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Sir William Osler  
*An Encyclopedia*

Charles S. Bryan  
*Editor*

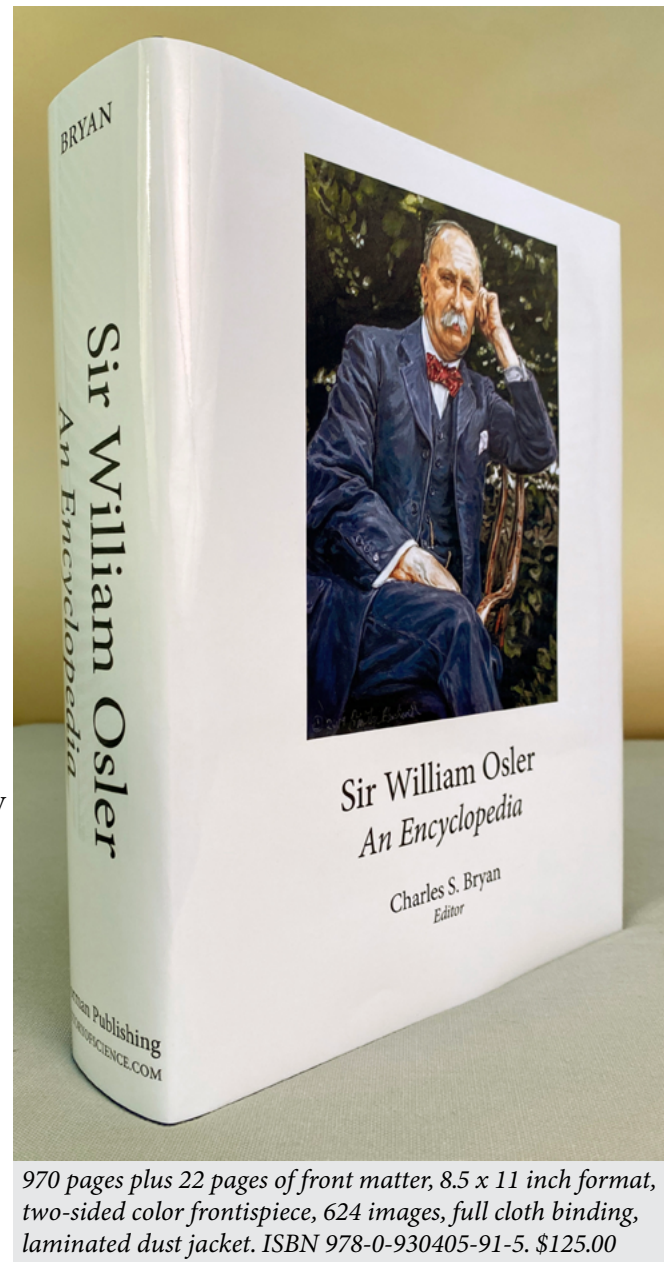
## *Sir William Osler: An Encyclopedia*

Edited by Charles S. Bryan

Sir William Osler (1849–1919) was the most famous and best-loved physician in the English-speaking world during the early twentieth century. Some consider him “the greatest physician of all time” or “the father of modern medicine.” More commonly, he is seen as an avatar of humanism in medicine. The 135 contributors to the present volume address four questions, as follows:

- *What was Osler really like, and what did he do?* Assembled for the first time in one place are reminiscences and tributes by more than 200 of Osler’s contemporaries. His top character strengths, assessed with criteria developed by the Values in Action Classification Project, were kindness, vitality, and love of fellow humans. He used these to energize the medical profession and implement major changes in medical education.
- *What did he write, and who influenced his thinking?* Presented here, for the first time in one place, are analyses of all of Osler’s major non-technical writings along with sketches of those who influenced him. His interests changed over time from character-building and the unity of the medical profession to more fundamental problems of human existence, including whether science will ultimately prove a force for good or evil.
- *How has he been assessed during the century since his death in 1919?* Wilburt Davison spoke for many who knew Osler: “We regarded him as perfect.” Serious criticisms of Osler began during the closing decades of the twentieth century and crescendoed in 2018 when two Australian physicians argued it is time to unmask him “for the sake of historical truth, the values of science, and the integrity of medicine itself” Presented here are more than 25 criticisms and potential criticisms of Osler, mostly rendered through the lens of “presentism.” Readers can use this information to decide whether Osler seems “too good to be true,” as has been alleged.
- *Does he still matter, and, if so, how?* Osler became a “despairing optimist” after World War I, in which he lost his son. He closed his last public address, given in May 1919 on “The Old Humanities and the New Science,” with the hope that through the Hippocratic combination of *philanthropia* (love of humanity) and *philotechnia* (love of science and technology), humankind might somehow find the wisdom (*philosophia*) to survive and flourish. Those words became his valedictory, as he died later that year from complications of pneumonia.

