

A. Earl Homewood, DC, Chiropractic Educator

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Introduction

A. Earl Homewood, one of Canada's foremost chiropractic educators, has influenced chiropractic literacy for the past 43 years, primarily throughout North America, by his forceful presence and his expressive writing.

This article traces Dr. Homewood's background and early training in order to give the reader some insight into the circumstances that shaped his character and destiny. Then it provides a chronological outline of his professional career to date, followed by a description of his major accomplishments as an administrator, teacher and author and a summary of the truly challenging legacy this unique humanitarian has left the chiropractic profession.

A. Earl Homewood was born on September 5, 1916 in Toronto, Ontario and was raised, along with a younger sister, Gwyneth (now Gwyneth F. Smith-Pyne, DC), in a modest home on Muir Avenue. Dr. Homewood's father emigrated from Eastbourne, in Sussex, England, to Toronto at the age of 17. He was a member of the Toronto Police Force for 30 years and was subsequently employed by the Sheriff's Department of the Supreme Court of

Ontario for another 18 years. His mother came from Essonville, a small town in Haliburton, located in northern Ontario.

Earl Homewood attended Brock Street Public School and obtained an Honour Grade 13 Graduation Diploma (Senior Matriculation) from Bloor Collegiate in 1937 (Homewood interview May 25, 1988). Earl had planned to study medicine after high school. However, a persistent case of bronchitis, which lasted all one winter, despite the efforts of a competent medical doctor, dramatically altered his career aspirations. At the urging of his parents, he consulted a Toronto chiropractor, Fred Wortz, DC, who obtained dramatic results in just one visit.

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Additional adjustments apparently cured his bronchitis and ignited a flame of enthusiasm for the chiropractic profession that still burns brightly to this day.¹

A year after graduating from high school Earl completed a general course at Shaw's Business College. In 1938 he enrolled in the University of Natural Healing Arts (UNHA) in Denver, Colorado and graduated with a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree in 1941. Interestingly, this University also granted Doctor of Chiropractic and Doctor of Naturopathy degrees, although the curriculum was essentially the same for all 3 courses. During this time Earl was an apprentice at Feldman's Mortuary, where he became a licensed embalmer and attendant at post mortems. In the fall of 1941 Dr. Homewood began post graduate studies at the Western States Chiropractic College (WSCC) in Portland, Oregon and received his degree as a Doctor of Chiropractic the following year.

In June 1942, one month after graduating from WSCC, he enlisted in the Canadian Navy and was stationed at HMCS York, located in what is now the Automotive Building in the Toronto Exhibition Grounds. In July he was transferred to Halifax and served for 3 years in the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve. For a while he was stationed at a hospital called the HMCS Halifax and did secretarial work for 7 consultants in the out patient department. Then he served in the Hospital's physical therapy department, where he held a Masseuse's rating and built the patient load to capacity. Here he rose to the level of a Leading Sick Berth Attendant before going to sea aboard the Corvette HMCS Owen Sound, on which he toured the North Atlantic. In 1945, at the end of the Second World War, Earl was honourably discharged from the Canadian Navy.

In 1948, Dr. Homewood obtained a Bachelor of Therapeutic Arts degree from WSCC. The thesis he wrote for this degree became the basis for his first book, "The Neurodynamics of the Vertebral Subluxation." In 1953, he earned a Doctor of Naturopathy degree from the Philadelphia College of Naturopathy and in 1960 he received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the Blackstone School of Law, Chicago, Illinois. His interest in law resulted in the publication of his second book, "The Chiropractor and the Law" (Homewood, personal communication).

Professional career

Following his discharge from the Navy in 1945, Dr. Homewood returned to Toronto and established his first practice at Lansdowne and Bloor. At this time he became a member of a Property Search Committee which was charged with finding the first home for the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College (CMCC).

CMCC opened its doors on September 18, 1945 and Earl taught chiropractic technique that first semester. In the second semester he added anatomy to his agenda and shortly after that, jurisprudence. During this period Dr. Homewood served under CMCC's first Dean, John S. Clubine, DC, handling a full teaching schedule during the day and embalming cadavers at night. For this he earned the magnificent sum of \$3,000 annual-

ly, plus an additional \$4 for each hour he taught over 20 hours a week.

