

Robert Williamson Lovett.

Publication/Creation

[Place of publication not identified] : [publisher not identified], [1924]

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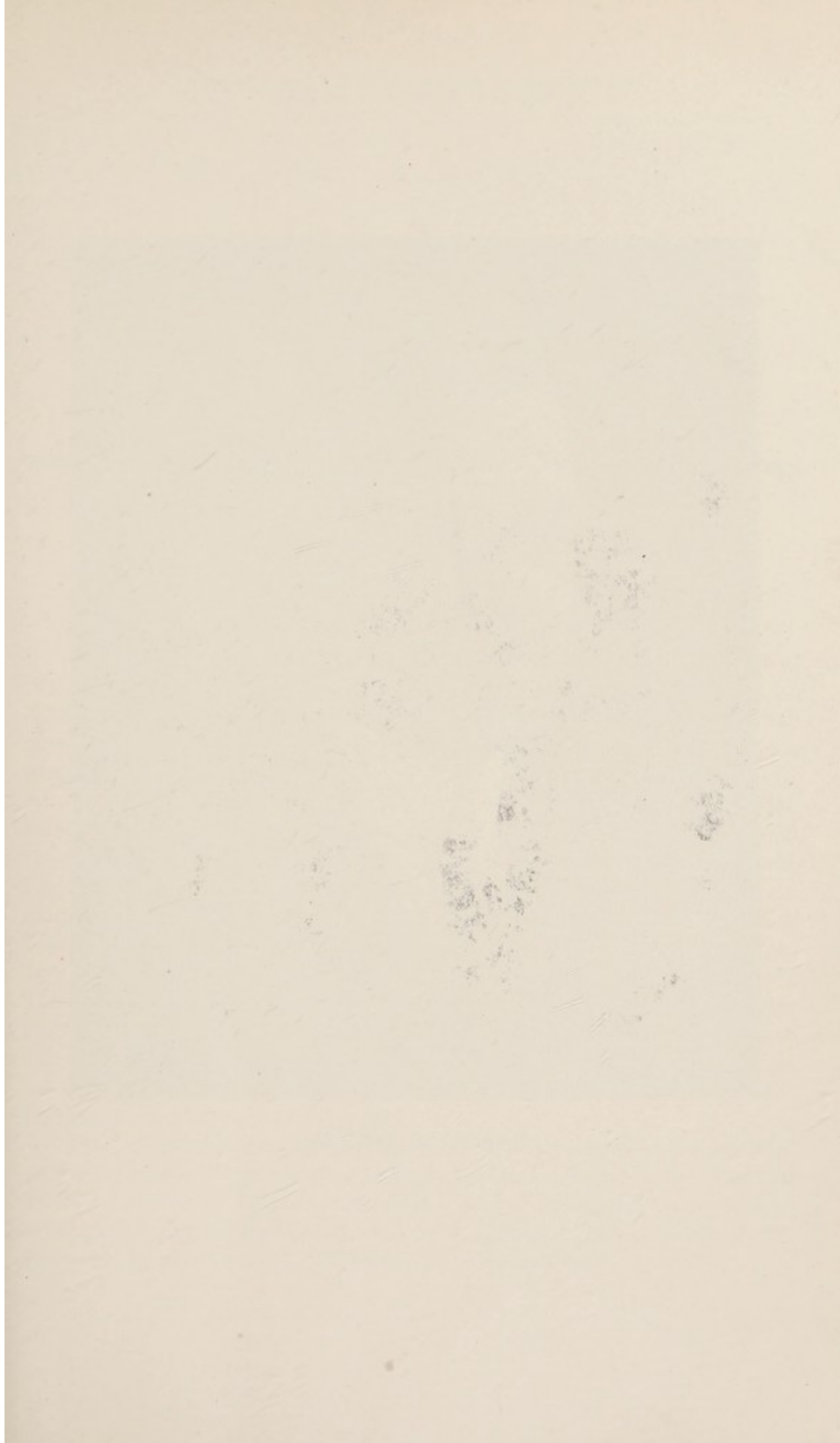
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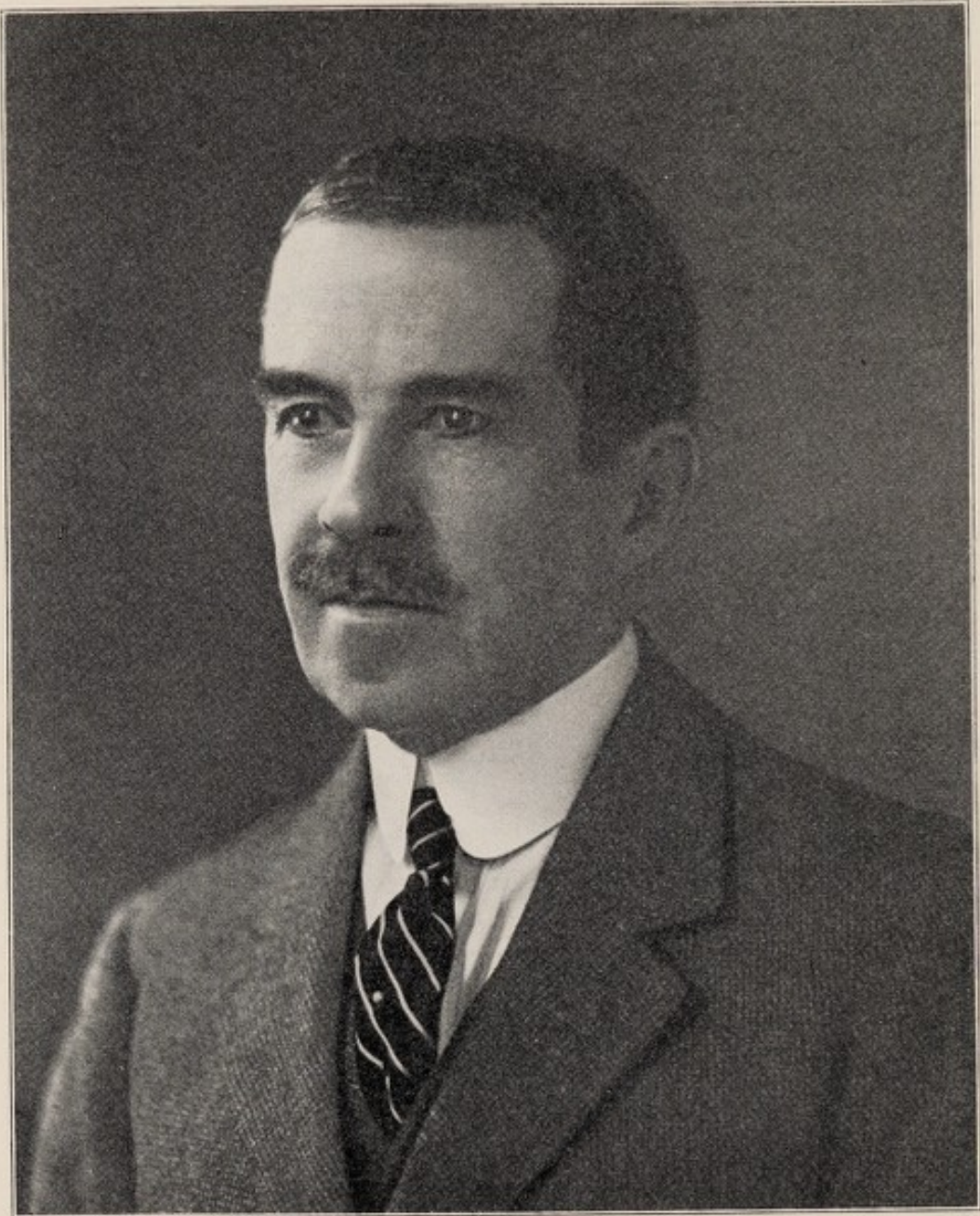
ROBERT WILLIAMSON LOVETT

