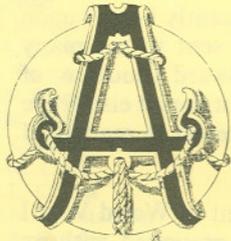


OSLER LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

McGILL UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL, CANADA

NO. 40 - JUNE 1982

ANNE WILKINSON (1910 - 61)



ANNE WILKINSON is a name which should be familiar to Oslerians. She was the author of that literary gem *Lions in the way: A discursive history of the Oslers*.^{*} This book is required reading for anyone interested in Sir William Osler and his family and no "required reading"

could possibly be more enjoyable. In its writing, Anne Wilkinson combined an extraordinary literary talent and careful historical research with a personal knowledge of many of the Oslers. She herself was a member of that family; Sir Edmund Osler was her maternal grandfather. And it should be added that Dr. Francis, our first Osler Librarian, was a cousin. (In writing him, she signed "ever your most affec. cuz., Anne"). Needless to say all the resources of the Osler Library were gladly and freely put at her disposal.

Recently Anne Wilkinson's name has come to the fore through *The Tamarack Review*. This Canadian literary journal, established in 1956, has apparently run its appointed course. A "final issue" has appeared dated Winter 1982; it is dedicated to the memory of Anne Wilkinson. This reminder of Anne Wilkinson as a literary figure has suggested that it might be appropriate to provide readers of the *Newsletter* with a brief comment on her life and work.

Anne Wilkinson (née Gibbons) was born in Toronto but moved to London, Ontario as a child. Her father died while she was still a child and it was then that she went to live in Craighleigh, the Toronto home of her maternal grandfather, Sir Edmund Osler. Her recollections of her grandfather were clear since she lived at Craighleigh from 1919 to 1924, the year of his death at which time she was almost fourteen.

Later she received a somewhat informal and varied education in a number of English and American schools and eventually went on to a distinguished career as a poet. In 1968, A.J.M. Smith wrote the following tribute. "Her work as a whole puts her, certainly, in the forefront of contemporary Canadian poets. She has helped us to be a little more aware and hence a little more civilized. Her poems are a legacy whose value can never be diminished."† She was a founding editor of *The Tamarack Review*. In an appreciation published in the Summer 1961 issue of that magazine, it was stated that *The Tamarack Review* had been one of her principal interests and pleasures and that, without her help, it might not have survived its fourth year. Small wonder that the final issue of 1982 is dedicated to her memory.

Although poetry seems to have been her main concern, she did write two books of prose - her delightful story of the Osler family (1956) and *Swann and Daphne* (1960), a fantasy for children.

Perhaps this brief account of Anne Wilkinson can best be concluded by quoting a passage from her story of the Oslers since it displays so well the high quality of her prose. She is describing her visit to Frank Osler in London, England as he lay dying in a nursing home. "He lay in a big brass bed. First he looked like William, then like Edmund. His head belonged to an elder statesman, a bishop, a retired general. I looked everywhere for Frank. I found, instead, Ellen's six sons gathered together in this last survivor. Time had already diminished the gap between the strong and the weak and death was about to close it."

Grateful acknowledgment is offered to Miss Lillian Rider of the McLennan Library at McGill University for her help in providing information about Anne Wilkinson.

^{*}Anne Wilkinson, *Lions in the way: A discursive history of the Oslers*. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1956).

†Anne Wilkinson, *The collected poems of Anne Wilkinson and a prose memoir*. Edited, with an introduction by A.J.M. Smith (Toronto: Macmillan, 1968).

A HISTORY OF FATHER JOHNSON'S CHURCH

The Osler Library has received an historical work entitled *St. Philip's Church: 150 Years Beside the Humber: 1828 - 1978*. This has come to us with the compliments of the Historical Society of St. Philip's Anglican Church, Etobicoke, Weston, Ontario and the Chairman of that Society, Mrs. Phoebe Rankin. William Osler's teacher, the Reverend William Arthur Johnson, served St. Philip's Church as its incumbent from 1856 to 1880 and it was there that Osler was confirmed. The book contains a chapter devoted to "The Church's Incredible Father Johnson". The author of this chapter, Mrs. Phoebe Rankin, introduces her subject as follows: "Without being guilty of exaggeration one could point to the incumbency of the Reverend William Arthur Johnson as the focal point for the interest in St. Philip's Church manifest today by visitors from all parts of the world. His twenty-four years were to be colourful, dynamic and, at times, turbulent." Also there are frequent references to Father Johnson in other chapters. This is a very welcome addition to the Osler Library.

The initial letter on this page is reproduced from *Le Livre Moderne: Revue du Monde littéraire et des Bibliophiles contemporains*, publiée par Octave Uzanne, Paris, vol. 2, 1890 (Bibl. Osl. 7169).

OSLER LIBRARY 1982 SPRING EXHIBIT

Many spring exhibits are so designated merely because they are mounted in the spring. They do not necessarily reflect the spirit of the season. This one does. It is made up largely of delicately tinted prints of flowering plants, the product of the Blackwood Press. These prints, as well as a few booklets in the exhibit, were given to the Osler Library by Dr. Edmund E. Simpson, a McGill medical graduate of 1939. The Blackwood Press was established by Dr. Simpson in his home at 6206 Homestead Drive, Placerville, California, 95667. There he has produced many attractive prints and booklets.

