

INTRODUCTION

This volume is the third in a planned series of four "Technique and Diagnosis" books to be published by the Institute of Classical Osteopathy. Similar in format to the first two volumes, which dealt with the pelvic area and the extremities, the articles in this volume are taken from the archives of the Institute and cover various aspects regarding the treatment and diagnosis of thoracic and abdominal conditions.

Today, with so-called Visceral osteopathy¹ being regarded as yet another 'specialism¹ within the profession, it is important to look back at how previous generations of osteopaths approached these areas. According to his contemporaries, A.T. Still commonly and expertly treated the ventral aspect including structures such as the diaphragm, intestines and kidneys. J.M. Littlejohn, McConnell and others continued with this work until the sad decline of osteopathy as a system of therapeutics, which began in the 1960's and continues to this present day.

The majority of the articles in this volume are by two of the greatest pioneers of the profession, both trained at Kirksville by Still himself.

J.M. Littlejohn was the father of osteopathy in the U.K., founding the B.S.O. in 1917. Having graduated from Kirksville, Littlejohn went on to teach both at Kirksville and Chicago and, according to one of his contemporaries "dipped osteopathy into the bath of physiology, and, what's more, kept it there". He wrote on every aspect of osteopathic therapeutics in a detailed and learned style which some find difficult, but for those prepared to persevere in their studies, an unparalleled wealth of wisdom and experience lies within.

Carl McConnell also trained under Still and the years spent at Kirksville gave him the solid foundation on which he built his professional life. He authored over 250 articles and co-authored one of most important of the early osteopathic text-books. He became the first Director of the A.T. Still Research Institute, President of the American Osteopathic Association and Editor of the Journal of the A.O.A. His brilliant writings on what he called 'Ventral technique' were based purely on the applied anatomy and physiology of the region under discussion in conjunction with the related spinal segments, the

two aspects being part of an indivisible whole that characterises true osteopathy. Contrast this with today's malign tendency to sub-divide the profession into specialisms; here the 'Visceral osteopath', there the 'structural osteopath' and everywhere, it seems, the 'cranial osteopath'.

The article on the abdominal lymphatics is an extract from a larger work investigating the importance of the lymphatic system in health and disease. For those interested, reprints of the entire book are available from the John Wernham College in Maidstone.

Willis Haycock, Normund Cram and A. Rumfitt were early members of the Institute and the articles included here reveal a glimpse of the true potential of osteopathic medicine, a potential that now, sadly, seems to have been lost, in the light of some recently publicised investigations (some might say persecutions) by the G.Ost. Council can you imagine their reaction on being told that an osteopath was treating a mitral stenosis?

As should always be the case in genuine osteopathy, the applied anatomy, physiology and mechanics are revisited in most of the articles and it is hoped that readers will appreciate the attempts of the Various authors to illustrate the "why's" as well as the "how's" of treatment approaches. The basic medical sciences of anatomy, physiology and pathology should always be looked at from an osteopathic viewpoint. As John Wernham was always saying to his students; "Don't ask whether the case is suitable for osteopathic treatment, ask what osteopathy can do for this case!"

The two preceding volumes of this series seem to have been welcomed by students, lecturers and practitioners alike and I trust this volume will be equally appreciated.

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