Osler was voted “the most influential physician in history” in a 2016 survey of North American doctors, but his interests and influence transcend medicine. This volume offers the first comprehensive reference to Osler’s personality, character, life, times, and thinking about a broad range of issues relevant to the human condition.

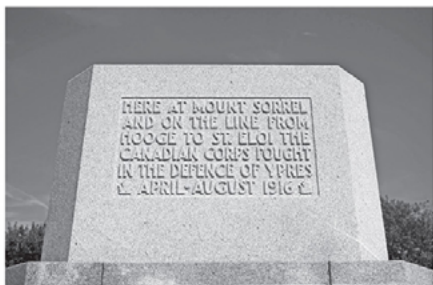


970 pages plus 22 pages of front matter, 8.5 x 11 inch format, two-sided color frontispiece, 624 images, full cloth binding, laminated dust jacket. ISBN 978-0-930405-91-5. \$125.00



Osler, Grace Linzee Revere (Gross) (Lady Osler) (1854–1928)

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Sanctuary Wood, Hill 62, site of the Battle of Mount Sorrel (June 2–13, 1916)—trench system and Canadian War Memorial

Oto/Alamy Stock Photo (above); Walkabout Images/Alamy Stock Photo

The upper photograph shows a restored trench system at the Sanctuary Wood Museum, Hill 62, used by British and Canadian troops during the Battle of Mount Sorrel. The lower photograph shows the Canadian War Memorial. Hill 62, known as Tor Top, and adjacent Hill 61, constituted the only portion of the crest of the Ypres ridge that remained in Allied hands at the commencement of the battle. The battle pitted three divisions of the German 4th Army against three divisions of the British 2nd Army, augmented by the 3rd Canadian Division. After extensive preparation the German XIII (Royal Württemberg) Corps and 117th Infantry Division captured the hills. The Canadians led a fierce counterattack and the Germans ultimately fell back to their original lines. Ralph Osler, Sir William Osler's nephew, was among the Canadian dead. The Royal Regiment of Canada stages a Sorrel Day parade every year on the second Sunday in June.

granddaughter of “E.B.” Osler, was in London in 1933 when she got word that Frank was dying. She called on “Aunt Belle,” who led her to a nursing home. Wilkinson ends *Lions in the Way: A Discursive History of the Oslers* (1956) as follows:

He [Frank] lay in a big brass bed. First he looked like William, then like Edmund. His head belonged to an elder statesman, a bishop, a retired general. I looked everywhere for Frank. I found, instead, Ellen's six sons gathered together in this last survivor. Time had already diminished the gap between the strong and the weak and death was about to close it.

JAMES R. WRIGHT, JR., and CHARLES S. BRYAN

Bliss, *Life*, 26, 31, 37, 161–2, 396–7, 416, 426–7, 431, 457, 480, 487. Cushing, *Life*, ii: 14, 24, 80; iii: 532–3, 627. Gregory (2015). Wilkinson, *Lions*

in the Way, 88, 99, 110, 119–29, 131, 135, 151, 154, 157, 163, 172–3, 179, 188, 219, 237, 244, 254.

See also Families of William Osler.



Grace Revere Osler

Osler Library of the History of Medicine, McGill University

This photograph was taken in Oxford in 1894, at which time Grace and William Osler had been married two years. The Oslers were then living in Baltimore, but had gone to Oxford to attend a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

### Osler, Grace Linzee Revere (Gross) (Lady Osler) (1854–1928)

Grace Revere Gross proved a near-ideal wife for William Osler, just as Ellen Pickton had been for his father, Featherstone Lake Osler. She supported but did not interfere with his career; she created a home environment in which he could entertain as many guests as he wished; she seldom aired misgivings about his bibliomania; she was witty and charming; and, after he died, she nourished his posthumous reputation including the choice of Harvey Cushing as his biographer. By all existing accounts their marriage was a happy one, as had been the marriage of Osler's parents.

Grace Linzee Revere (Gross) Osler was born June 19, 1854, at 103 Boylston Street, Boston. Her parents were John Revere (1822–1886) and Susan Tilden (Torrey) Revere (1826–1911), and she was the great-granddaughter of Paul Revere (1735–1818), famed silversmith and Patriot of the American Revolution (American War of Independence). She married twice. Her first husband was surgeon Samuel W. Gross of Philadelphia. They were married 13 years (1876–1889) until his death. Her second marriage of 27 years' duration (1892–1919) was to William Osler.

