

THE OSLER LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

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Osler Library of the History of Medicine, McGill University, Montréal (Québec) Canada

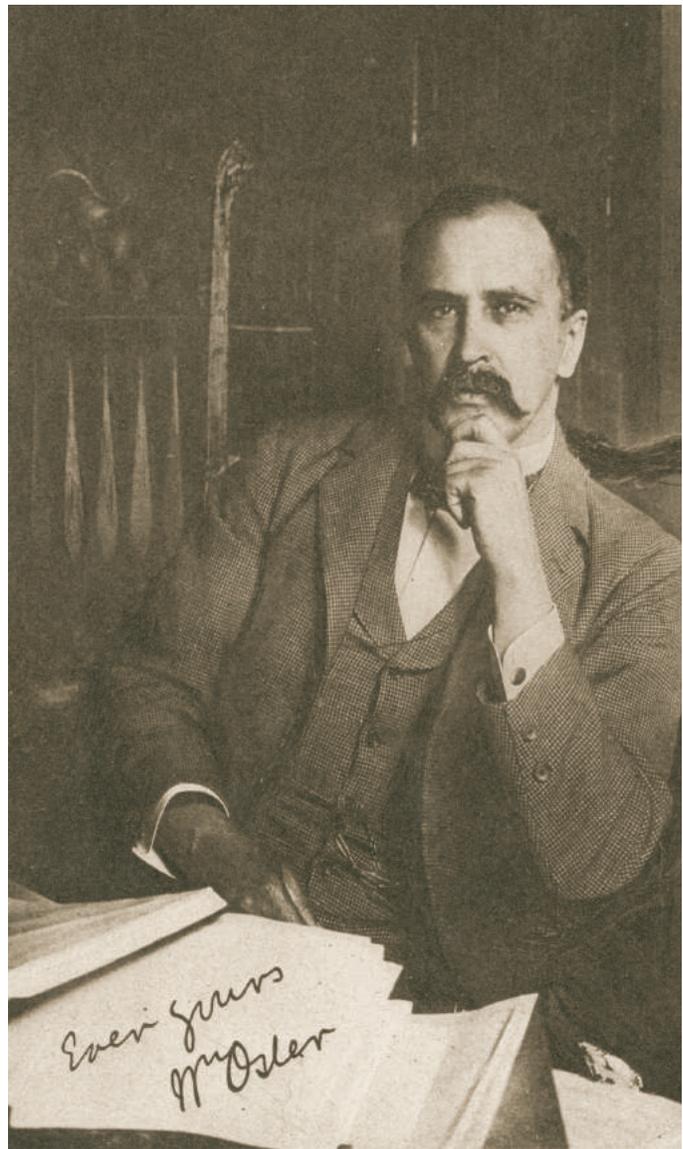
Dr. David Eidelman

VICE-PRINCIPAL (HEALTH AFFAIRS) AND DEAN OF THE
FACULTY OF MEDICINE; CHAIR, OSLER LIBRARY BOARD
OF CURATORS



As a McGill medical student, I heard the name Osler almost from day one. At the time, I could only dimly perceive the impact of the man on McGill and on medicine. As someone strongly oriented to the biomedical sciences, I was ill-equipped to appreciate how importantly Osler's humanism would influence my educational experience. Of course, I read my copy of 'A Way of Life', but I was too immature to get much out of it.

In medical school the main impact of Sir William Osler on me was indirect. I spent wonderful hours in the Osler Library, reading, thinking and day dreaming, all the while benefitting from Sir William's extraordinary generosity to our university as I felt the embrace of the Library's collection. As I matured, I increasingly came to appreciate Osler for the giant he was. In particular, while I led the Department of Medicine, I experienced the ultimate imposter syndrome, knowing that all such are measured against Sir William and inevitably found wanting. As Dean, in large part through my involvement with the Osler Library, the magnitude of Osler's accomplishments and contributions came into even sharper focus, especially his sense of humour and his love of literature. We are very privileged to count Osler among our forebears and to be able to benefit from his legacy.



William Osler at His Desk, 1 West Franklin Street, Baltimore, Maryland.
William Osler Photo Collection, CUS_046-025_P.



McGill



William Osler in Murray Bay (La Malbaie), Québec, Summer 1902. William Osler Photo Collection, CUS_046-003_P.

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The Osler Library: A Continuing Resonance

Abraham Fuks, CM, MDCM

ERSTWHILE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE; CURRENT MEMBER OF THE OSLER LIBRARY BOARD OF CURATORS



SACRED SPACES: I was a premed student at McGill when I first happened upon Sir William Osler while wandering the halls of the Strathcona Medical Building, searching for signs of what the future might bring, and serendipitously finding the stately, marble framed, entrance to the Osler Library.

This wonderful space was all the more impressive after its relocation to the McIntyre Medical Sciences Building where the wood paneling and stained glass interior presented a dramatic contrast to the surrounding new building of labs and classrooms. The focal point of the central nook with the Osler bronze shielding the urn and its ashes (its existence something of an open secret that I felt privileged to learn) was flanked by the Osler collection of legendary volumes with their honey- and mahogany-hued bindings and folios encased in white vellum. The room was then, and remains to this day, more than a half-century later, what Michael Bliss described as “a shrine, architecturally a cross between a church and a mausoleum.” Our former Principal Bernard Shapiro noted that the two cultural institutions that have survived relatively intact over a millennium and more are universities and those dedicated to religious observance. The Osler Library combines the academic and the devotional into a sacred space dedicated to study, contemplation and reflection and continues to serve those ends. The transcendent is brought to earth by artifacts and icons and Osler’s desk, stethoscope and books with essays for medical students became the historic touchstones for a career in medicine.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA: Soon after my return to McGill as a new member of the faculty, I was invited to join the Faculty of Medicine Admissions Committee and participate in the interview and selection of applicants. Half in jest, I suggested to my colleagues that one useful criterion for selection was a demonstrated knowledge and interest in Osler and the history of medicine. I proposed asking each candidate, “Who was Sir William Osler?” and assigning ‘points’ for the answers. Of course, my older and more sober colleagues on the Committee dissuaded me from pursuing the idea. I nonetheless still wonder whether this mini-test would be in any way inferior to contemporary psychometric measures to assess motivation, commitment and passion for medicine and McGill. Perhaps I can now propose a randomized trial to resolve the question!

A TEACHING RESOURCE: While the Osler Library is a stellar resource for historians and other scholars of medicine, it also serves undergraduate, graduate and medical students by providing an unmatched inspirational venue for study, and a source for unique materials. When Ron Guttmann and I put together a seminar course on the History of Immunology, we compiled a list of the seminal papers in the field, starting with Edward Jenner’s magisterial *An inquiry into the causes and effects of the variolae vaccinae, or cow-pox* published in 1798. While facsimiles and reprints are useful, nothing compares with the originals. For one class, the Osler Librarian of the day, Prof. Faith Wallis, prepared an array of materials from the Osler collection starting with the Jenner folio, and including the compiled lectures by Ilya Metchnikoff on *The Comparative Pathology of Inflammation*, Paul Ehrlich’s work on the side-chain theory of amboceptors and antibodies, Emil von Behring’s book entitled, *Die Geschichte der Diphtherie, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Immunitätslehre*, on anti-toxin therapy, and the papers by Karl Landsteiner reporting his discovery of human blood groups. The students were invited to the Francis Seminar room to personally examine these collected treasures that created a sense of excitement about immunology that photocopied readings could never achieve. This was a small instance of the pedagogical importance of the Osler collections and I imagine the visit must continue to resonate in the minds of the then-young graduate students.

A MAGNET AND REFERENCE POINT: The Osler Library is a magnet for visiting alumni and is a must-see stop on a tour of the Faculty of Medicine for prospective donors. It signals a link with tradition and history and is an implicit promise that endowments will be nurtured, protected and not forgotten. The venue is visited by members of the American Osler Society and other ‘Oslerians’ on pilgrimage and a focal point for meetings of the Board of Curators. The Library is a reference point for a host of student activities including the student-run Osler Society, the annual Osler Lecture and Banquet, the Osler Essay Contest, and a book reading club. It is a source of inspiration for the Physician Apprenticeship Program, the Osler Fellows and the annual White Coat Ceremony, described in greater detail in the contribution to this newsletter by Dr. Don Boudreau.

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GENEALOGY: The Osler Library as a historic presence in the 100th year since the death of its collector and founder, Sir William Osler, represents the intellectual tradition and genealogy of persons and ideas necessary to the practice of medicine. Osler's first biographer was Harvey Cushing, the founder of North American neurosurgery. In turn, Wilder Penfield met Osler while a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford and later trained with Cushing. Penfield was a lifelong supporter of the Library and a colleague and mentor to William Feindel, who became the Honorary Osler Librarian, a great contributor to its collections and Penfield's archivist. Finally, the eminent medical historian, Michael Bliss, was a frequent scholarly visitor to the Osler Library and wrote the authoritative biographies of Sir William Osler and Harvey Cushing. All these intellectual threads and more are interwoven and knotted around the Osler Library. They represent, as does the Osler Library itself, a transgenerational cultural inheritance, a species of Lamarckianism, if you will, and a continuing resonance and legacy for new generations of physicians and scholars.



William Osler at a patient's bedside, holding a stethoscope, probably taken at the Johns Hopkins Hospital. William Osler Photo Collection, CUS_046-008H.P.

The Reverberating Relevance of the Osler Library of the History of Medicine

J. Donald Boudreau, MD

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE AND INSTITUTE OF HEALTH SCIENCES EDUCATION



In 2007, at the 37th Annual Meeting of the American Osler Society, Dr. Abraham Fuks (erstwhile Dean of the Faculty of Medicine), Ms. Pamela Miller (retired Osler Librarian), and I (Associate Dean of undergraduate medical education at the time) gave a presentation titled *'William Osler and McGill: A Continuing Remembrance'*. We described the various ways in which William Osler was visible to medical students. Since then, his presence in the MDCM program has expanded and become even more salient.

We introduced a longitudinal group mentorship program in 2005, calling it the 'Physician Apprenticeship' (PA). We called the mentors 'Osler Fellows'. Linking Osler's name to that educational innovation was aimed at facilitating recruitment and, more importantly, at inspiring the mentors with Osler's ethos of humanism. The strategy has been spectacularly

successful. This past August we launched the 15th iteration of the apprenticeship! It remains a keystone of the medical school.

Something unintended and unexpected, yet desirable and meaningful, has transpired over the past few years. The student body has adopted a new nomenclature. Students no longer refer to the 'Physician Apprenticeship' but rather to the 'Osler Program'. 'PA meetings' have been replaced by 'Osler Group' meetings. Of course, the mentors continue to be called Osler Fellows. The fact that students so readily and spontaneously gravitated towards the memory of Osler is surely a testament to the enduring power of his legacy – a legacy of exemplary physicianship and mentorship. In 2007, we spoke about a continuing remembrance; today, I am rather inclined to think of it as reverberating relevance.

Dr. Richard Cruess

PROFESSOR OF ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY AND HEALTH SCIENCES EDUCATION AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY;
FORMER DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND CURRENT MEMBER OF THE OSLER LIBRARY BOARD OF CURATORS



My wife and I came to Montréal from medical school in New York in June of 1955 being only dimly aware of Sir William Osler. This changed dramatically when we attended our first Osler banquet at the Ritz with Dr. Francis as the guest speaker. It was a memorable event, not in the least because it was required of medical students at the time to throw rolls at each other in the Ritz ballroom. In spite of this distraction, we became aware of Osler and his meaning to modern medicine and, of course to the McGill community. As is true of many of us, Osler became a constant contributor to our pride in McGill and to our own sense of self. Again, in company with many McGill faculty members, we developed a habit in finishing any presentations with a quote from Sir William, attempting to invoke his own humanity in our own activities and to advertise his links with McGill.

When I became Dean in 1981, my relationship with Osler became more complex. As the steward of Canada's oldest medical school, it clearly became my responsibility to emphasize the power and importance of our heritage, stressing how fundamental the faculty of medicine was not only to the stature of the University, but to the city of Montréal and to Canada. Osler was central to this issue and I, like my predecessors and successors in the position, found it both beneficial and very satisfying to invoke him and his memory. As being widely regarded as the greatest physician of modern times, this never failed to resonate with the audience.

This is particularly true because so much has changed in the modern practice of medicine. As is known to all, the structure of the healthcare system and its funding bear no resemblance to the cottage industry of the past, with its emphasis on the individual and generally independent physician in solo practice. I have firmly believed throughout my professional life, that has encompassed most of these changes, that our role as educators is twofold. In the first place we must prepare students and residents for the practice of the future and they must be ready to embrace change. However, and this is perhaps more challenging, we must also identify the admirable aspects of the traditional practice of medicine in order to ensure that what has been cherished by both physicians and society endures into the future. Osler of course embodies the values that we wish to preserve. I have found it beneficial to frequently use two of the many quotes that Sir William left us as I pursued this task.

"The times have changed, conditions of practice have altered and are altering rapidly, but when a celebration takes us back to our origin and simpler days, we find that the ideals which inspired them are ours today—ideals which are ever old, yet always fresh and new." 1903

And finally, a quote from Osler, greeting the first-year medical class at McGill in 1877. I repeated it as I welcomed each entering first-year medical class from 1981 until 1995.