REPRINTED FROM
THE JOURNAL OF BONE AND JOINT SURGERY
OCTOBER, 1924

B. xxiv. Ser.

by R.B. Osgood?





ROBERT W. LOVETT

ROBERT WILLIAMSON LOVETT, A.B., M.D., D.Sc.

Robert Williamson Lovett, A.B., M.D., D.Sc., Charter Member of the American Orthopedic Association, died of nephritis and pericarditis on July 2, 1924, at the residence of Sir Robert Jones in Liverpool. He had planned to spend the summer with his family in the land that, next to his own, he loved best.

Simple, but very impressive, memorial services were held at the Sefton Park Presbyterian Church in Liverpool on July 6th. An international touch was given by the participation of the Honorable Horace Lee Washington, U. S. Consul-General, who entered the pulpit at the beginning and draped the right-hand side with the Stars and Stripes, while Mr. Frederick Watson, son of Dr. John Watson, known to Americans as Ian McLaren, and son-in-law of Sir Robert Jones, draped the left with the Union Jack. The first lesson was read by the Consul-General and the second by Sir Robert Jones. The minister, the Rev. J. S. Macdonald, spoke feelingly of Dr. Lovett's great service to surgery and of "the crooked path made straight" for the crippled child. There was a large attendance of distinguished medical men of Liverpool.

