

CHIROPRACTIC CAME TO OREGON IN 1903

Never was there any healing device or theory causing more speculation or controversy than this art they decided to call Chiropractic.

I think all reasoning, clear thinking individuals are willing to accept the theory that Chiropractic was not discovered in this country, It was developed here, yes, and made practical first of all by D.D. Palmer and his son B. J. D. D., a fish merchant became acquainted with an old Netherlands emigrant who told him his people, after a hard day's work in the fields would place themselves face down on the ground and walk up and down each other's backs, deriving great relaxation, and sometimes getting rid of old ailments this way. They said it was like magic, and called it "Napravit".

Old D. D. was a clever man and also an opportunist. He decided to test this out. It worked. He got results. He started a school and for all that he was not an educated man, his son B. J. was, and became a wonderful teacher. This school, in Davenport, Iowa, was soon going strong, and from it sprang several small schools here and there. Among them, the Brainard School of Minnesota, was started by a well-to-do engineer, a brother-in-law of Dr. Eva Marsh. He invited her and her husband to join his first class, which they did, and upon returning to Portland they started the Pacific Chiropractic College, located at S.E. Fifth and Hall in the Fall of 1903.

In 1904, Dr. Powell and I had just returned from New York. While walking out one evening, we saw the sign and decided to investigate. Dr. Powell was invited to have a treatment. This he did with very unusual results. He said to me "This is the real thing, far above the New York Institute of Science, Suggestive Therapeutics, or Bernar McFadden's Physical Culture, or what we have so far of Osteopathy. We decided to invest in this.

Dr. Powell very soon mastered the philosophy, technique, and graduated and opened offices in McMinnville. Cures were many, some remarkable, and soon called the attention of the medical profession. They decided to do something about this new method, and the next session of the Legislature introduced a bill naming all healing arts the "practice of medicine."

Through friends, Dr. Powell was told about this. He called Dr. J. E. Marsh. They called upon some influential friends, members of the Legislature. Dr. Wright, a dentist, said, "Boys, tell us what you want, and we will see what we can do." Dr. Powell drafted an exemption clause for Chiropractic to the Medical bill. They had a big fight, but won, and Chiropractors practiced under this protection until 1914.

An active Chiropractic State Association had been in operation for several years, composed of many earnest men and women. In July, 1908, a group of these decided to pool their funds and invite Dr. B. J. Palmer and his wife Mabel to come to Portland and put on a ten day course of advanced theory and practice of Chiropractic. B. J. accepted, and armed with slides and illustrations, assisted by his wife, gave us a fine course. He was a wonderful instructor and held nothing back. We all surely fell for these two fine young people. We practiced on each other and others who came in. It was a very profitable ten days. On the 24th of July we had a group picture taken by Davis of Portland. I still have ours, clear and good, with the names on the back of the picture. There were fifteen of us, and B. J. and Mabel.

Now, our bringing out B. J. and Mabel instead of D. D., the discoverer and developer, made old D. D. very unhappy. He decided to come to Portland and put on a class of his own. He came, and together with Dr. LaValley, started the Peerless College. A nice group of students was attracted, among them some who had attended our summer class. Unfortunately, D. D. was not a teacher. He bored them by repeating; also his son's success still rankled. One day he openly attacked him in class and made some unfortunate remark about his first wife, B. J.'s mother, then dead. This brought on the climax. The class walked out. He soon discovered he had killed his chance and left Portland, leaving Dr. LaValley holding the sack.

The class stuck together and contacted R. Powell, still practising in McMinnville. They invited him to come down and be president of the college which they had named the Pacific College of Chiropractic. After much deliberation, Dr. Powell decided to do this, and took over in September, 1909. They had a nice class, some good instructors, and were located in the Commonwealth Building on Sixth Street in Portland.

In the meantime, The Peerless College hung on and graduated a class of seven in 1912. Among them were three very fine young people. Dr. W. G. and Hazel Hoffman and Br. Wiehofer (Massey), a Dr. Brown, and three others. (Dr. Brown is living on the Coast, Dr. W. G. passed on seven years ago, Dr. Hazel is still here, but nearly blind.) Peerless College was about to close after graduating this one class. It seemed too bad for these young people to lose their Alma Mater. LaValley broached the subject of a merger to Dr. Powell. He, while sympathetic with the graduates of the Peerless, was reluctant. Dr. LaValley brought pressure to bear through the State Association, and the Peerless and the Pacific College were united. Dr. LaValley became a member of the faculty. Dr. Powell remained as president.

The leading earnest Chiropractors in the State had for some time seen the need of a State Board of Examiners for Chiropractic, and in the Fall of 1914, the Governor appointed a board of three members recommended by the State Association. They were Dr. ~~Dr.~~ George Hoye of Portland, president, Dr. Alonzo B. Calder, Oregon City, secretary, Dr. Helen Bock of Portland, treasurer. On August 28 and 29th, 1915, all eligible Chiropractors in Oregon and a Dr. Slater of Hawaii, came in to Portland to take the State Board examination.

It had become quite apparent to all connected with the college that Dr. Powell's health was failing. He had directed the Clinic since 1909, and carried a load as instructor. The only one who refused to see it was Dr. Powell. We decided something had to be done, and in 1917, after graduation, he was talked into taking a summer vacation. He visited an old friend, a rancher in the Big Horn Mountains of Wyoming. This complete rest in the high altitude proved very good for him. He came home in the Fall much better though still very nervous. We persuaded him to go back in the early spring, and in June, the day school closed, his family joined him. The plan was to return to Portland in the fall in time for the opening of school, but Fate or the great Destiny had other plans for us. The terrible influenza epidemic was raging by then, the people of the Big Horn Basin had no doctors nearer than 60 miles. They were in a panic. Dr. Powell and I stepped in and helped them, working all the fall and winter and into the spring, and praise God, we never lost a case. Small wonder that when we were ready to move on a delegation called on us offering us anything to stay on.

In the meantime, Dr. Elliott had made hay while the sun shone. He had gained control of the college, and had brought in a medical doctor named Dr. Powell to meet strangers who came in to see Dr. W. O. Powell. We were relieved when we heard that Dr. Albert Budden, a decent, honorable man, had got control of the institution.

Dr. Powell at last regained his health and came back to his old home in McMinnville. He was persuaded to run for county judge and was elected. He lived a happy and contented life among friends.

On Thanksgiving morning, 1949, he passed away at the age of 81. He is buried in the family lot at Brookside Cemetery at Dayton, Oregon.

Somehow when the book is opened, and we each of us answer for our deeds in this life, I am not the least bit worried about the record of dear old W. O.

Sincerely, and with best wishes,

Anna Powell et. P.