

PREFACE

T.E. Hall was regarded by his contemporaries as being the most accomplished osteopathic technician of his time. Nothing is known of his early history, except that he joined the army and became a musician. He later joined the Debroy Somers band, and we find him on board ship as a member of the orchestra, and suffering from the effects of a chronic knee injury, a legacy from the football field. Among the passengers there was an elderly American osteopath, and the knee and the musician were dramatically relieved. The year was 1925 and on returning to London, Hall registered as a student with J.M. Littlejohn, at his address in Dover Street.

As he approached seniority during his student years, his natural gift in the field of osteopathic technique began to emerge, and to lay the foundations of a long, and fruitful career under the guiding hand of J.M. Littlejohn. After the early days in Vincent Square, the British School of Osteopathy occupied temporary accommodation at Abbey House in nearby Victoria Street, before becoming permanently established at 16 Buckingham Gate in 1930. Having graduated in 1929, Hall joined the faculty of the School, teaching osteopathic technique, a subject in which he excelled, and taking the office of Vice-Dean in 1934.

It was during these formative years in the life of the School that he visited American colleges, and a life-long friendship with Harrison H. Fryette was formed.

It was his unswerving loyalty during the difficult years following the failure of the Parliamentary Bill in 1935 and, more particularly, during the war years, that prevented final disaster from overtaking the only school of osteopathy in Great Britain at that time. It has been said that "but for Hall the School would not have survived the war".

In the 1950's new influences began to deviate from the principles laid down by J.M. Littlejohn, and promulgated by Hall. It was at this time that the Osteopathic Institute of Applied Technique (now known as the Institute of Classical Osteopathy) was formed. Hall made the original suggestion that such an organisation should be formed and became one of the founder-members. He taught, and demonstrated, his techniques to the membership and these have been preserved in recordings, on film and in the Year Books published by the Institute.

Hall was not a prolific writer. Nearly all of the articles in this book are based on lectures and demonstrations given by him in the late 1950's and 60's. He was an entertaining and knowledgeable speaker, although somewhat prone to straying from the subject. Many of his anecdotes and asides have been included in the articles and they help to give a hint of his unique style of presentation. His association with Fryette further refined his already high degree diagnostic and technical ability. He had no time for what he called "crack merchants" and, according to John Wernham "when demonstrating students he would often manipulate the model's neck until all the crack had been taken out of it and only then tell the student to get on with the adjustment."

For Hall, the art of osteopathy demanded a thorough knowledge of the physiological movements of the spine, a high degree of diagnostic or palpatory skills and the technical ability to deal with the underlying conditions. What would he have made of the comments by a recent graduate of the B.S.O. that they "do not do manipulation because it is too difficult"?

The Institute of Classical Osteopathy exists to help stem the general decline in standards of manipulative and diagnostic skills and continue the work of its founders Hall, Wernham, Proby, Jackson and others.

After a long and distinguished career T.E. Hall died on the 24th March 1979. We shall not see his like again.

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For those interested in finding out more about the technique and diagnostic skills of T.E. Hall, the Institute of Classical Osteopathy has produced a video of his work. We are fortunate that mainly due to the dedication and the foresight of John Wernham, a considerable amount of 35mm footage of Hall in action has survived. This has been edited and transcribed onto video tape under the supervision of Mr C. Campbell, Principal of the Irish College of Classical Osteopathy. Copies can be obtained from the Institute of Classical Osteopathy. Recordings of some of his original lectures are also available.