From September 1952 until August 1961, Dr. Homewood was not only the Business Administrator but also the Dean. At the Annual College Meeting in March 1959, he was elected President of the CMCC Association and Chairman of the Board of Directors and its Board of Management. Now he carried the impossible burden of President, Chairman, Business Administrator and Dean, while maintaining his strenuous teaching duties and finding some time for private practice.

In August 1961, Dr. Homewood resigned from CMCC, exhausted and dispirited over the fight with Metropolitan Toronto and the expropriation and destruction of a major part of the College caused by the construction of the Bloor Street Subway.² At this time he became a resident of St. Petersburg, Florida.

From 1962 to 1964 Dr. Homewood served as Business Administrator of the Lincoln Chiropractic College in Indianapolis, Indiana. He spent two winters there, where he almost doubled the student enrollment and made extensive improvements to the physical facilities: physiology lab, cafeteria, faculty lounge and clinic.

After leaving Lincoln College, Dr. Homewood travelled to the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic (LACC), where he served for a short time as Chairman of the Chiropractic Department and taught technique, principles and jurisprudence. (Homewood, personal communication).

In 1965 he became Dean Designate of a chiropractic college being planned as part of Brandon University in Manitoba. Brandon University wanted to assimilate CMCC and liquidate all its assets in Toronto but Dr. Homewood vociferously objected to this proposal for fear that once this was accomplished, the Brandon facility would be abandoned. Instead, he wanted to keep both Colleges operational. However, the provincial government in Manitoba changed and the President of Brandon University, John E. Robbins, PhD, resigned. This killed CMCC's hopes of affiliation.

In the summer of 1966 Earl returned to Toronto to raise funds for CMCC. Between December 1966 and April 1967, he sold \$250,000 in debentures bearing interest at 7% per annum, to the chiropractic profession across Canada. This money was used to help pay off a \$500,000 mortgage at 12% interest.³

In May 1967, Dr. Homewood was appointed President and Dean of CMCC.⁴ He continued in this capacity until the Annual Board of Governors Meeting in October 1969, when he was abruptly dismissed, without reason, and given two weeks severance pay.

Dr. Homewood was named Assistant Administrative Dean of LACC in 1970; and in 1974, when George Haynes, DC, became their President, Earl became the Administrative Dean. Here he was involved in enlarging enrollment, increasing staff, discontinuing evening classes and expanding the physical plant. Dr. Haynes resigned as President in 1976 and named Dr. Homewood his successor. Earl left LACC in August 1976 because of a disagreement with the College's governing board.

Earl became a Distinguished Professor at WSCC in 1978 and retired to Florida in 1982, where he has lived ever since. (Homewood, personal communication).

During his professional life Dr. Homewood toiled relentlessly to raise the standards of chiropractic education and held a number of responsible positions on the Council on Chiropractic Education (USA) from 1946 to 1975. He has received numerous tributes over the years, including being made a Fellow of the International College of Chiropractors (FICC) in 1953. One of Earl's fondest memories is of receiving an honorary Doctor of Laws degree (LLD) in 1981 at CMCC's commencement exercises. This award was presented by the President of WSCC, Herbert J. Vear, DC, accompanied by the President of CMCC, Donald C. Sutherland, DC. Both these gentlemen were former students of Dr. Homewood. In addition, Earl was celebrating the 40th anniversary of his graduation from UNHA and his sister Gwyneth, her 30th from CMCC.

Accomplishments

Administrator

Dr. Homewood has often said that he was drafted into the service of CMCC much as sailors were pressed into the British Navy. Although he may have felt at times that he lacked the experience for the many jobs thrust upon him, he was never short of energy or initiative. When Earl became Administrative Dean of CMCC in 1952, the College had a bank overdraft of \$22,000. Three years later there was a surplus of \$21,000.⁵ He attained this through his business acumen and his willingness to work 12 to 15 hours a day for substandard wages. He was also instrumental in substantially enlarging CMCC's holdings on Bloor Street by acquiring a number of homes on Prince Arthur Avenue.

