

Rook's Textbook of Dermatology



The Editors

From l to r, Tony Burns, Stephen Breathnach, Christopher Griffiths and Neil Cox standing in front of a portrait of Arthur Rook, the father of the *Textbook of Dermatology*.

We dedicate this edition to Neil Cox, who died shortly before the book went to press. Neil was a hugely talented dermatologist whose contribution to the specialty has been outstanding. In addition to a multitude of other publications, he has contributed to and edited two editions of *Rook's Textbook*. Enormously hard-working, his input has been of inestimable value. He will be sorely missed.

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Rook's Textbook of Dermatology

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IN FOUR VOLUMES

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EIGHTH EDITION

 **WILEY-BLACKWELL**
A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication

This edition first published 2010, © 1968, 1972, 1979, 1986, 1992, 1998, 2004, 2010 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd

Blackwell Publishing was acquired by John Wiley & Sons in February 2007. Blackwell's publishing program has been merged with Wiley's global Scientific, Technical and Medical business to form Wiley-Blackwell.

Registered office: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, UK

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ISBN: 978-1-4051-6169-5

Catalogue records for this book are available from the British Library and Library of Congress.

Set in 9.5/12pt Palatino by Toppan Best-set Premedia Limited
Printed and bound in Singapore by Fabulous Printers Pte Ltd

Contents

Contributors, ix

Preface to Eighth Edition, xv

Preface to First Edition, xvi

VOLUME 1

- 1** Introduction and Historical Bibliography, 1.1
D.A. Burns & N.H. Cox
- 2** Comparative Dermatology, 2.1
D.A. Burns, N.H. Cox & P.B. Hill
- 3** Anatomy and Organization of Human Skin, 3.1
J.A. McGrath & J. Uitto
- 4** Functions of the Skin, 4.1
C.B. Archer
- 5** Diagnosis of Skin Disease, 5.1
N.H. Cox & I.H. Coulson
- 6** Epidemiology of Skin Disease, 6.1
H.C. Williams
- 7** Evidence-Based Dermatology, 7.1
M. Bigby & H.C. Williams
- 8** Skin and Skin Disease Throughout Life, 8.1
G.W.M. Millington & R.A.C. Graham-Brown
- 9** Racial Influences on Skin Disease, 9.1
L.C. Fuller & E.M. Higgins
- 10** Histopathology of the Skin: General Principles, 10.1
E. Calonje
- 11** Molecular Biology, 11.1
E.A. O'Toole
- 12** Inflammation, 12.1
M. Steinhoff, R.W. Groves, P.E. LeBoit & T.A. Luger

- 13** Clinical Immunology, Allergy and Photoimmunology, 13.1
G.P. Spickett & T. Schwarz
- 14** Wound Healing, 14.1
E.A. O'Toole & J.E. Mellerio
- 15** Genetics and Genodermatoses, 15.1
A.D. Irvine and J.E. Mellerio
- 16** Prenatal Diagnosis of Genetic Skin Disease, 16.1
J.A. McGrath
- 17** The Neonate, 17.1
D.G. Paige, A.R. Gennery & A.J. Cant
- 18** Naevi and other Developmental Defects, 18.1
C. Moss & H. Shahidullah
- 19** Disorders of Keratinization, 19.1
M.R. Judge, W.H.I. McLean & C.S. Munro
- 20** Psoriasis, 20.1
C.E.M. Griffiths & J.N.W.N. Barker
- 21** Pruritus, 21.1
M.W. Greaves
- 22** Urticaria and Mastocytosis, 22.1
C.E.H. Grattan & A. Kobza Black
- 23** Eczema, Lichenification, Prurigo and Erythroderma, 23.1
J. Berth-Jones
- 24** Atopic Dermatitis, 24.1
P.S. Friedmann, M.R. Ardern-Jones & C.A. Holden

VOLUME 2

- 25** Contact Dermatitis: Irritant, 25.1
S.M. Wilkinson & M.H. Beck
- 26** Contact Dermatitis: Allergic, 26.1
M.H. Beck & S.M. Wilkinson