"Some will tell you that the profession is underrated, unhonored, underpaid, its members social drudges—the very last profession they would recommend a young person to take up ... I would rather tell you of a profession honorable above all others, one which while calling for the highest powers of the mind, brings you into such warm personal contact with your fellow men that the heart and sympathies of the coldest nature must needs be enlarged thereby."



A composite portrait of the Medical Faculty of McGill University, commissioned for the Faculty's semicentennial in 1882. Osler is shown standing, fourth from the left. Dean George W. Campbell, who died that year, is shown standing in the centre foreground. He was succeeded by Robert Palmer Howard, who is shown seated at the far left.

Standing, from left to right, are Thomas G. Roddick, George Ross, William E. Scott, William Osler, Francis J. Shepherd, William Gardner, George W. Campbell, Gilbert Prout Girdwood, Frank Buller, and Richard L. MacDonell. Sitting, from left to right, are Robert Palmer Howard, William Wright, John William Dawson, Duncan C. MacCallum, Robert Craik, and George E. Fenwick. William Osler Photo Collection, CUS_033-011_P.

Dr. Penfield, Dr. Osler and the Monterrey-Montreal Connection

Eduardo García Flores, MD

CEO AND FOUNDER OF EL CENTRO MEDICO OSLER OF MONTERREY, FORMER PROFESSOR DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE MONTERREY



uring the time I was in Montreal (1964-72), I worked the first three years towards my PhD with Dr. Herbert Jasper at the University of Montreal in the laboratory of Physiology of Dr. Pierre Courdeu. After, I moved to the McGill affiliated hospitals, where I did one year of surgery at Montreal General Hospital (1966-67) and four years (1968-72) at the Montreal Neurological Institute (MNI); I became interested in the history of medicine specifically regarding Dr. Osler. I had read Harvey Cushing's Pulitzer Prize winning biography of Dr. Osler, as well as Dr. Penfield's paper entitled "Hero Worship," regarding his mentors: Dr. Osler, Dr. Sherrington and Dr. Ramon y Cajal.

In 1968, while walking in the corridor of the 6th floor at the MNI, I met Dr. Penfield and he asked me if I was the new Mexican resident, to which I replied affirmatively. Then, he mentioned that if I had time and emphasized "your time, not the Institute time," he would like to go with me through some memorabilia of his sejour in Spain (1924). I said that if it was OK with him, I could be in his office next day at 5pm, to which he agreed. He showed me the following day an old telegram (radiogram) with only one word in Spanish: *Venga*. Before I answered, he said don't tell me that *venga* means come, I know that; give me your best take of this word coming from a man like Dr. Ramon y Cajal. I automatically answered an unfiltered response, using my fast track system: "*Venga*," I replied "is the way, we summon either a pet or a child." He exclaimed that was the exact connotation he was looking for and he thanked me with some of his classic papers. I had two more sessions with him, reviewing letters in Spanish. When his autobiography *No Man Alone* was published, that line was mine.

I was so fortunate that in 1970, when Dr. Penfield was the guest of honor of the American Neurosurgical Society in Houston, I presented as co-author with Dr. Henry Garretson the first paper of the meeting: "Pituitary Apoplexy," which was favorably discussed by the celebrated Harvard Neuropathologist Dr. Raymond Adams. Years later I had coffee with Dr. Adams in Boston, and he mentioned that he lived in Boston on the street with the name of his great-great-grandfather, President John Adams. I responded that, by coincidence and of course in a very Lilliputian dimension, my eldest brother Dr. Carlos García Flores lives on the same street in Linares, Mexico named after my father, Dr. Carlos García Rodríguez.

A week after the Houston meeting Dr. Penfield invited me and Dr. Garretson for tea in his apartment in Côte-des-Neiges, a distinction rarely bestowed upon a simple resident, which I shared as an indelible memory; he was 79 and Mrs. Penfield 76. In order not to transgress the boundaries of courtesy, Henry and I departed 45 minutes after our arrival for tea.

Before returning to Monterrey in 1972, I acquired additional training in microsurgery at the Kanton Hospital under the direction of Dr. Hugh Krayenbul and the supervision of Dr. Yasi Yassargil at Zürich University. In December 1972 while in Monterrey, I gathered a group of young doctors, mostly trained in Ivy League Universities, to form a medical society. The first stone of the Centro Medico Osler was lay down in 1973 in "La Sultana del Norte", so nicknamed because of its industrious people. The Medical Centre was later to be known as "Clinica Osler". It had 52 beds, of which half were devoted exclusively to Neurosurgery. The name was suggested to me by Dr. Penfield, when I visited him in 1975, by which time he had undergone a biopsy of the abdominal wall and had received the ominous diagnose of a sarcoma. I was greeted on that occasion by the new MNI Director Dr. William Feindel, who gave me this terrible news, encouraging me to visit Dr. Penfield at that moment hospitalized at the MNI third floor, where the ineffable head Nurse Siddons Gray had been in charge for decades. I asked her if it was possible to see Dr. Penfield, she told me go ahead: "He will be quite pleased to see you, besides, he doesn't have many visitors, his gynecologist son is in Detroit, Michigan and does not come often to see him, and Mrs. Penfield is in a nursing home recovering from a broken hip." I insisted that she should ask him. She came back, and I could read clearly in her face: I told you so: "Dr. Penfield will be glad to see you Dr. García Flores." The visit lasted two and a half hours, and I asked several times, if he felt tired please let me know and I could return the next day. Prior to this encounter I had registered a medical society with 50 doctors to be known as "*Sociedad de Medicos del Noreste*," to become the staff *piéd a terre* of the clinic, which I was hoping to call the Penfield Medical Centre.

In his hospital room, we talked about Dr. Osler and the time Dr. Penfield spent at the Oxford home of the esteemed Regius Professor of Medicine, convalescing from a shrapnel injury to his knee sustained during the Sussex frigate attack by a German torpedo. I mentioned the progress of my Clinic, and that I was searching for a suitable name. I conveyed my reluctance to

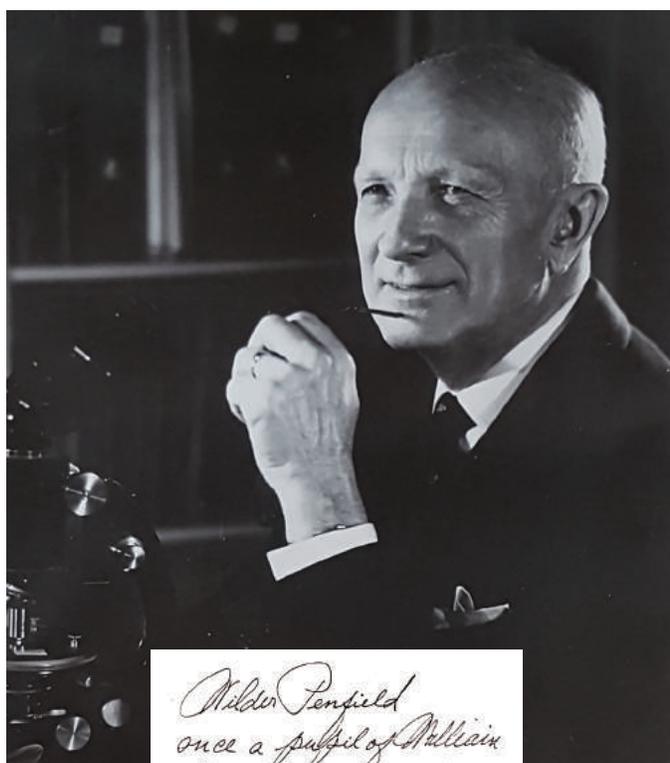


Image 1: Signed photograph given by Wilder Penfield to Eduardo García Flores. Courtesy of Dr. García Flores.

name it, as it is customary in Mexico, with the name of a saint, as the majority of hospitals and clinics in Monterrey were named after saints. Dr. Penfield suggested that I should name it after “The saint of medicine, Dr. William Osler.” I thought that was an excellent idea, perhaps a name quite big for my Clinic, but close to my inflamed hero worshiper’s heart. Then, I invited him to honor me with his presence at the opening ceremony of the Clinic, which was scheduled for months thereafter. He said that he would love to do so, but due to his illness, it was not possible; however, he would ask Ted (Dr. Rasmussen) to attend on his behalf and he gave me an autographed picture of himself where he mentioned he was a former pupil of Sir. William Osler (image 1).

On the 8th of May 1976, Dr. Theodore Rasmussen, Dr. Penfield’s successor as MNI director, arrived at Monterrey to deliver the first Sir William Osler Lecture (image 2) and gave me the autographed picture of Dr. Osler which I donated 40 years later to the Osler library. Dr. Rasmussen mentioned that the picture of Osler had been in Dr. Penfield’s office for 40 years and he delivered to me the sad news that the first director and founder of the MNI had passed away three weeks before the inauguration of my clinic. Out of the thirty-two Osler lectures delivered on a yearly basis, five were by physicians and neuroscientists from McGill: Dr. William Feindel gave the second lecture, Dr. Peter Gloor the third, Dr. William Fields the 12th, and Dr. David Hubel the 15th. The rest were given by distinguished neurosurgeons from all over the world.

As the 200th anniversary of the foundation of McGill medical School is approaching, and also by suggestion of the late Dr. William Feindel and Dr. Denis Melanson (former Chief of neuroradiology at the MNI and founder and editor of the monthly letter the Hippocampus), I thought this vignette should be written, even if it may be called “Historical Pointillism” in allusion to Camille Pissarro’s painstaking elaboration of oil paintings by adding hundreds of points to create a landscape – in this case a micro-historical landscape of the MNI. I intended to highlight Dr. Osler and the Monterrey and Montreal connection in the events that took place over several decades, before the goddess of memory and remembrances Mnemosyne erases it from my fragile septuagenarian memory.

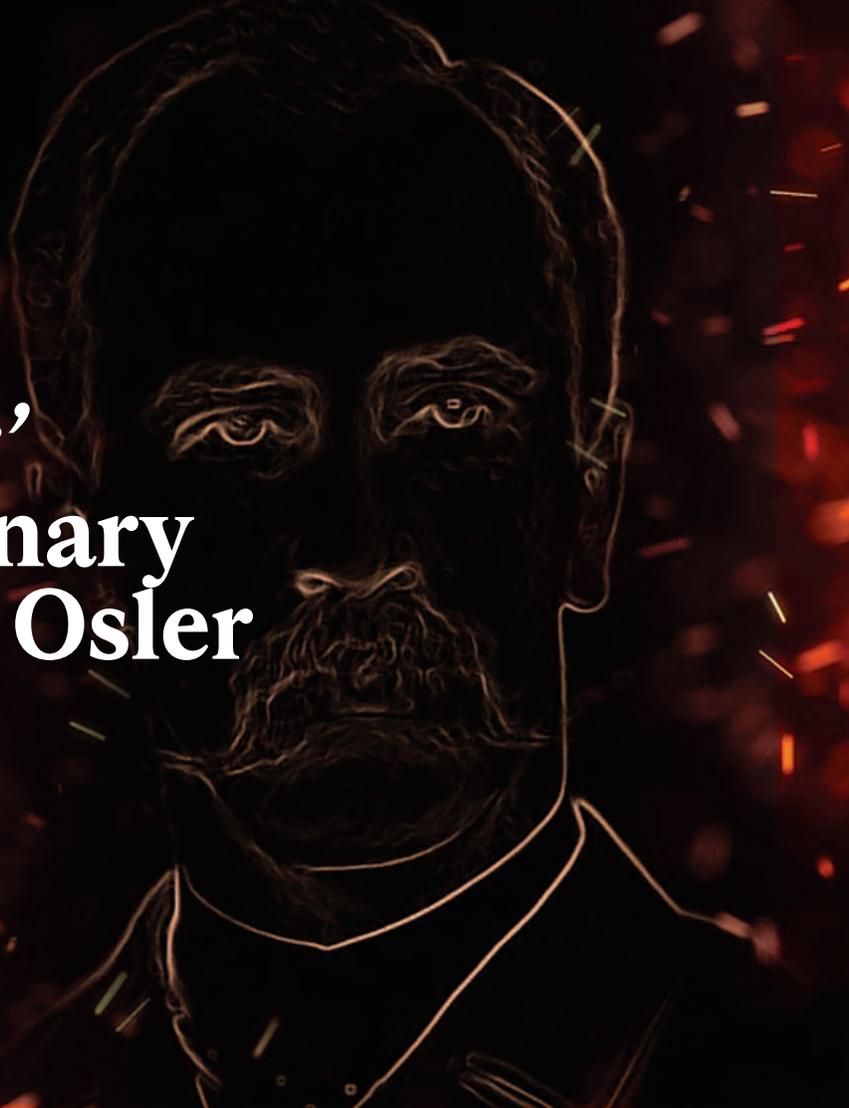
The similarities between Monterrey and Montreal are several. The names of both cities refer to the mountain of the king or Royal Mountain, due to the orographic ubiquity of the settlement on top of a mountain; their populations are similar; and both have top education institutions, McGill and ITESM *Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey*; both are hubs of innovation; and they have aéroespacial Industries related to the Bombardier family of Montreal. Moreover, at one time Osler was a household name present in both cities. In 2010, I sold the Clinic to the Clariond family of Mexico and moved to Zürich; since 2012, the Osler Clinic has been known as The Swiss Hospital at Monterrey.



