mentioned in one brief sentence back in first century AD by the Roman author Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History*. The first description of syndromic cryptophthalmos is commonly attributed to German ophthalmologist Karl Wilhelm Zehender and his colleague Wilhelm Manz in 1872.

I argue that the first description of syndromic cryptophthalmos was given not by German medical doctors in 1872 but by Prussian poet and humanist Daniel Hermann (1543–1601) in “*De monstroso partu...*” or “*About the monstrous birth: on August 18 of the year 1595 in the district of Ascheraden on the other side of the Duna in Livonia and on things that happen against the laws of nature. An ethical, natural and historical discourse.*”

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