- 27** Occupational Dermatoses, 27.1
J.S.C. English
- 28** Mechanical and Thermal Injury, 28.1
C.T.C. Kennedy, D.A.R. Burd & D. Creamer
- 29** Cutaneous Photobiology, 29.1
J.L.M. Hawk, A.R. Young & J. Ferguson
- 30** Bacterial Infections, 30.1
R.J. Hay & B.M. Adriaans
- 31** Mycobacterial Infections, 31.1
V.M. Yates
- 32** Leprosy, 32.1
D.N.J. Lockwood
- 33** Virus Infections, 33.1
J.C. Sterling
- 34** Syphilis and Bacterial Sexually Transmitted Infections, 34.1
G.R. Kinghorn
- 35** HIV and the Skin, 35.1
C.B. Bunker & F. Gotch
- 36** Mycology, 36.1
R.J. Hay & H.R. Ashbee
- 37** Parasitic Worms and Protozoa, 37.1
F. Vega-López & R.J. Hay
- 38** Diseases Caused by Arthropods and Other Noxious Animals, 38.1
D.A. Burns
- 39** Genetic Blistering Diseases, 39.1
J.-D. Fine & S.M. Burge
- 40** Immunobullous Diseases, 40.1
F. Wojnarowska & V.A. Venning
- 41** Lichen Planus and Lichenoid Disorders, 41.1
S.M. Breathnach
- 42** Disorders of the Sebaceous Glands, 42.1
A.M. Layton
- 43** Rosacea, Perioral Dermatitis and Similar Dermatoses, Flushing and Flushing Syndromes, 43.1
J. Berth-Jones
- 44** Disorders of Sweat Glands, 44.1
I.H. Coulson
- 46** Subcutaneous Fat, 46.1
D.H. McGibbon
- 47** Diseases of the Veins and Arteries: Leg Ulcers, 47.1
P.S. Mortimer, K.G. Burnand & H.A.M. Neumann
- 48** Disorders of Lymphatic Vessels, 48.1
P.S. Mortimer
- 49** Purpura and Microvascular Occlusion, 49.1
N.H. Cox & W.W. Piette
- 50** Vasculitis, Neutrophilic Dermatoses and Related Disorders, 50.1
N.H. Cox, J.L. Jorizzo, J.F. Bourke & C.O.S. Savage
- 51** The 'Connective Tissue Diseases', 51.1
M.J.D. Goodfield, S.K. Jones & D.J. Veale
- 52** Non-Melanoma Skin Cancer and Other Epidermal Skin Tumours, 52.1
A.G. Quinn & W. Perkins
- 53** Tumours of the Skin Appendages, 53.1
E. Calonje
- 54** Lentigos, Melanocytic Naevi and Melanoma, 54.1
J.A. Newton Bishop
- 55** Histiocytoses, 55.1
A.C. Chu
- 56** Soft-Tissue Tumours and Tumour-like Conditions, 56.1
E. Calonje
- 57** Cutaneous Lymphomas and Lymphocytic Infiltrates, 57.1
S.J. Whittaker
- 58** Disorders of Skin Colour, 58.1
A.V. Anstey
- 59** Metabolic and Nutritional Disorders, 59.1
R.P.E. Sarkany, S.M. Breathnach, A.A.M. Morris, K. Weismann & P.D. Flynn
- 60** Necrobiotic Disorders, 60.1
D.A. Burns
- 61** Sarcoidosis, 61.1
D.J. Gawkrödger
- 62** Systemic Disease and the Skin, 62.1
N.H. Cox & I.H. Coulson

VOLUME 3

- 45** Disorders of Connective Tissue, 45.1
N.P. Burrows & C.R. Lovell

VOLUME 4

- 63** The Skin and the Nervous System, 63.1
C.B. Archer & D.J. Eedy

- 64** Psychocutaneous Disorders, 64.1
L.G. Millard & J. Millard
- 65** Disorders of Nails, 65.1
D.A.R. de Berker & R. Baran
- 66** Disorders of Hair, 66.1
A.G. Messenger, D.A.R. de Berker & R.D. Sinclair
- 67** The Skin and the Eyes, 67.1
J.N. Leonard & J.K.G. Dart
- 68** The External Ear, 68.1
C.T.C. Kennedy
- 69** The Oral Cavity and Lips, 69.1
C. Scully & A. Hegarty
- 70** The Breast, 70.1
D.A. Burns
- 71** The Genital, Perianal and Umbilical Regions, 71.1
C.B. Bunker & S.M. Neill
- 72** General Aspects of Treatment, 72.1
A.Y. Finlay and C.H. Smith
- 73** Topical Therapy, 73.1
J. Berth-Jones
- 74** Systemic Therapy, 74.1
S.M. Breathnach, C.H. Smith, R.J.G. Chalmers & R.J. Hay
- 75** Drug Reactions, 75.1
S.M. Breathnach
- 76** Erythema Multiforme, Stevens–Johnson Syndrome and Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis, 76.1
S.M. Breathnach
- 77** Dermatological Surgery, 77.1
C.M. Lawrence & N.R. Telfer
- 78** Lasers and Flashlamps in the Treatment of Skin Disorders, 78.1
R.J. Barlow
- 79** Radiotherapy and Reactions to Ionizing Radiation, 79.1
C.G. Kelly & I. Peat
- 80** Minimally Invasive Treatments and Procedures for Ageing Skin, 80.1
N.J. Lowe
- Index
- The index to all four volumes can be found at the end of Volume 4

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Preface to the Eighth Edition

Just over forty years ago, the first edition of *Textbook of Dermatology* was published under the leadership of Arthur Rook, Darrell Wilkinson and John Ebling. Now designated *Rook's Textbook of Dermatology*, but known to many dermatologists as 'The Rook book', or simply 'Rook', it is in its eighth edition.