Image 2. Press coverage of Dr. Rasmussen’s delivery of the first Sir William Osler lecture. Courtesy of Dr. García Flores.

'Dying Embers' and the Centenary of Sir William Osler (1849-1919)

Nadeem Toodayan



For the international Oslerian community, the centenary of Sir William Osler's death on 29 December this year will be a time for quiet reflection. Despite falling on a Sunday, no large scale ceremonies have been planned to mark the actual day, although a series of seminars, exhibits, and memorial meetings will pre and post-date this important anniversary (see Table, p.10). The William Osler Society of Australia and New Zealand (WOSANZ) - which was inaugurated in this centenary year to honour Osler's memory - has made extensive inquiries over many months seeking to formally mark the hundredth anniversary of Sir William Osler's death. With few exceptions, the reception to these inquiries has been lukewarm, and it is not without a sense of regret that many an enterprising proposal has been cast aside for want of support and apparent lack of interest.

All throughout the past century, William Osler has been one of the most consistently celebrated icons of the medical profession. The centenary of his birth in July of 1849 was very widely commemorated, as was to some extent the 50th anniversary of his death in 1969, and to a lesser extent, the

sesquicentenary year of his birth in 1999. That said, a vast archive of commemorative material has accumulated over the years, and historical collections of Osleriana are brimming to repletion. And yet the register is lacking in some vital aspect. There are no known video or audio recordings of William Osler, and despite decades old calls from Dr Louis Carlyle Lyon (1899-1970)^{2,3} there have been no very widely circulated feature length documentaries commemorating 'The Great Physician'.⁴ The material is there of course, but the currents of contemporary history have been unkind to grand-narrative accounts of Osler's influence in the medical profession. Postmodern day critics of Osler are also on the rise, and the year 2018 saw one of the most irreverent attacks on Sir William Osler in the whole history of Osler studies.^{5,6,7} Why should this be? Has medicine's most beloved physician had his day?

The truth is that although Osler's influence continues to crop up in medical journals, clinical societies, and other organisations brandishing his name, there are very few remaining serious scholars of the Osler tradition. 'Oslerians' themselves are a diverse and motley group with widely diverging motives and sympathies, and even the Osler societies

*Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the
bleak December;
And each separate dying ember wrought
its ghost upon the floor.*

EDGAR ALLAN POE (1809-1849)
THE RAVEN, JANUARY 1845.¹

have their rival factions. This is to some extent evidenced in the Osler centenary commemorations: although a number of promising independent events have been organised, there has been no real unifying effort to present William Osler to the world as a model for 21st century physicians. Charles Bryan's upcoming encyclopaedia on William Osler – a really astonishing collaborative effort with 139 contributors from 8 different countries – may be the one great exception in this regard, and Oslerians can look forward with interest to commemorative meetings in Oxford and London next year. Still, it remains to be seen what the longer term impact of such activities will be – as Osler often remarked: “Many are the wand bearers, few are the mystics.”^{8,9}

Whatever the case may be, the truth is that Osler scholars are dying faster than they are being replenished, and the 21st century alone has claimed many of the most influential students of the Osler tradition: Alex Sakula (1917-2003), John P. McGovern (1921-2007), Mark Silverman (1939-2008), Earl F. Nation (1910-2008), Charles G. Roland (1933-2009), William H. Feindel (1918-2014), Lord John Walton (1922-2016), Richard L. Golden (1929-2016), Lawrence D. Longo

(1926-2016), Shigeaki Hinohara (1911-2017), J. Michael Bliss (1941-2017), and Alfred R. Henderson (1920-2019) to name but a few.¹⁰ Owing to current trends, it will become increasingly more difficult for succeeding generations of Oslerians to further their scholarship and example. And so Poe's lines are apposite. As *each separate dying ember* of the Osler flame burns out, it will leave behind a fainter and fainter figure of the man who was so widely admired by a century of physicians. But even when the name is no longer widely spoken of, the spirit of Sir William Osler will live on, reverberating in the lives of those who have been humble enough to appreciate his teachings.

*Verily, the Heart of Man is invincible
Where, embers may lastingly burn,
Like the lamp in Olybius his urn,
Alive, and light, but close and invisible.¹¹*

Continues on page 10

A table summarising some of the commemorative events and contributions lined up for the centenary of Sir William Osler's death.

Event & Dates	Summary	Venue/Organizer
<p>The American Osler Society's 49th Annual Meeting</p> <p>12 - 15 MAY 2019</p>	<p>The 49th Annual Meeting of the American Osler Society had the largest attendance in the society's history. 52 papers were presented, 32 of which were directly related to Osler - 2 of these were focused on the central theme of Osler's centenary. An impressive exhibit of Osler memorabilia was on display in the (temporarily relocated) Osler Library during the conference.</p>	<p>Hotel Omni Mont-Royal, Montreal, Canada. The American Osler Society.</p>
<p>Health & Well-being: Science & Humanity are One¹²</p> <p>26 SEPTEMBER 2019 8,14,28 NOVEMBER 2019 5 DECEMBER 2019</p>	<p>Under the principal theme 'For Health and Well-being Science and Humanity are one', a series of 5 separate seminars are being held at Osler's former Oxford residence at 13 Norham Gardens this year to mark the centenary of William Osler's death. Highlights of the program include proposed revisions of the WMA's Declaration of Geneva and the WHO's definition of health, discussions around care technology and care attitude, and William Osler's influence on nursing.</p>	<p>Osler's former Oxford residence at 13 Norham Gardens, now the Osler-McGovern Centre of Green Templeton College, Oxford. Organized by Professor Terence Ryan, ACTAsia, and others.</p>
<p>Osleriana: A Medical Humanities Journal-Magazine, Volume 1</p> <p>JULY 2019</p>	<p>The William Osler Society of Australia and New Zealand released the first issue of its official annual journal <i>Osleriana</i> earlier this year. The production is but one of a series of Osler centenary projects undertaken by the society, a number of which will be revisited in the second (2020) volume of the journal.</p>	<p>The William Osler Society of Australia and New Zealand (WOSANZ est. 2019).</p>
<p>Postgraduate Medical Journal Osler Centenary Supplement¹³</p> <p>DECEMBER 2019</p>	<p>The Fellowship of Postgraduate Medicine (FPM) will be producing a special Osler centenary supplement of <i>The Postgraduate Medical Journal</i> which will also mark the centenary of the foundation of the FPM. It may be recalled that Osler was elected first president of the new organisation (an amalgamation of the Fellowship of Medicine and Postgraduate Medical Association) some months before he died in December of 1919. On 6 December 2019, by a further Osler centenary FPM conference will be held on important 'advances in medicine.'</p>	<p>The Fellowship of Postgraduate Medicine/BMJ.</p>
<p>So joyous and gentle a life: An exhibition in memory of Sir William Osler (1849-1919)</p> <p>4 NOVEMBER 2019 - 1 FEBRUARY 2020</p>	<p>An exhibition of Oslerian relics and relevant historical documents brought together by RSM librarian Robert Greenwood.</p>	<p>The Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole Street, London.</p>
<p>Oxford commemorative event at Christ Church College</p> <p>26 JANUARY 2020</p>	<p>An afternoon ceremony has been organised at Christ Church College, Oxford, to mark the centenary of Osler's funeral there. After talks by Charles Bryan and Allan Chapman, attendees will be given a guided tour of the college, with a possible visit to Robert Burton's (1577-1640) library. A choral evensong in Christ Church Cathedral with Osler as the focus is being planned.</p>	<p>Christ Church College and Cathedral, Oxford University, England. Organised by Ruth and John Ward of the Osler Club of London, with the assistance of Reverend Edmund Newey, Sub Dean of Christ Church College.</p>
<p>William Osler centenary portrait by Tarleton Blackwell.</p> <p>COMPLETED NOVEMBER 2019</p>	<p>On the request of AOS veteran and Osler scholar Charles S. Bryan, Tarleton Blackwell of Manning, South Carolina, has completed a new centenary portrait of Sir William Osler. The picture used is a well-known photo of Osler taken at the opening of the Phipps Clinic in April of 1913. The William Osler Society of Australia and New Zealand had made early inquiries about a new Osler centenary portrait in 2018, and provided a professionally coloured image to help assist with Blackwell's portrait. The original portrait is to be donated to Osler's former Oxford home at 13 Norham Gardens.</p>	<p>Charles S. Bryan and Tarleton Blackwell.</p>
<p>The American Osler Society's 50th Annual Meeting</p> <p>26 - 29 APRIL 2020</p>	<p>The American Osler Society's 50th Annual Meeting will coincide with the centenary year of Osler's passing. Bryan's upcoming Encyclopaedia on William Osler will be ready for release by the time of this event.</p>	<p>The Westin Hotel, Pasadena, California. The American Osler Society.</p>
<p>Sir William Osler (1849-1919): The Relevance of His Legacy Today</p> <p>1 OCTOBER 2020</p>	<p>The BSHM and the Osler Club of London will jointly be hosting a Sir William Osler Legacy meeting and Poynter Lecture at the Royal College of Physicians of London on 1 October 2020. Dr John Ward will be the 2020 Poynter lecturer; his talk is titled: "The great Republic of Medicine knows and has known no national boundaries." - William Osler, the great medical internationalist.</p>	<p>The Royal College of Physicians of London. Hosted by the British Society for the History of Medicine and the Osler Club of London.</p>

1. Poe EA. *The Raven and Other Poems*. New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1845, p.1.
2. Lyon LC. Sir William Osler Centenary. *British Medical Journal*, (6 August 1949); 2(4622): 335.
3. Lyon LC. Osler Memorials. *British Medical Journal*, (29 July 1950); 2(4673): 298.
4. In 2007, Rob Stone's (son of AOS veteran Marvin J. Stone) company *Vienna Productions* produced the most detailed Osler documentary to date – *Sir William Osler: Science and the Art of Medicine*. Notwithstanding the overall quality of the production, the production is not very widely known and somewhat difficult to access nowadays. A more amateur and much shorter documentary on *Sir William Osler in Oxford* was produced in 2005. In October of 2017, the Canadian drama series *Murdoch Mysteries* ran a full episode titled 'Dr. Osler Regrets' where William Osler was widely reintroduced to Canadian audiences by the Toronto actor Stewart Arnott. The episode was centred around Osler's 'Fixed Period' address controversy. The William Osler Society of Australia and New Zealand (WOSANZ) is currently working on a new documentary.
5. Fiddes P. Komesaroff P. An emperor unclothed: the virtuous Osler. *Hektoen International*, 2018 (Winter). <https://hekint.org/2018/03/20/emperor-unclothed-virtuous-osler/>.
6. Fiddes PJ. (2018) Sir William Osler's life in medical education. A critical re-evaluation of his moral philosophies, his teaching practices and the construction of a legend. Doctoral Thesis, Monash University, Melbourne, Australia.
7. Bryan CS. Toodayan N. Osler studies enter second century. *J Med Biogr*. 2019 Nov; 27(4): 186-188.
8. Osler W. *An Alabama Student, and other Biographical Essays*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1908, p. 1. The original saying is from Plato's *Phaedo*, a dialogue on the immortality of the soul: "Many are the thyrsus-bearers, but few are the mystics."
9. Osler W. *The Old Humanities and the New Science*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920, p. 31.
10. For a full list of prominent past Oslerians, see The American Osler Society's deceased members list: [http://cms.cws.net/content/americanosler.org/files/Deceased%20Elected%20Members%20of%20the%20American%20Osler%20Society\(1\).pdf](http://cms.cws.net/content/americanosler.org/files/Deceased%20Elected%20Members%20of%20the%20American%20Osler%20Society(1).pdf)
11. Browne T. *Christian Morals, By Sr Thomas Brown, Of Norwich, M.D. And Author of Religio Medici. Based on the Edition Published from the Original and Correct Manuscript of the Author; by John Jeffery, D.D. Arch-Deacon of Norwich*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1716, Part III, Sect XVIII, p. 106.
12. The author is indebted to Professor Terence Ryan for providing details of these Osler centenary events at 13 Norham Gardens in September of 2019.
13. The full open-access version of the Osler centenary issue of the *Postgraduate Medical Journal* (Volume 95, Issue 1130) has recently been made available online: <https://pmj.bmj.com/content/95/1130>. The editors advised this author that the issue will remain open-access for 6 months.

Dr. Scott Wright

PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE; DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION RESEARCH, JOHNS HOPKINS BAYVIEW MEDICAL CENTER; DIRECTOR OF THE MEDICAL EDUCATION TRACK OF THE GIM FELLOWSHIP AT JOHNS HOPKINS

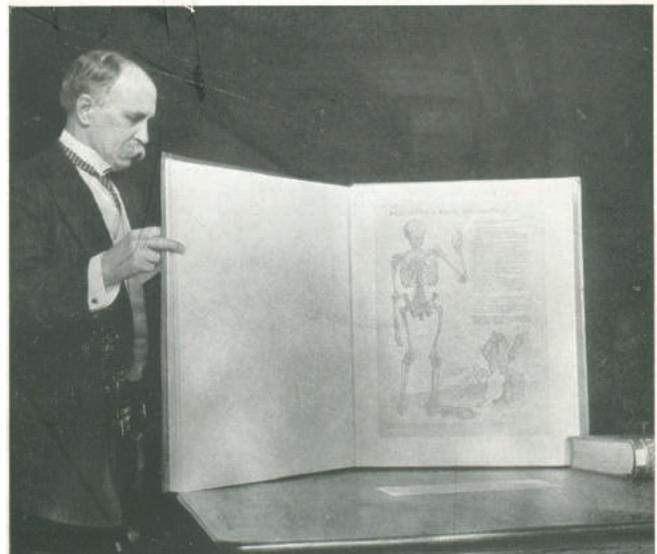


fter my time in medical school at McGill and residency in internal medicine at The Montreal General Hospital, I went on to fellowship at Johns Hopkins, where I have remained for the past 24 years. The ghost of Osler lingers at these institutions and I have been hearing his whispering to me throughout my career (metaphorically, I am not hallucinating).