Dr. Lovett's body was brought back to his own country on the Scythia, and the American services were held in Appleton Chapel in the Harvard Yard, July 23rd. The church was filled by his colleagues, patients, and friends, and services were conducted by a classmate, the Rev. Mr. J. W. Suter and by the Rev. S. C. Wellwood, a personal friend.

Born in Beverly, Massachusetts, on November 18, 1859, Dr. Lovett was graduated from Harvard College in 1881 and from the Medical School in 1885. He received his surgical training at the City Hospital in Boston. After a short experience in New York, he settled in Boston. The problems of bone and joint disease in children at once claimed his interest, but as a member of the Surgical Staff at the City Hospital, he practised general surgery for many years. In 1899, he resigned from the City Hospital and his clinic became henceforth the Boston Children's Hospital. In 1912, he became the Chief of its Orthopaedic Department. Teaching appealed to him strongly, and for fifteen years he was on the faculty of the Harvard Medical School. He succeeded Dr. E. H. Bradford as the John Ball and Buckminster Brown Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, becoming the second incumbent of the chair. This position he held until his death.

During the War, as Major in the Medical Officers Reserve Corps, he was actively engaged in organizing schools of orthopaedic surgery for the training of surgeons, and gave his time and strength unsparingly to the instruction of medical officers. He was elected president of the American Orthopaedic Association in 1897, and was constantly on its important committees. He was president of the Boston Surgical Society from 1920 to 1922. He was Surgeon-in-Chief in the Massachusetts Hospital School for Crippled and Deformed Children, Surgeon-in-Chief to the Peabody Home, Consulting Orthopaedic Surgeon to the New York State Board of Health, Chairman of the Harvard Infantile Paralysis Commission, Surgeon in charge of the Vermont Infantile Paralysis Investigation, Corresponding Member of the British Orthopaedic Association, member of the Société Internationale de Chirurgie, Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, American Medical Association, Massachusetts Medical Society, etc. His contributions to medical literature were voluminous and significant. His books on Scoliosis and Infantile Paralysis have run through many editions. He was co-author with Dr. E. H. Bradford of the well known Text Book of Orthopaedic Surgery. His crowning work was the preparation with Sir Robert Jones of the comprehensive volume on Orthopaedic Surgery, which is recognized as the latest and most authoritative publication on the subject. His monographs are too numerous to mention, but he never cumbered medical literature.


Such is the veriest outline of Robert Lovett's professional life. It connotes high endeavor and great accomplishment. It is fitting that in addition the American Orthopedic Association should pay its tribute to a personality active and powerful in its councils for thirty-five years. The task is not without difficulty, for he had few confidants. He kept his own

counsel until the appropriate time came to give it away. Then it was often found to be the wisest, and was generally acceptable to the majority. It was always helpful. He possessed a keener foresight, and insight, and farsight than most men. He enjoyed contact with medical politics in its broad and important sense. He often settled knotty questions. Serving on many important local and national boards, he mediated whenever it was possible, but when pushed to the wall fought with courage and great adroitness. If the judgment of his peers prevailed, he was capable of accepting it and of throwing himself into the ranks and striving with them to accomplish the end in view with the weapons they had chosen. He was a powerful executive who was facile and able in organization. He was master in the art of inducing men and women to labor for him and with him, and of compelling their respect by insisting upon the highest standards of work. He was companionable to a degree, with a peculiar charm of manner and an incomparable sense of humor. He was blessed with a capacity for enjoyment in sport, in painting, and in intimate contact with growing things. He was probably most himself with his family and his roses at Lincoln. His patients were accustomed to accept his verdict as the last word. He had many warm friends whose friendship he retained "without capitulation." The personal tribute of Sir Robert Jones, published in the *British Medical Journal*, may well be quoted here. "He represented the highest ideals of our art and brought to bear upon it the rich power of a cultured mind. . . . He had a heart of priceless gold only fully revealed to those he loved."

We had known he was ill and troubled in body for several years, but he was never professionally weary; his mental alertness, the openness of his mind to new ideas, his power of origination never suffered.

"I knew his name would be among the lost
In that great honor roll of men who gave
All that they had and counted not the cost."

R. B. O.



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