Although Dr. Homewood resigned from CMCC in 1961, worn out from the prolonged fight with Metro Toronto over the expropriation of the College's property and the devastation of its buildings, when he returned in 1966 he became the College's most productive fund raiser and its chief witness in the civil action initiated by CMCC against Metro Toronto.

In 1967, as President of CMCC, he became an influential member of the College Planning and Development Committee and helped negotiate a favourable contract with the land developer and entrepreneur, Gerhard Moog, for the new Campus CMCC still occupies on Bayview Avenue. Mr. Moog credits Dr. Homewood with designing the layout for the new College and with persuading him to enlarge the original proposal for the physical facilities from 34,000 to 54,000 square feet. He believes it was Earl who convinced him to persist with this complex project, despite the many obstacles that had to be surmounted, and that Dr. Homewood should be given the lion's share of credit for the success of this venture. Mr. Moog would still like to see CMCC renamed the A. Earl Homewood College of Chiropractic. (Moog, personal communication).

Teacher

The author was fortunate to have this erudite, diligent, sometimes impatient gentleman teach him myology, central neurology, human dissection, chiropractic technique and jurisprudence from 1951 to 1955 at CMCC. His lectures, like his books, were based on the principles enunciated by the founder of chiropractic, Daniel David Palmer, in his book "The Chiropractor's Adjuster," published in 1910. The following quotations from that book provide some sense of what Dr. Homewood was trying to get across to his students. "A chiropractor should be able to care for any condition which may arise in the families under his care, the same as a physician;"⁶ "The determining cause of disease are traumatism, poison and auto suggestion."⁷ "The basic principle of chiropractic is that disease is either too much or not enough functioning; energy supplied in a degree either greater or less than normal."⁸ Dr. Homewood related the intricacies of anatomy to the realities of everyday practice and concentrated on how disrelationships of structure can impinge on the functioning of the nervous system.

Earl's technique courses were based on the teachings of Homer G. Beatty, DC, who was President of UNHA from 1933 to 1951 and Dr. Homewood's mentor.⁹ Here, he emphasized attention to detail and drilled his pupils to develop a controlled, dynamic adjustive thrust, to make it specific yet safe for the patient, while protecting the practitioner from injury. He reiterated that the purpose of adjustive technique was to normalize neural function while the intent of diagnosis was to influence the type of treatment administered. Here, as always, he was guided by the dictums of DD Palmer. "It is unsafe and unwise to teach adjusting, unless it is taught intelligently."¹⁰

Dr. Homewood's courses in jurisprudence were designed to guard the patient's rights as well as the chiropractor's purse. In addition, he wanted to prepare the practitioner for the eventuality of appearing in a court of law as an expert witness, so that, among other things, the chiropractic profession would be ably represented.¹¹

Dr. Homewood's examinations were demanding but fair. When hapless pupils lamely tried to excuse their lack of knowledge Earl would exclaim, "Heiferdust! You pays yer money and you takes yer choice!" He exhorted his students to take full advantage of the education being offered them and felt strongly that education was a continuous, evolutionary process that should be applied to professions as well as to individuals.¹²

Author

Dr. Homewood is a prolific writer. His book, "The Neurodynamics of the Vertebral Subluxation," was first published in 1963 and its third edition reprinted in 1977. It has been updated periodically and contains a neurological explanation of the mechanics by which somatic disrelations (subluxations) can produce visceral dysfunction and pathological tissue changes.¹³ As previously mentioned, this book is based on the principles of DD Palmer and quotes him directly 69 times out of a total of 563 references.¹⁴ "Neurodynamics has been used as a textbook by a

number of chiropractic colleges for 25 years, which testifies to the value of Earl's book.

Dr. Homewood's second book, "The Chiropractor and the Law," was published in 1965, 5 years after he earned his LLB degree from Blackstone School of Law. This book was Earl's innovative response to the inadequacies of the textbooks available for teaching jurisprudence to chiropractic students. It was written both to satisfy the needs of these students and to serve as a source of reference material for the profession, particularly those members who found it necessary to appear in court as expert witnesses.¹⁵ This text is now out of print.