To maintain the relevance of Osler's teaching and impact in our changing world, a few of us here at Johns Hopkins launched CLOSLER, a free and open access medical education website (closler.org). With the goal of stimulating healthcare professionals to reflect on giving exceptional care to every patient, CLOSLER takes its name from William Osler, the early champion of patient-centered care worldwide. Our tagline is "Moving us closer to Osler."

CLOSLER offers one article per day written by healthcare professionals at Hopkins and beyond relaying pearls and lessons from practice for all, organized into four sections: Connecting with Patients, Clinical Reasoning, Passion in the Medical Profession, and Lifelong Learning in Clinical Excellence. CLOSLER has ushered in a new era of education that can help to "move us closer to Osler" and clinical excellence; it pushes the perspectives of outstanding role

models to all who are interested in developing in this realm. Please consider subscribing to have our weekly highlights sent to your inbox (<http://closler.org/>). This might allow Osler to rest in peace and to curtail the whispering.



Sir William Osler Holding Vesalius' "Tabulae Anatomicae Sex", Bodleian Library, 1912. William Osler Photo Collection, CUS_064-069_P.

Dr. Bernard Brais

CO-DIRECTOR OF THE RARE NEUROLOGICAL DISEASES GROUP OF THE MONTREAL NEUROLOGICAL INSTITUTE AND HOSPITAL; MEMBER OF THE OSLER LIBRARY BOARD OF CURATORS



Visiting the Osler library as a first-year medical student in the early 1980s felt to me like entering the mind of an eclectic collector. At the time, I did not associate medicine to such vast erudition. Since, I have learned that the greatest medical teachers like Sir William Osler need to have at hand vast amounts of knowledge to imbue their teaching of potent references. All have to collect pearls such as those enshrined in *Aequanimitas*. To collect anecdotes and stories to enliven my teaching has since been a daily labor. One story I quote to illustrate that collecting is an expensive compulsive trait was garnered from my early days of perusing at the Osler Library. I read in one of Osler's books the story of a rich English collector who believed he had the only copy of a manuscript, until to his great chagrin he learned that a Dutch merchant had a

second. He hastily arranged a meeting with him to compare the two versions. While examining the other man's copy by the fireplace in the man's home he probed his host as to whether he would contemplate selling it? The latter bluntly told him that he would never offer him enough money for his copy. The Englishmen said he would try and gave him a money order to an astronomical sum. The Dutch after his initial surprise, accepted. While sharing a sherry, the British gentleman threw the Dutch book into the fire, and triumphantly stated:

Now I have the only copy!

There is only one Osler Library, let us continue to cherish it for future generations of medical, history and health science trainees.

Osler's Personality and Character What Set Him Apart?

Charles S. Bryan, MD, MACP, FRCP(Edin.), FRCP(London)

HEYWARD GIBBES DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF INTERNAL MEDICINE EMERITUS, THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA



William Osler was by far the best-known, best-loved, and most influential physician in the English-speaking world at the turn of the twentieth century. Among his contemporaries were equally or even more successful clinicians, scientists, educators, textbook authors, essayists, and medical historians, yet it was Osler who "snatched something from dull oblivion" (to paraphrase his words in "The Alabama Student"). Many of us still walk in the penumbra of his personality. Osler was voted "the most influential physician in history" in a 2016 poll of North American physicians.¹

What set him apart?

There was clearly something magical about Osler. Sir Arthur Keith (1886-1955), co-discoverer of the sinoatrial node that regulates our heartbeats, spoke for many: "A future generation will never understand the love which Osler's own generation lavished on him, and the respect in which it held him."² Wilburt Davison (1892-1972), founding dean of Duke University School of Medicine, reviewed some 440 articles about Osler and concluded that "our generation will brook no criticism of Sir William Osler," since "in all the articles which I read, only three mentioned the slightest deviation from human perfection."³

What might we learn through systematic study of Osler's personality and character?

No attempt seems to have been made to predict what would have shown up had Osler taken the Myers-Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI), the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI), or other instruments commonly used in psychological testing. Here, an attempt will be made to assess his personality and character strengths using the framework developed by the Values in Action Classification Project (VACP).⁴ Supplementing these observations will be a few reflections drawn from my previous work on Osler⁵ and from the forthcoming *Sir William Osler: An Encyclopedia*, which now has 135 contributors.

First, let me explain the VACP. During the late 1990s, a group of senior psychologists concluded that their discipline's preoccupation with what is "wrong" with people overlooked what is "right" with people. They perceived a yearning in society for "character" and "values." The researchers established seven criteria for what qualifies as a human strength. They eventually recognized 24 such strengths, which fell into six recognizable clusters. These six clusters of strengths, they concluded, occur across all cultures and political persuasions. These clusters correspond precisely to the seven basic virtues of antiquity—the four cardinal virtues (wisdom, justice, temperance, and courage, enumerated by Plato in *The Republic* and elsewhere) and the three theological virtues (faith, hope, and love, enumerated by St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:13)—with the exception that faith and hope are combined as "strengths

of transcendence” (Table 1). Their compendium, designed to be the positive psychology movement’s equivalent of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, forms the basis for the present analysis of Osler’s character strengths.

During the preparation of the forthcoming encyclopedia on Osler, detailed notes were made on the reminiscences of, or tributes by, 205 of his contemporaries. Most of these were written by leading physicians and surgeons of his era, but there were also former medical students and residents, clergymen, academics, and nurses. These 205 sets of reminiscences and tributes generated a list of 1,148 mentions of character strengths, from which was generated a list of 247 positive attributes observed of Osler. These 247 attributes were then assigned to one or another of the six strength clusters determined by the VACP (Table 1).

From Table 1 it is apparent that “strengths of humanity” were by far the most common, representing 425 of the 1,148 mentions (37 percent). These were followed by strengths of courage (24 percent of mentions) and strengths of transcendence (13 percent of mentions). Toward the bottom were strengths of wisdom and knowledge (10 percent) and strengths of temperance and justice (8 percent each).

These observations by no means imply that Osler was deficient in strengths of wisdom and knowledge, temperance, and justice. Rather, they indicate that his contemporaries considered his strengths of humanity and, to a lesser extent, strengths of courage and transcendence, to be the more remarkable or “newsworthy,” the strengths that set him apart.

Shown in Table 2 are Osler’s top 12 character strengths (from among the 24 character strengths across the six clusters). Clearly, it was his kindness (19 percent of all mentions) and vitality (17 percent of all mentions) that most impressed contemporaries. Osler’s kindness included encouragement, sympathy, ability to inspire and stimulate, and a kindly disposition. Osler’s vitality included charm, enthusiasm, high energy level, and a “magnetic” or “radiant” personality (today, we would say “charisma”). After kindness and vitality came love for fellow humans, social intelligence, and humor and playfulness (Table 2).

To supplement this analysis based on the VACP, let us briefly evaluate Osler using a theory of personality known as transactional analysis. This theory was developed during the 1950s by Eric Berne (1910–1970), a Montreal native whose influencers included Osler’s protégé Wilder Penfield. Berne, building on the work of Sigmund Freud, posited that each of us has three personas—parent, adult, and child. As popularized (and perhaps trivialized) by Thomas Anthony Harris (1910–1995) in his 1967 bestseller *I’m OK, You’re OK*, the parent has two parts (a critical parent and a nourishing parent) as does the child (an unhappy not-OK child and a happy OK-child). Things usually go well when interpersonal transactions involve the same persona (that is, parent ↔ parent, adult ↔ adult, or child

↔ child), but go awry especially when one person’s critical parent “hooks” another’s unhappy not-OK child.

It has been my private opinion for many years that the key to Osler’s lovability was an unusually “happy OK child.” This made him impervious to barbs launched by others’ “critical parents.” It was said of him that he “did not feel the pinpricks.” Osler’s unusually happy OK child derived largely from his family of origin. He could not recall a single unhappy incident from childhood. As is well known, he was the youngest son and eighth child of Upper Canada’s most successful parents of that era, Featherstone Lake and Ellen Pickton Osler. Young Willie honed social intelligence by observing his older siblings. Also, as Joseph Lella observes, he was his mother’s darling, her “Benjamin.”⁶ As such, he emerged from childhood with, as Sigmund Freud famously put it, “the triumphant feeling, the confidence in success, which ... brings actual success along with it.”

Osler’s fortunate position in his family of origin resembles that of another charismatic figure, Benjamin Franklin. However, and also like Franklin, Osler worked hard to hone self-discipline, healthy habits, and an uncommon ability to balance sociability with the solitude requisite for scholarly productivity.

Intelligence, charm, vitality, goal-orientation, focus, time-management skills, and a supportive family of origin—persons with these attributes generally succeed in any chosen field, including corporate business and politics. But when they reach the pinnacle of power and influence, will they use these for private self-aggrandizement or for the public good? Osler chose the latter.

It was his kindness, his love, unconditional high regard, and concern for fellow humans that truly set him apart.

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 2. Keith A. “Osler and the medical museum.” In [Abbott ME, ed.] Bulletin No. IX of the *International Association of Medical Museums and Journal of Technical Methods*. Sir William Osler Memorial Number. Montreal: Privately printed; 1926: 5–6.
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 5. Bryan CS. *Osler: Inspirations from a Great Physician*. New York: Oxford University Press; 1997.
 6. Lella JW. “An archaeology of two Oslerian dreams and a perspective on Sir William’s historical significance.” In JA Barondess JA and CG Roland, eds. *The Persisting Osler—III. Selected Transactions of the American Osler Society, 1991–2000*. Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Company; 2002: 27–42.

Continues on page 14

Table 1. WILLIAM OSLER'S CHARACTER STRENGTHS AS REPORTED IN THE REMINISCENCES OF, OR TRIBUTES BY, 205 OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES (NUMBER OF MENTIONS IN EACH CATEGORY)*

<i>Category*</i>	<i>Strengths included in each category*</i>	<i>Mentions</i>
<i>Humanity</i>	Love, kindness (generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, altruistic love, "niceness"), social intelligence (emotional intelligence, personal intelligence)	425
<i>Courage</i>	Bravery, persistence, integrity, vitality	273
<i>Transcendence</i>	Appreciation of beauty and excellence (awe, wonder, elevation), gratitude, hope (optimism, future-mindedness, future orientation), humor (playfulness), spirituality (religiousness, faith, purpose)	151
<i>Wisdom & Knowledge</i>	Creativity, curiosity, open-mindedness, love of learning, perspective (wisdom)	111
<i>Temperance</i>	Forgiveness and mercy, humility and modesty, prudence, self-regulation (self-control)	98
<i>Justice</i>	Citizenship (social responsibility, loyalty, teamwork), fairness, leadership	98
Total number of mentions		1,148

*After Peterson C, Seligman ME. Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004

Table 2. WILLIAM OSLER'S TOP 12 CHARACTER STRENGTHS AS REPORTED IN THE REMINISCENCES OF, OR TRIBUTES BY, 205 OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES (NUMBER OF MENTIONS)

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Mentions</i>	<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Mentions</i>
<i>Kindness</i>	213*	<i>Hope (optimism, future-oriented)</i>	48
<i>Vitality</i>	191**	<i>Self-regulation</i>	47
<i>Love of fellow humans</i>	121†	<i>Persistence</i>	38
<i>Social intelligence</i>	91‡	<i>Humility and modesty</i>	25
<i>Humor and playfulness</i>	74§	<i>Love of learning</i>	25
<i>Integrity</i>	49	<i>Curiosity</i>	21

Shown here are the 12 strengths reported most frequently from among the 24 strengths that emerged from the Values in Action Classification of Strengths project (see reference shown in footnote to Table 1).

*Encouragement of others (40), sympathy for others (37), kindness/kindness/kindhearted (35), inspiring/inspirational (27), stimulating/stimulation of others (18)

**Charm/charming (41), enthusiasm (36), energy/energetic (13), "magnetic" (12)

†Friend/friendliness/friendship (68), love of fellow humans (39), "Abou ben Adhem"-like (9)

‡Human/humanist/humaneness/humanitarian (19), insight into others (13), interest in others (11), good conversationalist (8), dignity (6), effectiveness at psychotherapy (6)

§Humor/sense of humor (48), playfulness (9), boyishness (6)

Caroline Boileau

TRAVAILLANT À PARTIR D'UNE POSITION FÉMINISTE, AVEC UN INTÉRÊT MARQUÉ POUR LA SANTÉ - INTIME, PUBLIQUE, SOCIALE ET POLITIQUE - CAROLINE BOILEAU CRÉE DES ŒUVRES QUI S'ÉLABORENT PAR UNE PRATIQUE MULTIDISCIPLINAIRE À TRAVERS L'INSTALLATION, LE DESSIN, LA VIDÉO ET LA PERFORMANCE. ELLE A TRAVAILLÉ À LA BIBLIOTHÈQUE EN TANT QU'ARTISTE EN RESIDENCE MICHELE LAROSE-OSLER LIBRARY EN 2018.