Grace Revere was educated in private schools in Boston. One was Miss Foote's School. Miss Foote had trained with Victorian novelist Elizabeth Sewell (1815–1906) at Sewell's school on the Isle of Wight. Sewell established the school because she saw a need to offer a substantial and challenging curriculum for young women, which did not exist at the time. Sewell's was the first such school in England. Miss



Clockwise from upper left: William Osler as a medical student at McGill, circa 1870–1872; Osler performing an autopsy at “Old Blockley” (Blockley Almshouse, later Philadelphia General Hospital), circa 1886–1889; Osler as professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, circa 1887; Osler with the first resident staff (house staff) of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, 1889–1890; Osler writing *The Principles and Practice of Medicine*, July 1891; William and Grace Revere Osler in 1894; Osler with his son Edward Revere in the nursery, 1 West Franklin Street, Baltimore, circa 1897–1898; Grace, William, and Revere Osler, newly arrived in Oxford, 1907; Revere Osler in uniform, circa 1916–1917; Revere Osler’s marker in Flanders after he was killed by an artillery shell in August 1917; William Osler at his desk at 13 Norham Gardens, Oxford, circa 1918. Center: Sir William Osler’s coat of arms after he was made a baronet in 1911. Photographs courtesy of the Osler Library of the History of Medicine, McGill University, and the Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives of the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions.





Charles S. Bryan is Heyward Gibbes Distinguished Professor of Internal Medicine Emeritus at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, where he served as chair of the Department of Medicine and director of the Center for Bioethics and Medical Humanities. A graduate of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, he is a Master of the American College of Physicians, a fellow of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of Edinburgh and London, and the recipient of awards including the Order of the Palmetto, South Carolina's highest honor for non-military service. His writings mainly concern infectious diseases, medical history, and medical biography.

## Advance Praise for *Sir William Osler: An Encyclopedia*

... a tour de force that reflects the editor's passion, persistence, and productivity. William Osler's career and contributions have been kept alive by four generations of physicians and scholars, such as Richard Golden, John McGovern, Earl Nation, and Charles G. Roland. Bryan was already a member of that group, having published more than thirty articles about Osler over the past three decades. His crowning achievement, the *Osler Encyclopedia*, is (and will always be) an indispensable source for insight into Osler's career, colleagues, contemporaries, and context, pertinent primary and secondary sources. William Osler would be surprised (but pleased) that his legacy is being kept alive in such a palpable way.

—W. Bruce Fye, Emeritus Professor of Medicine, Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, Rochester, Minnesota; author of *The Development of American Physiology and American Cardiology*



A comprehensive encyclopedia on the most iconic physician in the history of American medicine. It is both eminently readable and highly insightful. Physicians and scholars will find it engaging, as well as general readers interested in the culture of American medicine. A monumental contribution.

—Kenneth E. Ludmerer, Professor of Medicine, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Missouri; author of *Learning to Heal, Time to Heal, and Let Me Heal*



In an era when medicine is focused on concepts of professionalism and the inclusion of medical humanities in medical education and practice, the writings and approach of Osler and his life in medicine are increasingly relevant. Dr. Bryan and his army of Oslerian scholars have produced a remarkable work of scholarship on the life, work, colleagues and times of Sir William Osler.

—T. Jock Murray, Dean Emeritus, Dalhousie University School of Medicine, Halifax, Nova Scotia; author of *Multiple Sclerosis: The History of a Disease*



Everything you always wanted to know about Sir William Osler has taken a quantum leap forward. Dr. Charles Bryan and 135 contributors have assembled *Sir William Osler: An Encyclopedia* which contains facts, reminiscences, essays, addresses, photos, and other memorabilia about Osler. It provides an unequalled resource for medical history and the humanities. A monumental achievement!

—Marvin J. Stone, Founding Director, Sammons Cancer Center, Baylor University Medical Center, Dallas, Texas; author of *When to Act and When to Refrain*

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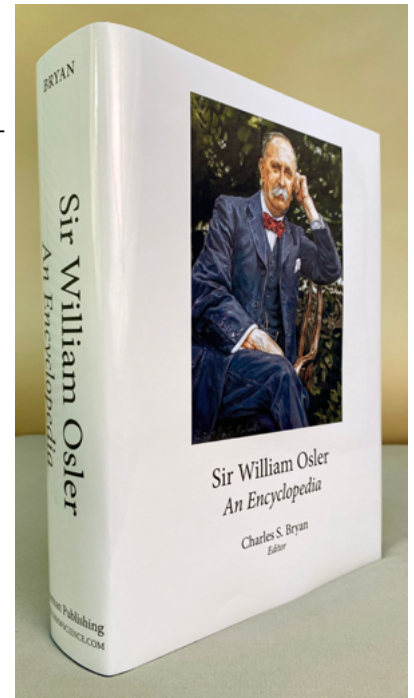
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