In 1983, Dr. Homewood published a revised edition of "Anatomical Adjustive Technique," which was first written by Homer G. Beatty, DC, in 1939. Dr. Homewood has expanded the original version for purposes of clarification. He has tried to retain the words of Dr. Beatty, while enlarging upon descriptions and directions in order to clarify their meaning and enable the reader to visualize the technique and its application. Earl has also translated the archaic terminology of this volume into standard anatomical language.¹⁶

Dr. Homewood has published three research papers. They are: "A Posturometer Survey,"¹⁷ "Chiropractic of Today,"¹⁸ and "Visceral vs. Musculoskeletal."¹⁹ He has also authored several briefs for presentation to various government bodies.^{20,20a}

Dr. Homewood has made substantial, sustained contributions throughout his long career to a number of professional journals and serves as a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the Archives and Journal of the Association for the History of Chiropractic. As Administrative Dean of CMCC, he regularly published in the Journal of the Canadian Chiropractic Association, from its inception in 1957, until his resignation from the College in 1961.²¹ Articles by Earl show up again between 1967 and 1969, when he returned to CMCC as President.

Without doubt, Dr. Homewood's most fruitful relationship has been with the Digest of Chiropractic Economics. He began a series of articles titled, "Chiropractic Jurisprudence," which commenced with the first issue of the Digest in July/August 1958 and continued in almost every issue, 6 times a year, until November/December 1966.²² Earl still writes for the Digest on a variety of educational subjects. His latest treatise, "The Challenge of the Future," appears in the May/June 1987 issue.²³

Legacy

*"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime.
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."*²⁴

This quotation from, "A Psalm of Life," by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, applies to Dr. Homewood and poses a question. What aspects of Earl Homewood's life will endure? Con-

templating the turbulent, vulnerable, sometimes disappointing, yet productively worthwhile life of Dr. Homewood, I have come to the conclusion that he, like many men of substance, is a complex enigma.

He remains a bachelor but has been a loving father to 8 adopted Vietnamese sons. Once a 130 pound, apparently fragile intellectual, he mastered the martial arts of judo and jujitsu and was an inspiration to those who studied those disciplines under him. (William Doherty, personal communication) Earl's father was a policeman, duty bound to uphold the law. His son raged against the inequities imposed upon his profession by unjust legislation and begged his peers to rectify them.²⁵ A confirmed drugless practitioner, he warned his students that, "It is better to have a patient with drug poisoning than one with rigor mortis."²⁶ He still clings to the seasoned tenants of DD Palmer, Willard Carver and HG Beatty while embracing the modern concepts of vertebral fixation and micro-manipulation.²⁷ He loves the chiropractic profession but can heap scathing criticism upon it when warranted.²⁸ He staunchly defended CMCC's assets while ignoring his own financial well-being.

In the twilight of his career he should be savouring the sweetness of his victories yet tastes instead the bitterness of regret. His greatest disappointments concern the colleges and the profession. He has said that the colleges don't prepare graduates to handle the wide range of conditions seen by medical doctors.²⁹ He is concerned that the profession is concentrating on musculoskeletal problems, while virtually ignoring visceral disease, thereby forcing the public into the hands of allopathic medicine.³⁰ In relation to this, he is convinced that most chiropractors no longer adjust to influence the nervous system, rather they are preoccupied with "stacking bones."³¹ He also feels that the profession has failed to protect and expand its legal rights.³²

Dr. Homewood's character is composed of veracity, tenacity, industry courage and scholarship. These traits, combined with his convictions and his altruism, reveal him to be in touch with humanity. Dr. Homewood has donated many gifts to the profession as an educator but he has gone beyond that. He played a major role in CMCC's move to its new campus, which proved to be the turning point of CMCC's development into a highly regarded, fully accredited college.³³ He has made us aware of and grateful for our roots, contributed to the uniqueness of the Canadian chiropractic profession and been a strong force in uniting the Canadian profession around our College.³⁴

A. Earl Homewood has always lead by example and dared us to do the same. This challenge, to emulate his selfless devotion to chiropractic, is his greatest legacy.

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