Readers will recall that Dr. Simpson was both author and printer of an elegant brochure entitled *William Wilmoughby Francis* (*Osler Library Newsletter* no. 38). These reminiscences of our first Osler Librarian were also a product of the Blackwood Press.

OSLER AND ORIENTAL MEDICINE

The Osler Library has received, as a gift from its author, a copy of Richard L. Golden, M.D., *Osler and Oriental Medicine: A discursive review* (Princeton, New Jersey: Science Press Associates, Inc., 1982). This is based on a considerable amount of research and will be of interest to many readers of the *Newsletter*. Enquiries concerning it should be directed to Science Press Associates, Inc., 16 Cleveland Lane RF #4, Princeton, New Jersey, 08540, U.S.A.

AN OSLER ANECDOTE

The following letter was originally published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (105:1129, December 4, 1971). Most readers of the *Newsletter* have probably not seen this, so with the permission of the Journal's editor, it is reprinted here. Dr. Clouston, to whom the letter refers, served overseas in World War I as an army medical officer and, presumably, this was when he saw Osler as a medical consultant.

To the Editor:

In going through my papers recently I came upon the following Osler anecdote sent to me many years ago by the late Dr. Howard Clouston, of Huntingdon, Quebec. I have not seen it elsewhere and thought it might be of interest to readers of the Journal.

Osler was a medical consultant in World War I and on one occasion he was presented with an obscure condition in a veteran of the South African campaign. He sat listening to the history in long detail, with his eyes moving around. When it ended he was silent for a moment. Then he leaned forward and looked at the tattooing on the man's forearm.

"I often think" he said casually, "that if I look closely enough at these tattooings I can see the track of the spirochaete. Indeed, it has been said that if the South African medal ribbon were soaked in water the solution would give a positive Wassermann reaction."

H.E. MacDermot, M.D.

Editorial Committee for the *Newsletter*: Edward H. Bensley, Editor; Philip Teigen, Osler Librarian; Lorraine Hicks, Editorial Assistant.

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FRIENDS OF THE OSLER LIBRARY

The appeal to the Friends for the 1981-82 academic year concluded at the end of May and the Library is grateful to have received about \$8,000 contributed by 283 Friends. Most of the contributions have come from Friends in Canada and the United States of America. However, very welcome contributions have come also from Friends in Australia, England, Japan, The Republic of South Africa, Switzerland and West Germany. The Library acknowledges with thanks the support of all its Friends. The following have been added to the list since the publication of the February *Newsletter*.

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The appeal for the 1982-83 academic year will be made
in the October *Newsletter*.

**THE OSLER SOCIETY
OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY**

Report for the Academic Year 1981-82

The 276th and 277th meetings of the Osler Society took place during this academic year. Professor John Kenneth Galbraith of Harvard University delivered the 1982 Osler Lecture and was the Guest of Honour at the Sixty-first Annual Osler Banquet which followed.

On January 27, in collaboration with the McGill Medical Ethics Club under the direction of Bernard Brais, Dr. David Roy, Director of the Centre for Bioethics of the Clinical Research Institute of Montreal, gave a fascinating talk, "Towards a New Medicine". Dr. Roy outlined the morals and values found in ancient Greek medicine and applied these to our own society today. He also speculated on what the future holds for ethics in medicine.

On March 10, Leonard Bloom of the third year class presented an interesting slide show on "Political and Personal Aspects of a Canadian in Nigeria". Leonard spent one year teaching English in Nigeria under the auspices of CUSO. He related many fond memories of this truly unique experience.

The Fifth Annual Osler Lecture, "The Economics of the Arms Race," was presented on Osler Day, April 21, 1982. With his notes stacked high on several phone books in order to compensate for his towering stature, Professor Galbraith delivered his well-worded, hour-long speech to a completely filled Leacock Amphitheatre 132. He spoke of the futility and senselessness of the arms race, comparing super-powers (U.S.A. and U.S.S.R.) to two small boys sitting knee-deep in gasoline in a garage with one boy having six matches and the other having five. Dr. Galbraith then went on to explain the consequences of a nuclear war with respect to the economy as well as to the population of the aftermath.

In the evening, the Sixty-first Osler Banquet was held at the McGill Faculty Club. The Grand Ballroom, aglow with the three beautiful pieces of Osler silver, provided the setting. This year saw a record attendance of 118 guests all of whom raised the grand Loving Cup with pride in the traditional "Toast to Osler". Our Honorary President, Dr. Charles Scriver, presented a copy of Osler's *A Way of Life* to second year Class President, Steven Rossy, representing the presentation to be made to all second year class members later. The banquet ended with everyone singing in hearty unison (and more or less in tune!) "Our Regius Prof."

Brian Greffe, MDCM III
Joel Wolkowicz, MDCM II
Co-Chairmen, The Osler Society, 1981-82