Une bibliothèque est un labyrinthe. Un lieu conçu pour s'y perdre...perdre le nord, perdre le but initial de la recherche, perdre la tête, puis, tout à coup, trouver *quelque chose*. Une chose inattendue qui remet tout en question. Une chose impossible à classer dans les cases déjà toutes prêtes. Une chose qui, une fois vue, ne peut plus être oubliée. La bibliothèque est pour moi ce lieu physique où le corps doit se mouvoir pour chercher, chercher, chercher, parfois au risque de ne rien trouver. C'est dans ce mouvement du corps dans l'espace que la magie opère, qu'une chose est trouvée à côté, derrière, sous, au-dessus de la chose cherchée initialement.

La bibliothèque est une rencontre. Je n'ai pas d'expertise particulière sur la vie et l'œuvre du Dr William Osler. Je ne suis ni historienne des sciences, ni médecin, mais, en tant qu'artiste, j'ai habité sa bibliothèque durant presque six mois pour y réaliser une recherche sur la représentation du corps de la femme dans des ouvrages médicaux du 15^e au 19^e siècles. J'ai aussi rencontré William Osler à travers la générosité et la disponibilité des gens qui soignent sa collection et l'alimentent encore de nouveaux ouvrages et objets. Qu'une bibliothèque spécialisée en histoire de la médecine puisse accueillir une artiste visuelle pour une période de recherche puis pour une exposition est une chose rare et précieuse, cela témoigne de l'esprit du lieu, curieux et ouvert, incroyablement ouvert sur des façons très différentes de penser le corps et le monde.

La bibliothèque est un paysage. Un lieu où l'on accepte de s'aventurer parfois loin des repères habituels pour se laisser interroger et émouvoir par des *choses* qui apparaissent, nous touchent et nous traversent.



Caroline Boileau, *Corps qui hantent d'autres corps*, Aquarelle et collage sur papier, 2019.

Dr. Richard Fraser

PROFESSOR OF PATHOLOGY; DIRECTOR, MAUDE ABBOTT MEDICAL MUSEUM; MEMBER OF THE OSLER LIBRARY BOARD OF CURATORS



Although my involvement with McGill - first as a student and then as academic staff - has lasted over 50 years, my interaction with the Osler Library came relatively late. It evolved along with my interest in medical history as it related to the McGill Medical Faculty and its former pathology museum. Work on a Congress for the International Academy of Pathology in 2006 led me to discover the wealth of material objects related to such history that McGill contains - first those in the Pathology Department, then in Anatomy and finally in other Faculty Schools and Departments. I brought my first "discoveries" - often found in dark and dusty basement storage rooms or hidden in forgotten drawers - to Pamela Miller at the Osler Library, partly to get her agreement that they were in

fact of historical value and partly out of pride and excitement that I had discovered them. The encouragement she gave and the wealth of supporting and clarifying information in the Library's books and archives led me to an appreciation of the value of historical knowledge, both intrinsically and in teaching students and the public at large. I have spent many hours immersing myself in this aspect of medicine and am very grateful for the opportunity to have been able to do so - an opportunity provided by the Library's possessions and by the expertise and good will of its Librarians and staff who have advised and encouraged me, including Pam Miller, Chris Lyons and Mary Hague-Yearl. The Library is truly one of the gems of McGill University.

Dr. John D. Walker

PREPAREDNESS MEDICAL DIRECTOR, TEXAS HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION, DSHS (RET.); INVITED CO-CHAIR, FOUNDING POPULATION HEALTH CURRICULUM TASK FORCE, DELL MEDICAL SCHOOL & ADJUNCT CLINICAL FACULTY, SCHOOL OF NURSING, UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

One of Osler's enduring gifts to generations of physicians following in his footsteps is the priceless insight that the craft of healing has much in common with the art of friendship. Perhaps Scottish theologian and author, Hugh Black (1868-1953), said it best: "Our friends see the best in us and, by that very fact, call forth the best from us."

"Our friends see the best in us and, by that very fact, call forth the best from us."

Lawton Osler

LAWTON OSLER IS LINKED TO SIR WILLIAM OSLER THROUGH CONVERSATIONS WITH HIS FATHER, CAMPBELL REVERE OSLER. AS A BOY, C.R. OSLER KNEW THOMAS MCCRAE (SIR WILLIAM'S FRIEND, ASSOCIATE AND EDITOR) IN MUSKOKA. THIS RESONATES WITH LAWTON AS HE AND HIS WIFE LIVE IN MUSKOKA BESIDE THE COTTAGE THOMAS MCCRAE (UNCLE TOM) VISITED.

I grew up with stories of Sir William (Sir W) from a very early age. *Lions in the Way*¹ was one of my Sir William staples when I was younger. That was then replaced by Harvey Cushing's *The Life of Sir William Osler*. I do not have an actual experience of Sir William; however, I do have a related secondhand story. My father used to tell me and my siblings how 'Uncle Tom' saved him from being picked on by his older brothers when he was charged with gathering eggs from the hen house in Muskoka. Who is Uncle Tom? Uncle Tom is Thomas McCrae, Sir William's friend, fellow McGill graduate, associate, editor and relative by marriage. Thomas McCrae was in Muskoka because he and his wife Amy Gwyn visited Amy Gwyn's sister Marion Gwyn who was married to Britton Osler (Sir W's nephew). Britton had a cottage in Muskoka. Another memory is my friend's story of receiving top awards each year at Trinity College School

Professor Annmarie Adams

CHAIR, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES OF MEDICINE; FORMER DIRECTOR, SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE; MEMBER OF THE OSLER LIBRARY BOARD OF CURATORS

The Osler Library is one of my favourite places at McGill. It's a perfect combination of my delights: architecture, medicine, archives, and books. What makes it so special? The purpose-built architecture of the Osler Library, with its traditional décor and arrangement, is unexpected in the hip, white Modernism of the McIntyre Building that embraces it. This pairing makes it feel like a secret place, function like a hidden gem, and seem like the pearl in an oyster.



Photograph of architectural model of the McIntyre Medical Building, circa 1966, courtesy of NFOE et associés architectes. The building was designed by Montreal-based architects Marshall & Merrett in 1965 and the model was destroyed circa 2015.

(Sir W was the first Head Boy there). The prizes were books and he still talks about how he received books related to Sir W each year! One of which was the 2 volume Cushing book.

My connection to the Osler Library was quite convoluted. I knew my father had been involved, but I was not for a long time. However, for years my doctor who was a graduate of the Montreal Neurological Institute kept talking to me about The Osler Library. Finally, 3 or 4 years ago when I had my appointment, he went one step further and wrote an introduction to Rolando Del Maestro (an acquaintance) on a prescription and that was it.

Anne Wilkinson, *Lions in the Way: A Discursive History of the Oslers* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1956).

Professor Hélène Cazes

PROFESSEURE ET DIRECTRICE DU PROGRAMME D'ÉTUDES MÉDIÉVALES À L'UNIVERSITÉ DE VICTORIA



aison dans la tour, bibliothèque dans l'hôpital, temple dans l'Université, la Bibliothèque Osler me semble traverser les espaces et les temps comme un vaisseau de mémoire. Lors de ma première visite en 2010, je croyais que je faisais un détour depuis la bibliothèque McLennan pour me rendre à une sorte d'annexe, prestigieuse mais excentrée : une riche collection dont le donateur, par une sorte de caprice, aurait souhaité maintenir la marginalité, en haut, de l'autre côté de la rue. Je n'avais bien évidemment rien compris.

J'aurais dû m'attendre à frapper au petit marteau en bronze d'un petit bâtiment, moderne, autonome, des années 1920, avec des fenêtres aux verres colorés, des boiseries sculptées, des tapis d'Orient et des bibliothèques sur tous les murs. Car c'est bien là le projet d'Osler : un lieu à la fois personnel et public, savant et chaleureux, où recevoir les amis de l'histoire de la médecine parmi livres, objets, œuvres d'art. Un feu dans la cheminée, un vestiaire pour les manteaux, parapluies, gants et chapeaux, des tables et lampes, des lutrins, et partout, des livres, des livres, des livres. Il devait également s'y trouver crayons, gommes, buvards, encriers, plumiers. Et, oui, dans l'entrée, un beau fichier aux poignées de cuivre où consulter et classer par nom, titre, sujet les milliers de petits cartons, tapés à la machine, annotés pour les mises à jour, par le bibliothécaire et l'invisible secrétaire. Là, tout ne serait que luxe, calme et savoir. Temple familial, cette maison de l'histoire de la médecine, où Osler avait rassemblé ses trésors (les multiples butins de ventes aux enchères et de visites chez les librairies et antiquaires d'Europe et d'Amérique, la copie d'un vitrail célébrant les trois médecins de la Renaissance anglaise), formerait le seuil d'une autre dimension de l'aventure humaine, celle où l'espace réorganise le temps : comme autant de lanternes magiques, livres et manuscrits projetteraient les visiteurs dans l'histoire, peuplée de héros et de dévoués serviteurs, du progrès médical.

Accueillis par une foule de figures et d'œuvres, dans leurs versions et éditions originales, les lecteurs toucheraient de leurs mains et yeux personnes et pensées ; mettant leurs pas dans leurs pas, guidés par les études de la dernière section de la *Bibliotheca Osleriana* —celles des sources secondaires—, ils marcheraient à la suite de leurs prédécesseurs et continueraient, du bureau où d'obligeants bibliothécaires les auraient installés, l'infinie procession de la science.

Arrivée à mi-colline, c'était bien une maison mais on y accédait par un ascenseur : elle était prise dans l'écorce de la tour, moderne, du McIntyre Medical Building. Il y a bien une entrée mais pas de petit marteau, il y a bien un vestiaire sans personne néanmoins pour prendre votre manteau, vos gants et votre

chapeau. Et puis, dès que l'on passe le seuil, oubliés les étages, le parc de stationnement, l'ascenseur. Nous voilà ailleurs, là où tout n'est que luxe, calme et savoir.

Venue pour travailler sur l'un des héros de la *Bibliotheca Prima*, André Vésale, l'éternel jeune rebelle dont Osler et Cushing collectionnèrent passionnément la *Fabrique du corps humain* (1543), je rencontrai le projet de Sir William Osler : une certaine idée de la science, toujours en mouvement, toujours ouverte vers sa continuation. Plus de 100 000 livres maintenant, une salle de lecture dont on peine à s'arracher, des archives accessibles et, surtout, aussi, le sentiment d'une présence.

Car le retour aux sources que constitue la collection Osler n'est pas un nostalgique mausolée, mais une avancée sans cesse renouvelée vers un futur toujours meilleur. Dans la fougue de Vésale, souvent citée dans les discours aux étudiants de William Osler, le médecin philanthrope reconnaissait un rêve qui était le sien : donner vie au savoir par l'intégrité d'un rapport personnel à la science. Lui-même s'entoura dans ce temps des sources et collections où rien ni personne ne meurt de plus de 8 éditions de la *Fabrique*, outre la quasi-totalité des œuvres connues de Vésale ; il soutint la publication d'études sur Vésale et lança l'idée de rééditer, avec les bois originaux des gravures de 1543, la *Fabrique* pour un public moderne. Un jour, Christopher Lyons, alors bibliothécaire, me fit pénétrer dans le sanctuaire de la bibliothécaire : une salon maintenue dans l'état où Osler l'avait souhaitée : vitrail, foyer, tapis et meubles luxueux. Au cœur de la pièce, brûle sans feu le cœur de la collection : les urnes de Sir William et de sa femme. Tout près d'eux, les livres préférés, dont bien sûr la *Fabrique*. D'un coup, j'étais touchée, moi aussi, personnellement. Bouleversée de cette guerre qui emporta Revere puis William, émue d'être reçue chez lui, prête à suivre le chemin de la tradition savante à jamais.

C'est maintenant Mary Yearl-Hague qui m'y accueille et ouvre les fenêtres de la maison du savoir. Mon amour pour ce lieu m'en fait une familière, plus confiante et aussi plus libre. Il m'arrive de marmonner en lisant la *Bibliotheca Osleriana*, de converser avec Sir William, de l'interroger : et les femmes ? la gynécologie, pourquoi ne pas l'avoir mieux représentée, mieux commentée ? et vos secrétaires, qui traduisent et dactylographient les préfaces de vos précieux héros, pourquoi ne pas les nommer et remercier ? Il sourit sans me rabrouer. Son idée de la science est partage, dialogue : une tradition à la fois humaniste et, quelque peu, iconoclaste !



The view into the Osler Library, 9 August 2018.