The editorial team that supervised compilation of the seventh edition has also been involved in preparation of the current edition. As always, we would like to express our gratitude to previous editors and contributors whose efforts have provided the framework upon which this book has expanded and continued to evolve over the years. We are also indebted to contributors to earlier editions who have generously allowed some of their material to be retained for the present edition, and to those colleagues who have donated colour photographs. The origin of these is given in the legend to each figure, and where no acknowledgement is given the figures have been provided by the authors of that chapter.

Our aim is to continue to provide an updated reference guide to dermatological diseases, and to encourage understanding of scientific aspects of dermatology, although the book is not intended to provide extensive details of research in the basic sciences. Nowadays there is electronic access to vast amounts of information,

but we believe that a reference textbook, which can be readily accessed in the clinic or consulting room, or perused at leisure in an armchair, continues to be a valuable resource.

For this edition, every chapter has been updated, and several have been extensively modified and expanded, including the chapters on comparative dermatology and radiotherapy and reactions to ionizing radiation. There is also a separate chapter on the sexually transmitted diseases. Changes to chapters dealing with lasers and dermatological surgery reflect developments in recent years, and a new chapter describing skin rejuvenation procedures is indicative of the interest in this aspect of dermatology.

We thank our long-suffering wives and families for their tolerance and support over many years.

We should also like to thank the production team of Wiley-Blackwell for their efforts throughout the preparation of this edition, in particular Julie Elliott, Martin Sugden, Anne Bassett, the indexer Caroline Sheard, and the copy editor and proof reader.

D.A. Burns
S.M. Breathnach
N.H. Cox
C.E.M. Griffiths

Preface to the First Edition

No comprehensive reference book on dermatology has been published in the English language for ten years and none in England for over a quarter of a century. The recent literature of dermatology is rich in shorter texts and in specialist monographs but the English-speaking dermatologist has long felt the need for a substantial text for regular reference and as a guide to the immense monographic and periodical literature. The editors have therefore planned the present volume primarily for the dermatologist in practice or in training, but have also considered the requirements of the specialist in other fields of medicine and of the many research workers interested in the skin in relation to toxicology or cosmetic science.

An attempt has been made throughout the book to integrate our growing knowledge of the biology of skin and of fundamental pathological processes with practical clinical problems. Often the gap is still very wide but the trends of basic research at least indicate how it may eventually be bridged. In a clinical textbook the space devoted to the basic sciences must necessarily be restricted but a special effort has been made to ensure that the short accounts which open many chapters are easily understood by the physician whose interests and experience are exclusively clinical.

For the benefit of the student we have encouraged our contributors to make each chapter readable as an independent entity, and have accepted that this must involve the repetition of some material.

The classification employed is conventional and pragmatic. Until our knowledge of the mechanisms of disease is more profound no truly scientific classification is possible. In so many clinical syndromes multiple aetiological factors are implicated. To emphasize one at the expense of others is often misleading. Most diseases are to some extent influenced by genetic factors and a large proportion of common skin reactions are modified by the emotional state of the patient. Our knowledge is in no way advanced by classifying hundreds of diseases as genodermatoses and dozens as psychosomatic.

The true prevalence of a disease may throw light on its aetiology but reported incidence figures are often unreliable and incorrectly interpreted. The scientific approach to the evaluation of racial and environmental factors has therefore been considered in some detail.

The effectiveness of any physician in practice must ultimately depend on his ability to make an accurate clinical diagnosis. Clinical descriptions are detailed and differential diagnosis is fully discussed. Histopathology is here considered mainly as an aid to diagnosis but references to fuller accounts are provided.

The approach to treatment is critical but practical. Many empirical measures are of proven value and should not be abandoned merely because their efficacy cannot yet be scientifically explained. However, many familiar remedies old and new have been omitted either because properly controlled clinical trials have shown them to be of no value or because they have been supplanted by more effective and safer preparations.

There are over nine hundred photographs but no attempt has been made to provide an illustration of every disease. To have done so would have increased the bulk and price of the book without increasing proportionately its practical value. The conditions selected for illustrations are those in which a photograph significantly enhances the verbal description. There are a few conditions we wished to illustrate, but of which we could not obtain unpublished photographs of satisfactory quality.

The lists of references have been selected to provide a guide to the literature. Important articles now of largely historical interest have usually been omitted, except where a knowledge of the history of a disease simplifies the understanding of present concepts and terminology. Books and articles provided with a substantial bibliography are marked with an asterisk.

Many of the chapters have been read and criticized by several members of the team and by other colleagues. Professor Wilson Jones, Dr R.S. Wells and Dr W.E. Parish have given valuable assistance with histopathological, genetic and immunological problems respectively. Many advisers, whose services are acknowledged in the following pages, have helped us with individual chapters. Any errors which have not been eliminated are, however, the responsibility of the editors and authors.

The editors hope that this book will prove of value to all those who are interested in the skin either as physicians or as research workers. They will welcome readers' criticisms and suggestions which may help them to make the second edition the book they hope to produce.