

INTRODUCTION

The experience of many years in clinical practice coupled with a profound interest in osteopathic research gave Willis Haycock an unique insight into the theory and practice of osteopathy, a gift which he used for the benefit of both his patients and his fellow professionals throughout a long and successful career.

Willis Haycock began his training at the Manchester School of Osteopathy under the tutelage of its founder Dr. Looker, an American trained osteopath who had come to the United Kingdom to practice and teach Osteopathy. Students at the Looker School, as it became known, were taught traditional medical methods of diagnosis but were also taught to study the patient rather than the disease and, in Haycock's own words "to attempt to influence the disturbed physiology by various procedures affecting the somatic structures". With the demise of the Looker School Haycock transferred to the British School of Osteopathy to complete his training under J M Littlejohn. According to Haycock, Dr Littlejohn's tuition "widened and deepened my concept of Osteopathy by adding greatly to my understanding of the role of the disturbed nervous system, and especially the vaso-motor system, in the setting-up of those conditions which favour the development of disease and disability".

After graduating from the British School of Osteopathy Haycock returned to his native Yorkshire and began to apply these osteopathic principles to a wide range of cases. Rapidly building a successful practice, he never lost his consuming desire to learn more about the physiological processes triggered by osteopathic manipulation, studying the works of Sherringham, Pottenger, Cannon, Burns, Denslow, Korr and Seyle amongst others. He was certain that the insights gained from these studies enabled him to see more clearly into the problems affecting his patients and, therefore, to obtain better results. Later in his career he became influenced by the work of Bowles, Hoover, Johnston and others. The study sessions in New England to which these men contributed helped to reinspire Osteopathy, with a living, dynamic quality and Haycock's later years were dedicated to the expert teaching and practice of the subtle refinements of osteopathic technique.

In the late 1950's Willis Haycock was introduced to the Institute of Applied Technique (now called the Institute of Classical Osteopathy) and became a valuable contributor to both meetings and Yearbooks.

He later went on to become an honorary member and Academic Fellow of the Society of Osteopaths and Chairman of the Osteopathic Faculty of the European School of Osteopathy.

Through his clinical work, lectures and writings, Willis Haycock left Osteopathy changed, changed much for the better. By all accounts a gentle man, dedicated to both his patients and his profession, he spent the greater part of his life demonstrating the crucial link between structure and function which lies at the heart of Osteopathic thinking. His approach to treatment formed the living expression and application of the theoretical truths expounded by Littlejohn, Burns, Korr and others.

Osteopathy owes much to such men and Willis Haycock should be remembered with respect and admiration by all of us who follow in the profession to which he gave so much.

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