Reflections upon a Space

Mary K.K. Hague-Yearl, MPhil, MLIS, PhD

OSLER LIBRARIAN

I. 25 JULY 2018. FIRST RETURN, POST-FIRE.

In the weeks that immediately followed the fire of July 13th, access to the McIntyre Medical Building was limited. A list of names was closely matched to ID cards; everyone had to sign in and out. For health reasons, those entering were supposed to limit their time in the building to one hour. In those early weeks, before the ventilation systems were fully cleaned and tested, the building was stifling. The temperature in my office was around 40 degrees Celsius (104 F).

In those early weeks, I remained in the building for stretches of far longer than one hour. Sometimes, I was there for twelve. While the time I spent in the Wellcome Camera or in our locked stacks on the 4th floor made my lungs hurt when I took off my mask and I had to pay attention to remain hydrated, the Osler Room's dedicated HVAC unit meant that I could work. If I did not follow the one-hour rule, it was because I could retreat into a sanctuary. The Osler Room was cleaner and cooler than the city air outside of the McIntyre: it was filtered and remained a constant 18 degrees Celsius (64 F).

From the time I started working at the library, on 23 August 2017, I had witnessed many visitors - local, national, international - find solace in the Osler Room. The perfection of Percy Nobbs' design, the room's deep connection to Sir William Osler, and its existence as a hallowed space, made it impossible not to be moved upon passing through the pane glass doors. Before the fire, the Osler Room conjured up in me a deep sense of appreciation, respect, reverence. After the fire, it became a sanctuary to me, as I had witnessed it be to others before. While all around was chaotic, poisoned, stifling, the Osler Room remained steadfast and pure.

II. 30 AUGUST 2018. AN UNCERTAIN GOODBYE.

The books had all been packed and moved, either to Dorval for further treatment at PremièreAction/FirstOnSite, or to the McLennan Library to be unpacked directly onto the shelves. The art and artifacts had been wrapped and transported by PACART to McLennan.

I checked all of the glass doors on the Osler Room shelves to make sure they were unlocked and accessible to those tasked with undertaking an invasive inspection of the space. I confirmed that the case alarms were off. I apologized to Dr. Osler. I pulled the entryway doors closed and had one final look.

The library was empty, but it was not clean. There was plastic on the carpet; there were small splinters of wood that had broken off of the pallets used to transport the books; tissue paper and other bits littered the floor, too small to pick up but large enough to contribute to a sense of untidiness. It was not how one wished to leave the space.

III. SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2018.

Clearing and closing the Osler Room so it could be inspected for unseen damage was the first step of a response comprised of many elements. The Osler Room was the simplest to deal with, even if the works therein required the greatest delicacy in handling. Nonetheless, to individually wrap, pack, and ship those books directly to the McLennan Library was straightforward. Admittedly, restoring the books to shelf order took considerably longer but the books were available almost immediately upon arrival.

Depending upon their exposure to water, soot, and other contaminants the remaining items were candidates for a number of other processes: freeze drying, deodorization, cleaning by hand. Each item that was freeze dried was assessed: was the water damage so much that the book was a total loss, or could it be returned to the shelf? For the small number of 19th century books damaged, were they significant enough to the library that they needed conservation work, or could they be replaced? Similarly, for the prints in the one map case that was damaged, we needed to provide estimates for replacement cost versus conservation cost. I had never imagined that my job experience would include spending two days at a lab in Pointe-Claire observing blind sniff tests of bags of books removed from specific zones within the library.



"404 Glass slides going to McGill." A reminder of the Osler Library within a gutted space. 11 December 2018.

IV. DECEMBER 2018. THE FIRST RETURN.

It would be months before I returned to the space. I wore my work boots, borrowed a hard hat, and was given a tour. The library was empty, more empty than before. In the area outside of the Osler Room, shelves had been removed, the walls stripped of their veneer, the ceilings showed off wiring and ducts. Despite this, there were signs that we belonged in the space. There were reminders of our existence.

In the Wellcome Camera, someone had taped a sign to the wooden frame on a raw terra cotta wall: "404 Glass slides going to McGill." Though the sign had no place there, and had clearly come off of one of the boxes packed months earlier, knowing that someone had taken the time to pick up that piece of paper and stick it to the wall was oddly comforting. In that gutted space, someone had thought of us, even if only for a passing moment. There were other signs of our existence: pieces of paper on woodwork indicating a range of call numbers and exhibit signs on glass removed from an office doorway. It seemed oddly amusing that a card reader still worked though it was dangling from the ceiling and the door it was to open had been removed.

V. 2019. RENOVATION.

In the months since that first return in December 2018, I have been to the Osler many times. I have been there to consult with those overseeing the renovations, to answer questions: where do the light switches go? Is this the proper configuration of the shelves? What type of lighting goes here? Where were the security cameras located? Do you have pictures from this part of the space? Which carpet do you want? What about the tiles for the office floors? Wallpaper or paint?

Though the library is being restored to pre-fire conditions, there have been some minor changes to the space. We are losing some shelving from the area that houses our circulating collection in order to meet accessibility standards, yet we are using this as an opportunity to create a study corner near a trio of windows. As part of a larger Medical Faculty project, a storeroom door that had opened outside of the library limits will now be sealed and an entrance created from within the library. Moreover, our exhibit space will now be enclosed by a glass barrier to allow for greater security on our part, while enhancing access to the space that once was the Life Sciences Library, which will be reconstructed to contain additional dynamic classrooms.

Throughout all of this, the Osler Room has remained a sanctuary. More than a year has passed since it provided relief from a contaminated environment, but it remains a quiet sacred space in contrast to the reconstruction taking place beyond the double pane glass doors. In the coming days, after the final touches have been put on the Osler Library renovations, the entire library will become silent and reverential. It will wait with anticipation until it is reunited with its books and with its people.



Looking out from the Osler Niche on 30 August 2019 during a final walk through before turning the space over to construction crews.

The Relevant Osler

Does it Matter that Osler is Relevant when Nobody is Listening?

Henry (Pete) Travers, MD, FACP

CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF PATHOLOGY, SANFORD SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA



rior to going to medical school, my only exposure to William Osler came from one or two short comments to me by my physician father. He told me two things: Osler was the greatest physician who ever lived and Osler was only right forty percent (40%) of the time.

In spite of the innovation of a Department of Humanities at the new School of Medicine at Penn State's Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and in spite of its dean, George T. Harrell, being a founding member of the American Osler Society, there was no specific Oslerian instruction in medicine for the forty of us who began studying there in 1967. Our teachers did not expose us to Osler for any of the reasons Joseph VanderVeer¹ gave in 1989: Osler as a role model for physicians, his example and writings about what it meant to be a physician, and his grasp of the principles which led to successful practice. Those of us who were interested had to discover Osler - and medical history in general - on our own.

Osler lived, in Bliss' words, "a magnificent, epic, important and more than slightly saintly life."² He taught medical students in three countries, wrote *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, and was a quintessential humanist with a deep faith free of restrictive dogma. A practicing physician, Osler, through his lectures and writings, offered contemporaries and posterity alike both principle and ideal of medical practice, the treatment of patients, professional relationships and personal and professional honor. In his biography of Osler, Michael Bliss tried but failed to "find a cause to justify the death of Osler's reputation."³

There is overwhelmingly persuasive scholarship pointing to Osler's relevance - indeed all of medical history's relevance - to today's medicine.^{4,5,6} Yet medical history must continue to defend its utility in the minds of individual students and physicians and within academic counsels. Although Warner⁶ suggested this began in the late 19th century with the emergence of biomedicine⁷ rendering medical history irrelevant, it might have begun even earlier:

The modern physician does not waste his energies or burn the midnight lamp in anxious strivings after the philosopher's stone...⁸

Three years later, Warner⁹ went on to discuss the proposition that 19th century physicians' embrace of experimental science was a market-focused cultural tool rather than a clinical one. Osler¹⁰ captured the resultant dehumanization of medicine in his 1919 lecture, *The Old Humanities and the New Science*:

The workers lose all sense of proportion in a maze of minutiae. Everywhere men are in small coterie intensely absorbed in subjects of deep interest, but of very limited scope.

Jones et al,⁴ in a recent thoughtful paper about the place of history in medical school curricula, gave a detailed answer to the question, "Is history relevant and useful for medical students and physicians?" Early on these authors tell us that they "...make the case for history...as an essential component of medical knowledge, reasoning and practice." While they do, indeed, make a case for medical history, they come up short where, as the old Firestone advertisement said, "the rubber meets the road." We therefore turn again to why Osler fails to engage the vast majority of medical students and physicians?

First, I think that the work-a-day part of our world changes such that we are most absorbed in the change itself, implicitly rejecting the premise that principles of our profession do not change. *Second*, I think that successive generations of teachers, having in turn adapted to the accumulation of knowledge, guided students with an ever-narrowing perspective. *Third*, teachers, as advocates for the importance of their respective fields, are politically indisposed to embrace a broader view when it comes time for designing curricula. *Fourth* is a tautology: there are still 24 hours in a day. Time is becoming the student's and the physician's most precious possession, and competitors for pieces of time are innumerable, insistent and, in some cases, aggressive.

Each of these reasons is predicated on the exponential growth of information and its increasing accessibility. Any approach to reconnect present and past must account for that reality, only one of the “elephants in the room”, but arguably the biggest. The growth in what is knowable requires of teachers the ability to continuously refine information into organized knowledge in order to develop students with characteristics desired in medical professionals.

Writers and Teachers of Medical History in General

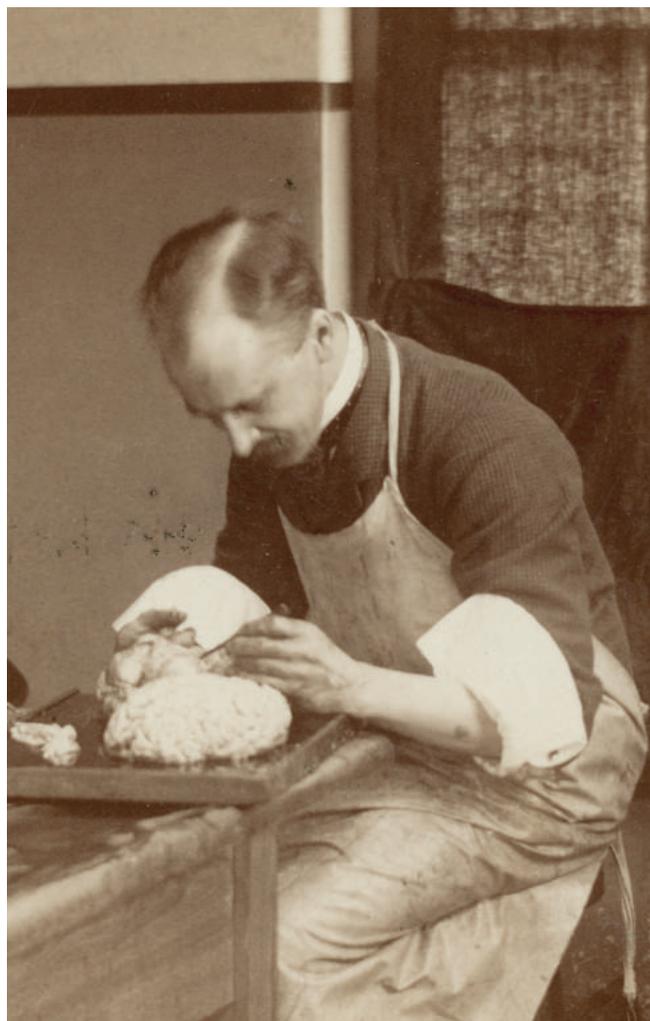
Past and present and future are not disjointed but joined...The greatest poet says to the past, Rise and walk before me that I may realize you.

Walt Whitman¹¹

It's not that teachers make history uninteresting. Whitman's poetic words, for example, found no greater champion than Félix Martí-Ibáñez (1911 - 1972), a Spanish physician who emigrated to the United States in 1939 just after the Spanish Civil war. Among his protean writings, essays such as *The Young Princes* and *To Be A Doctor* brought medical history to life and directly connected it to students and physicians of his times.

The Greeks created the legend that Delphi, site of the famous oracle, was the center of the world, because if two eagles were to fly from any two points of the globe, sooner or later they would meet in Delphi. We now know that the two eagles of science and medicine do not fly only in space but also in time, and their wings hover over the illustrious shadows of the investigators, clinicians, educators, pioneers, rebels and martyrs of the history of medicine. The meeting place of those two eagles lies not in space but in time, in the future, and in the mind and the heart of every one of you who answered destiny's call to greatness when you decided “to be a doctor.”¹²

Martí-Ibáñez was one of a number of inspiring writers bringing context to medicine including Pelligrino¹³, Majno¹⁴, Crussi¹⁵ and Mukherjee¹⁶ among many others. Many writers who included medical history in their works did not - as Osler did not - offer dry recitations of events, dates and people, but told stories that became threads in the tapestry of medicine, a tapestry that included everyone who ever was or will become a doctor. These “weavers” were well aware that a tapestry had an attractive front side and a less ordered back side, the latter filled with “...knots and tangles and rough ends...”¹⁷ These teachers showed us that often the knots and tangles truly inform us more than the front side where threads are straight and colors fit a pattern.



William Osler performing an autopsy at the Blockley Mortuary in Philadelphia. Osler was appointed an official pathologist at Blockley Hospital soon after his arrival in Philadelphia; he was Chair of Clinical Medicine at the University of Philadelphia from 1884-1889. William Osler Photo Collection, CUS_044-001BC3_P.

