

*What is Osteopathy and the Beginnings of
Animal Osteopathy*



*Reading comprehension and vocabulary exercises
for students of animal osteopathy.*

*An excerpt from "Osteopathy and the Treatment of Horses" by Anthony Pusey, Julia Brooks,
and Annabel Jenks. A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication - Wiley-Blackwell; First edition 2010.*

Osteopathy

Pre-reading

Warm-Up Questions

1. What is Osteopathy?
2. Where did you first hear about osteopathy?
3. What studies do osteopaths need to have?
4. Where did osteopathy develop?

A. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

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|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| ___ 1. rubbing | a) one who professes to heal the diseases of cows |
| ___ 2. unpleasant | b) not inclined to do something |
| ___ 3. cow-leeches | c) prosper |
| ___ 4. shoeing | d) range or expanse of something, as a rumour, illness etc. |
| ___ 5. merging | e) along or at the side of something |
| ___ 6. fulfill | f) non comfortable |
| ___ 7. spread | g) to put friction on, as in polishing or massaging |
| ___ 8. alongside | h) covering the foot, or hoof of an animal with a plate |
| ___ 9. reluctantly | i) to combine into a single body |
| ___ 10. flourish | j) to satisfy requirements, needs, obligations, etc. |

Reading

1. Over 2500 years ago, Hippocrates advised that “*a physician must be experienced in many things, but especially in rubbing*”. Osteopathy as a medical philosophy was developed in the 1880s by Andrew Taylor Still, a doctor from Virginia, in the American mid-west. Dr Still became disillusioned with the medicine practised at that time, which included bleeding, purgatives and other equally unpleasant forms of treatment. Instead, his anatomical studies led him to conceive a system of medicine that placed the main emphasis on the structural integrity of the body as an essential condition to the well being of the organism. In other words, if the structure is fine, then the body can function normally. Over the years, several definitions have been proposed for osteopathy but Dr Still’s original concept has largely been preserved.



Andrew Taylor Still (1828 – 1917), father of osteopathy (right) with author Mark Twain.

2. If human medicine was basic in the time of Dr Still, then the care of animals was also less than satisfactory. In the early years, the treatment of horses was the responsibility of farriers regulated in England by the Worshipful Company of Farriers established in 1674. However, they competed with cow-leeches and horse doctors in applying uncomfortable and invasive treatments such as oiling, firing, and prescribing toxic substances, like antimony and sulphur. In 1844, the Royal Charter for the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons recognised that horses should be treated by veterinary surgeons. Over the following decades, farriers reverted to specialising in the craft of shoeing horses, and those trained at the new veterinary colleges undertook the treatment of animals. In the 20th century, all professions moved towards the regulation of training and practice. For osteopaths in America, this meant merging with the medical profession in the 1960s. In England, osteopaths preserved their identity as an independent profession and the Osteopaths Act of 1993 restricted the title of Osteopath to those who had fulfilled the necessary training required by the General Osteopathic Council. Similarly, the Veterinary Surgeons Act of 1966 made it illegal for anyone other than a veterinary surgeon to treat an animal. An exception to this was physical therapists. This category included physiotherapists, chiropractors and osteopaths. This recognised the contribution of physical treatments made by these disciplines.

3. Recognition of osteopathy as a healing system spread and it soon became clear that treatment so successful in humans could be applied with equal success to the treatment of animals. Many of those considered as pioneers in the field were osteopaths practising in the first half of the 20th century. Some began after a request from a patient to look at a family pet; others in response to the suffering of their own animals. Osteopaths in rural areas were required by farmers concerned about their various animals. One of the pioneers in the field, working alongside vets, was Arthur Smith (photo: in white) Arthur qualified in 1951 from the British School of Osteopathy and set up practice in Leicestershire. One of his patients was a vet who, having felt the benefit of osteopathic treatment for himself, asked whether the principles could be applied to horses. Initially, reluctantly, he took time out to study horse anatomy at a local museum and decided that it might be possible. After successes with the first few cases, veterinary surgeons referred hundreds of horses to him over subsequent years.