In spite of the wealth of literary and teaching talent engaged in medical history, the history of medicine remains to most medical students and physicians a body of knowledge with insufficient utility to warrant their time. Far from being a recent phenomenon, interest in history and its incorporation into medical teaching has gone through periods of varying favor. Each cycle, though, has seen the waning of interest in history hinge on the two-century old concept that history is of pragmatic value to the physician. As Rosen pointed out 70 years ago in a related context, “When it became painfully obvious that more useful and sounder knowledge could be garnered faster by looking through a microscope than by studying older medical literature, the pragmatic argument lost its force.”¹⁸

The attitude in some medical schools that medical history lacks utility may be seen today in the rite of passage known as the “white coat ceremony.” In 2015 one first year student

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at the University of South Dakota Sanford School of Medicine said about the white coat, “The white coat’s just a symbol of the physician that’s been around for years and years and it just feels a little more real.” The student and her teachers may or may not have spent any time during the ceremony itself or subsequently exploring symbols in general, white in movies about medicine or medical literature (e.g. *Men in White*¹⁹ and *Arrowsmith*²⁰), and the rise of biomedicine referred to above. They may not have been aware of the significance of Eakins’ famous contrasting images depicting the transition from dark to white in the years 1875 to 1889.

In 2017, the same medical student who viewed the white coat as a symbol of the physician, said that in the time since she has not learned much about medical history. About the white coat she observes, “I am able to carry pens, small books in which to write notes, reference books, needle drivers to practice palming tools, suture to practice hand tying, my phone, my keys and a piece of gum.” She has found that “nursing students, pharmacy students, PA students, PT/OT students and dental students all have white coat ceremonies.” Uppermost in her expressions are practical considerations and issues of prestige; her connection with a noble tradition spanning millennia seems lost in modern medicine’s vast modern amphitheater palely lit by myriad handheld device screens, the distant light of history’s candle unnoticed.

Osler taught that we must discover that unconscious, enduring humanity beyond the great lessons stories of our heritage teach us to apply in our lives, a humanity which internalizes “...those two or three great and simple images in whose presence [our hearts may first open].”²¹ Time in a curriculum for history, history clubs, lectureships, symposia and history organizations will each and severally have their proponents and these vehicles can provide the images Camus believed so important. For Osler to remain relevant now and in the future, his lessons and stunning inspirations must be transformed to symbols, myths and stories presented at the time and in the context of our everyday experiences. These become the flint-on-steel source of sparks that ignite the fire of illuminating the connection of tradition to our professional “everyday” at the bedside, in the pages of a book, on-line at computers and handheld devices, at grand rounds, conferring with colleagues and teachers, and, in particular, in small groups. In a manner as equally existential as Matthew 18:20, we might then say, “For where two or three gather in the name of medicine, Osler shall be there in the midst of them.”

¹ *Vital Signs*, Summer 1989. At the founding of the Osler Society of Greater Kansas City in 2010, Sherman Steinzeig provided similar reasons for Osler’s relevance.

² Bliss, M. *William Osler: A Life in Medicine*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1999, Preface. Michael Bliss died on 18 May 2017.

³ *Ibid*. It is of some interest that neither Bliss nor Osler biographer Harvey Cushing mentioned an episode in 1911 where Osler, at a meeting of 2,000 physicians of the Metropolitan Branch of the British Medical Association, allowed Victor Horsley - whom he admired - to be publicly humiliated without raising his voice in complaint (*J Med Biog* 2013;21(4):249.

⁴ Jones DS, Greene JA, Duffin J and Warner JH. “Making the case for history in medical education.” *J Hist Med Allied Sci* 2015; 70(4):623-652.

⁵ VanderVeer J and Bryan CS. *Osler for White Coat Pockets*. Masthof Press, Morgantown PA, 2017.

⁶ Warner JH. “The aesthetic grounding of modern medicine.” *Bull Hist Med* 2014;88:1-47.

⁷ A term encompassing medicine as a technical, precise, specialized and standardized discipline.

⁸ “Sanatory Science.” *Quart J Med*. James Samuelson and William Crookes, eds, (London: John Churchill, 1864), 1:163.

⁹ Warner JH. “The humanizing power of medical history: responses to biomedicine in the 20th century United States.” *Med Humanit* 2011; 37:91-96.

¹⁰ Osler WO. “The old humanities and the new science. An address before the Classical Association at Oxford, May 1919.” Reprinted in *The Collected Essays of William Osler*, JP McGovern and CG Roland (eds), The Classics of Medicine Library, 1985; 472-497.

¹¹ Whitman W. *Leaves of Gras*. The Viking Press, 1959, Preface.

¹² Martí-Ibáñez, Félix. “To be a doctor.” In *Ariel*, MD Publications, 1962, pp. 263-267.

¹³ Pelligrino ED and Thomas DC. *A Philosophical Basis for Medical Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

¹⁴ Majno G. *The Healing Hand*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975.

¹⁵ Gonzalez-Crussi F. *Notes of an Anatomist*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1985.

¹⁶ Mukherjee S. *The Emperor of All Maladies*. New York: Scribner, 2010. This book was cited by *Time* as one of the 100 most influential books of the last 100 years. Even so, in 2011 it was outsold 6 to 1 by Bill O’Reilly’s book, *Pinheads and Patriots*.

¹⁷ Halligan M. *Lovers’ Knots*, Port Melbourne: Mandarin, 1993.

¹⁸ Rosen G. “The place of history in medical education.” *Bull Hist Med* 1948; 22:594-629.

¹⁹ A movie released in 1934 by MGM starring Clark Gable as a stressed intern.

²⁰ Lewis S. *Arrowsmith*, Harcourt Brace, 1925.

²¹ Camus A. “Between Yes and No.” In *The Wrong Side and The Right Side*. Algeria, 1936.

Things Rarely Seen

Pamela Miller

FORMER HISTORY OF MEDICINE LIBRARIAN; MEMBER OF THE OSLER LIBRARY BOARD OF CURATORS



Responding to Dr. Mary Yearl's invitation to write about the Osler Library has proved to be truly difficult. To begin with, after 12 years of enduring my contributions to the *Osler Library Newsletter* in my capacity as History of Medicine Librarian, you have probably heard enough from me! On the other

hand, one can never say enough about the Osler Library: the renowned collector, his exceptional collections, the Board of Curators, the Library staff, service, specialized researchers and community support, all housed in a heritage setting protected by state-of-the-art climate control tailored to the various needs of the collections. So, instead of reminiscing about what a privilege it was to serve the Osler Library over the years, and to avoid recalling the many joys (and sleepless nights) that I have described over the years, I decided to choose a few artifacts from the exhibition I prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Osler Society. The meeting was held in Montreal to mark the 100th anniversary of Osler's death; the exhibit, *Sir William Osler: The Man You Rarely See*, included some items which even the most dedicated Oslerians had never seen.

The point of the exhibition was to display artifacts about and often used by Osler and his family, that are seldom displayed, if at all, and which cast additional light on the career of this iconic doctor. I felt that these pieces merited a little more attention. A major problem and near disaster, proved to be the fire in the McIntyre Building that occurred in July 2018.

The difficulties that resulted from the fire included an unfamiliar display area, generously provided by Christopher Lyons, Head Librarian, Rare Books and Special Collections that houses the Osler Library until it returns to the McIntyre Building, and the fact that every artifact had been carefully wrapped, boxed and labelled for removal and storage in the McLennan Library and not for easy retrieval for display purposes! So, the choice of material depended on lists, memory and the ability of staff to locate boxes containing the heterogeneous collection of artifacts; no quiet browsing along the shelves was possible in preparation for this display.

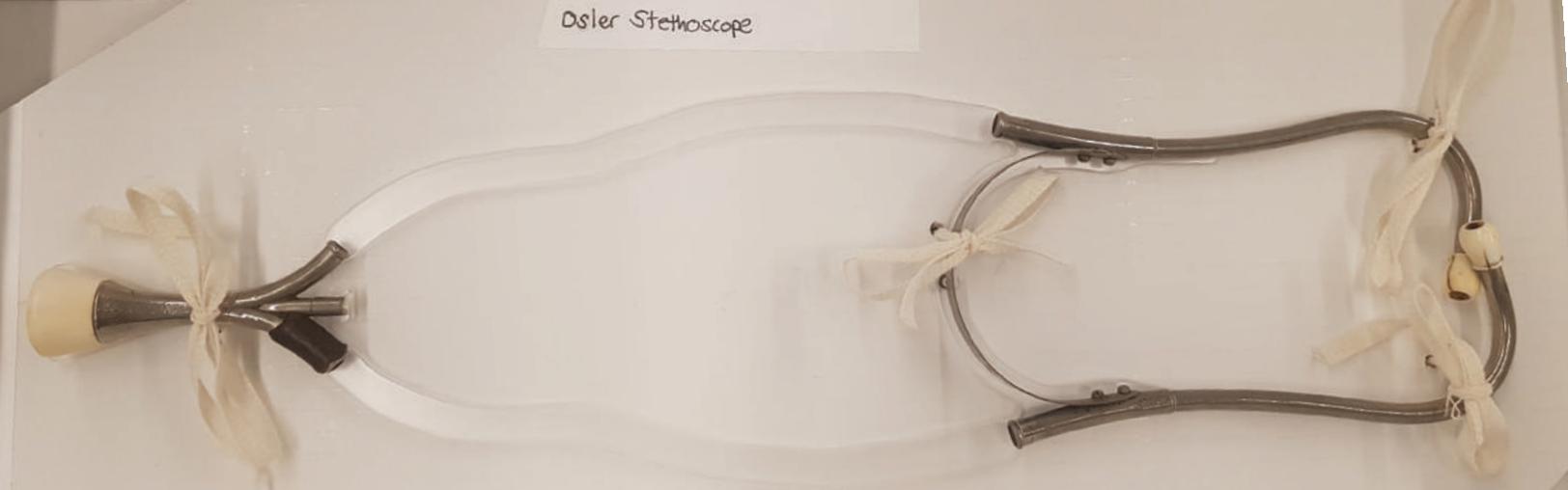
Approximately 50 items, among them letters, china, silverware, books, deeds, equipment, clothing, portraits and photographs were selected and I am highlighting only 7. Each served a specific purpose in their time. Each is capable of interpretation today and reinterpretation tomorrow. They tell us about Osler, about ourselves and about our country. In addition, they speak to the need for ongoing care, conservation and research by an adequate number of staff who are dedicated and knowledgeable.

First in this selection is part of a set of early 19th-century cups and saucers brought by Ellen and Featherstone Osler when they migrated to Canada in 1837. These unusual pieces were donated to the Osler Library by a family member, Jane Davis, just prior to the exhibition. They are edged with gold and the identity number of the painter, which allowed her or him to be paid for their work, is recorded at the bottom of each piece. What do the fragile items tell us? Does the quality of the pieces speak to the social aspirations of the Oslers? Was the china set even uncrated in the forests of Ontario? How did these delicate pieces survive family events and moves over the last 172 years?

It has taken two Oslerian specialists and two manuscripts, to reconstitute a copy of Osler's graduation thesis of 1872. One manuscript, BO 7639 was exhibited and it contains fragments of material that the first Osler Librarian, W.W. Francis had, thank heavens, bound up with other unpublished material for safe keeping and so very easily overlooked. The thesis was thought to have been entirely lost until the late Dr. Richard Golden, Oslerian expert par excellence, working on clues provided by the late Michael Bliss concerning a volume of unpublished drafts, BO 7664, reconstituted the thesis from fragments and drafts and published his analysis of his findings in a fascinating article in the *Journal of Medical Biography*, vol. 19, Supplement 1, 2007 concluding that, "Although the material is scant, there is enough to give considerable insight into William Osler as the emerging pathologist-clinician destined for future eminence." Looking at these bound scraps one asks why Osler did not preserve a copy of this prize winning work for future reference or even a happy reminder of what was judged to be "greatly distinguished for originality and research" based on 20 post-mortems and for which he was awarded a special book prize upon graduation. Part of the answer may be that Osler thought that the final year medical thesis was a waste of time, some students even paying someone else to produce the work for them. By the 1877-78 session the thesis requirement was dropped. Sleuthing in the documentation by two dedicated scholars has resulted in a "find" that has become a unique Osler treasure.

The Canada Museum of Science and Technology somewhat inadvertently contributed to the display by borrowing and restoring Osler's stethoscope in 2017 for their exhibition entitled *Medical Sensations*, an interactive exhibition exploring the 5 senses. This was truly fortunate. Throughout my years at the Osler, this iconic piece (what could be more iconic than a beloved doctor's stethoscope?) consisted of a small pile of decomposed tubing and the remaining ivory and metal components (see image). I always wondered how we could

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show such an important piece that had so many problems. In 2019, very kindly, at our request, the Museum removed the stethoscope for the duration of our display, including the skilful mount that their staff had prepared. In the course of our negotiations, the Curator, David Pantalony explained that he had intentionally highlighted Osler, the Osler Library and McGill in the Museum's popular exhibition, which was been seen by over 750,000 visitors in its first year!



Sir William Osler's stethoscope, in pieces.

Private Notes of Cases, 1895-1917, 239 cards, BO 7667. At Osler's request, the notes of his private cases were to be destroyed with the exception of 10 per annum. These notes were to be kept in his Library. The selection was by Thomas McCrae, Osler's colleague and friend and the patients' names were erased. This material has not received much attention so far. One wishes that all of Osler's case notes had survived as one of the most sought after physicians of his time. What a record of medical practice in a period of rapid discovery and change! Typically, each file often contains a referral from fellow physicians along with Osler's notes and conclusions. What criteria guided Thomas McCrae in his selection? What do we make now, of these criteria? Are these cases still interesting and important?

A poster published by Osler bearing a portrait of Michael Servetus (1511-1553) and some of Servetus' writings, according to Dr. Richard Golden, constitutes one of the rarest pieces of Osleriana in existence. According to Dr. Brian J. Morrison, who presented a paper on Servetus at the recent annual meeting of the American Osler Society, only 30 copies were ever printed and he had never encountered one. Servetus' views on the Trinity were regarded as heretical, and he was burned at the stake in Geneva in 1553 on the orders of John Calvin. Osler intended to use the poster to help raise funds to erect a monument to Servetus, and his discovery of pulmonary circulation. In fact the memorial had to await completion until after World War I. On reading Dr. Golden's description of this piece I was dismayed. I had never laid eyes on it. Where was it? An initial hunt yielded nothing. And then Lily Szczygiel, who has a knack for finding the impossible, decided to hunt systematically through our print collection, which at that time was not catalogued. The arrangement was alphabetical and included portraits, places and several pathological drawings laid flat in drawers in an oversized metal print cabinet. Lily started at "A" and it was promising to be a long process. Surprisingly, she found Servetus in the drawer marked "B". Did "B" stand for "Broadside" or "Broken", which it was? We will never know. Following the discovery the work was restored, a complicated process, then framed and fortunately was available for this exhibition.

Finally, two seemingly common items, a comic book and a school reader show how Osler's life has been interpreted to shape our understanding of ourselves and to inspire future generations. Both publications highlighted aspects of Osler's life in popular formats, roughly 60 years ago.

Canadian Heroes, The National Magazine for Young Canadians, vol.1, no. 1, Oct. 1942, p. 59-60. "Sir William Osler, The Great Physician", by Ed. Joseph, drawn by Herschel. (P100) Before the United States entered the Second World War, Canada, needing American supplies, decided to produce its own comic books in order to avoid spending cash on non-essential items; this is an example and the first edition of one such comic book.

“The Master Word in Medicine” from *Our Heritage*, Toronto, Macmillan & Ryerson Press, ed. C.T. Fyfe & Lorne Pierce, [c. 1948, private collection]. For many years this school reader, a conscious publication project designed to teach our children about our past, was included in the reading material of many Provincial Departments of Education across the country. Each chapter is followed by a quiz to ensure that the student has understood the message.

This “rarely seen” material is just part of the Osler Library’s riches to be explored and exploited. Medicine, including the Osler Library, is a living, evolving entity, at the juncture of science and the humanities. Thanks to the leadership and expertise of the Osler’s staff, the Board of Curators and community and family supporters, we can now enhance our resources by offering travel grants, an artist residency, a regular schedule of exhibitions and most recently, the Pam and Rolando Del Maestro Family William Osler Medical Student Essay Award for medical students that provides cash prizes

and speaking opportunities for the winners. Among his notes written in preparation for his paper entitled, “Burrowings of a Bookworm” Osler mused about the future of his Library that included the description of, “...an urn with my ashes and my bust or my portrait, through which my astral self...could peek at all the books I have loved....”. I believe that 100 years after his death, Osler’s “astral self” would be pleased at what his Library has achieved.

Many individual donors cheerfully contributed to this exhibition, including Osler family members Jane Davis and Dr. Susan Kelen and McGill staff, particularly Dr. Richard Fraser. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Lily Szczygiel for her sleuthing ability, as well as Bozena Latincic, whose labels and sense of display prevented the exhibition from resembling a garage sale, and to Dr. Mary Yearl who had better things to do with her time than to dig among boxes of mysterious artifacts. Thanks to each and every one of you for your patience.

Professor Faith Wallis

HOLDS A JOINT APPOINTMENT IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND CLASSICAL STUDIES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES OF MEDICINE. SHE IS AN HISTORIAN OF MEDIEVAL EUROPE, SPECIALIZING IN THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND MEDICINE. SHE IS A FORMER OSLER LIBRARIAN AND CURRENT MEMBER OF THE OSLER LIBRARY BOARD OF CURATORS.



My first “real” job after completing my Master’s degree was as Assistant Archivist in the McGill University Archives. The reference shelf in the Archives contained books about Montreal history, McGill and Quebec, and among them was Harvey Cushing’s biography of Osler. One Victoria Day weekend, I borrowed Cushing, and devoured it over the holiday. I was captivated, not least because the biography presented this exceptional man in such a delicately understated manner.

Later, after finishing my doctoral degree in the history of medieval science, my first “real” job was as Assistant Librarian in the Osler Library; within a year, I would assume its direction. Osler himself, as well as his splendid Library, can take the credit for my conversion from a historian of mathematical sciences to a historian of medicine. Immersing myself in Osler’s world, and in the old writings on medicine that he collected with such intelligence, method and imagination, taught me that medicine is a unique enterprise. From its early days, medicine was yoked to science -- to debates about, models of, and explanations for the phenomena of nature. But medicine, unlike other sciences, has to intervene in human suffering on a daily basis, and to contend with the contingencies of the individual body and the particular disease experience. Throughout his professional life, Osler preached that scientific medicine is obliged constantly to revise its knowledge base and its practices. He also exemplified the truth that the physician, like the priest, stands with the patient at the gates of life and death. A doctor must exercise a special kind of compassion that is based on, but adds something

distinctive to, the tenderness and sympathy that we all owe to the suffering. It was this unique amalgam of science, practice, and the numinous that lured me to the history of medicine. I met it first on the pages of Cushing; in my years as custodian and then as an avid user of the Osler Library, I have found the old books and the modern scholarship that have sustained it.

Osler was a Canadian and a cosmopolitan; a physician and a humanist; a man of huge energy and charisma, but with a melancholy cast of countenance. His contemporaries remarked that no portrait seemed able to reproduce his mercurial features. But there is an old adage that people are really known through the company they keep, and in Osler’s case, his best friend was Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682). Osler bought the 1862 Ticknor and Fields’ printing of *Religio medici* when he was a young student; it lay on this coffin at his funeral. He called *Religio medici* his “comes vitae vitaeque dulcis et utilis (the sweet and helpful companion of my life and my path)” – which is how Browne referred to his own copy of Horace, “worn out with and by me.” *Religio medici* is a physician’s spiritual testament composed in an age of appalling civil and religious warfare, and seventeenth-century readers responded warmly to its modest but steadfast defense of tolerance, moderation and charity. That Osler chose to be buried in his Library surrounded by the exceptional collection of works by and about Browne which he assembled speaks to his fidelity to those values. They are perennial, but their importance is unusually poignant today.

W.W. Francis: His Role in Keeping Osler's Memory Alive

Susan Kelen, PhD, C.Psych

SUSAN IS A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST LIVING IN OTTAWA. SHE IS THE GRANDDAUGHTER OF W.W. FRANCIS.



W.W. Francis was the Osler Librarian for thirty years, from 1929 until his death in 1959. Dr. Francis was credited with keeping Sir William Osler's memory and his spirit alive with his stories of Osler both as a person and as a physician.

numbers from *The Bibliotheca Osleriana* in the index. *The Patter* describes the history of the library, and sometimes how and where Dr. Osler acquired the book and the excitement in the Oxford household when a book finally arrived.^{iv}

Before Dr. Francis' appointment as Librarian, he spent 7 years cataloguing and annotating the books in the collection that Osler bequeathed to McGill. The cataloguing and annotating provided Dr. Francis with an even deeper intimacy with the collection than he might have had from his close relationship with Osler. It also made him uniquely prepared for his role of keeping Osler's spirit alive.

As Osler librarian, Dr. Francis used his knowledge and humour to engage students and scholars. His speeches and writings are filled with anecdotes about Dr. Osler and the history of medicine.

Dr. Francis was called "Keeper of the Shrine"- a reference not only to the respect and adoration bestowed upon Osler, but also to the chapel-like Osler Library. Osler was described as a Christ-like figure with a sense of humour. As a physician, Osler lived by the Hippocratic ideal combined with his love of fellow man. "Few saints have performed better miracles of faith healing than (Osler) with his favourite mixture of hope and *nux vomica* (a calming extract)."ⁱ

When students and scholars came to the library to do research or to pay tribute to Dr. Osler, Dr. Francis would play genial host. Francis delighted in giving "tours" of the library bringing out artifacts and books he thought would interest the visitor. He would take an ancient volume into his hand and turning the pages would give its history of how it was acquired by Dr. Osler and interpret the historical importance of the book with insight and wit. Dr. Francis shaped the content of his talk to the audience. A fellow librarian said that, "No doctor ever had a better book-side manner."ⁱⁱ

Dr. Francis was encouraged to write down his informal talks in a document which he referred to as *Showman's Patter*, a reference to vaudeville acts of the 1900's.

Showman's Patter became 300 pages of annotated descriptions of the books in the Osler Library.ⁱⁱⁱ It describes over 1300 books and artifacts in the collection and it includes reference



W.W. Francis at 13 Norham Gardens. Osler Library Photo Collection, 092/9.

Dr. Francis was careful to protect Dr. Osler's reputation. He advocated sealing Dr. Osler's memoir about the founding members of Johns Hopkins Medical School and Osler's writings under the name of Osler's alter ego, E.Y. Davis.^v These writings were written by Osler as tongue-in-cheek. However, they were either critical of colleagues or presented factious and salacious cases sent to test an editor's judgment.

W.W. Francis devoted his professional career to Osler and through his role as Osler Librarian kept the Osler's flame protected and alive so it was not a "memorial library" but a living, working library.^{vi}

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- i. W.W. Francis. "At Osler's Shrine." Presidential Address. *Bulletin of the American Medical Association*. 1937 26, 1-8.
 - ii. Richard Pennington, *W.W. Francis: Tributes from his Friends*. Montreal: McGill Osler Society, 1956, p. 4.

- iii. *Showman's Patter* is available on line through The Osler Library. It is an unpublished typescript which is annotated with pencil corrections made by Dr. Francis. *Showman's Patter* is available online at <https://archive.org/details/McGillLibrary->
- iv. Dr. Francis describes one elephantine volume arriving and Dr Osler immediately suggesting that it be weighed - it weighed 25 3/4 pounds. The book was one volume of an encyclopedia compiled in the 13th century by Vincent of Beauvais. See William Willoughby Francis, *Showman's Patter: A Description of Books in the Osler Library*; Dictated by the Author, 1950-1957" (Montreal: unpublished typescript, n.d.), p. 6.
- v. Wm. Osler. The Inner history of Johns Hopkins Hospital. Edited, annotated and introduced by D.J. Bates and the H. Bensley. *Hopkins Medical Journal*, 1969 V. 125 p 182-192.
- vi. W.B. McDaniel, *W.W. Francis: Tributes from his Friends*, p. 24.

Reflecting On A Visit to Sir William Osler's Library

Lady Cynthia Irvine



In November 2006 my husband Sir Donald Irvine and I were honoured to be invited by Pamela Miller to see the documents in the Osler Library of the History of Medicine.

Sir Donald Irvine CBE MD FRCGP FRCP FMedSci had been invited by McGill University to give the 30th Osler Lecture. I knew that Sir William was, and remained, an icon of medical professionalism in my late husband's practice, lectures and writings.

To be able to handle Osler's notes, and first-hand to view his writings was a day to cherish for my husband. To the end of his life he continued to hold the teachings of Sir William as a very special person in his own life, and indeed I found myself reflecting on an oft-quoted story of Osler as my husband died at home. He was attended by a general practitioner who had in the past been in Sir Donald's own practice and the care we both received during the sad months of my husband's final months, were, indeed as when Osler said in reply to the question - "Why are you sitting with that dying patient when you know that there is nothing you can do to help him?" Great Man's response was (I paraphrase) - "it is because there is nothing more I can do for him except be with him."

So now I too, continue to remember Sir William's examples of patient-centred care, and our visit to his library, in a very special place in my heart.



"Palpitation." William Osler treating a patient, probably in Johns Hopkins Hospital. William Osler Photo Collection, CUS_046-008E_P.

Friends of the Osler Library

The library gratefully acknowledges the support it has received from the Friends who responded to our last Annual Appeal for funds for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Just under 126 people contributed approximately \$108,764 to the Annual Appeal.

The 2019-2020 Annual Appeal can be found with this issue of the Osler Library Newsletter.

We heartily thank all our Friends who sustain the Osler Library. To the right is a list of those who have given us permission to print their names.

If you donated and your name does not appear, that is because we haven't received written permission to do so, which is required under Quebec's privacy laws. If you would like to see your name listed in future issues, please let us know by writing to osler.library@mcgill.ca

Thank you all for your generous support!

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Contact:

Osler Library of the History of Medicine
c/o Rare Books and Special Collections
McLennan Library Building, 4th Floor
3459 rue McTavish
Montréal, Québec, Canada H3A 0C9

Tel: (514) 398-4475 ext. 09873

Fax: (514) 398-5747

E-mail: osler.library@mcgill.ca

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