



Idiopathic Hydronephrosis

Edited by

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Foreword by E. Charlton Edwards

With 87 Figures

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Foreword

For more than a century, the condition now known as *Idiopathic Hydronephrosis* has been recognised as a clinical entity, and following the original description by Rayer in 1841 a variety of procedures were devised in attempts to correct the condition surgically. Most of these early methods were introduced in the last decade of the nineteenth century by several illustrious clinicians, including Trendelenburg, Küster, Fenger and Sutton. For many years diagnosis was based purely upon the patients presenting signs and symptoms and not until the early part of this century was technology available to assist in the pre-operative diagnosis of the condition. Early methods depended upon radiological techniques, and the introduction of the retrograde pyelogram by Voelcker and Lichtenberg in 1906 represented a significant advance in diagnostic methodology. Other methods also dependent upon radiographic techniques were subsequently introduced, including urography in the late 1930s by Swick, and more recently, the method of cineradiography, as pioneered with considerable success by Peter Narath in the decade following World War II.

During the past 50 years a variety of surgical procedures have been introduced for the treatment of idiopathic hydronephrosis. That so many different methods have been devised suggests that no one specific technique is capable of achieving a complete cure in all cases. In practice, most urologists adopt one particular method with which they feel satisfied given that the postoperative results of that particular method are not inferior to those of an alternative procedure. The methods which have been devised and which remain as alternatives in the surgical management of the disease include the intubated ureterostomy originally devised by Davis in 1943. A method attempting to denervate the pelvis and ureter was described by Oldham, but this procedure is rarely practised by present-day urologists. Similarly the nephropexy procedure developed by Hamilton Stewart has fallen from favour, leaving the Foley-Schwytzer Y-V plasty, the spiral flap method of Culp, and the Anderson-Hynes dismembered pyeloureterostomy as the most popular techniques in the surgical treatment of idiopathic hydronephrosis.

Until the early 1960s the causal mechanisms which underlie idiopathic hydronephrosis were largely unknown. However, during the past 10 years considerable advances in our understanding of the condition have taken place. This progress has been achieved largely through a multidisciplinary approach to the study of the normal and abnormal upper urinary tract. This increase in knowledge has in no

small part been dependent upon the introduction of modern techniques which have refined the information which can now be obtained from patients with the disease. In recognition of these considerable advances during the past decade, workers in several different fields, but all sharing a common interest in idiopathic hydronephrosis, attended a symposium devoted to the condition. The gathering was organised under the auspices of the Manchester and North West Region Kidney Research Association and held in September 1980 in Manchester, England.

This volume grew out of, and represents extension of, that symposium and contains an up-to-date account of the current state of knowledge on various aspects of idiopathic hydronephrosis. The authors have expanded their contributions to that meeting and their articles have been compiled by the Editors into this single volume (which, incidentally, is the first for over 15 years to be published dealing specifically with this topic). Anyone with an interest in hydronephrosis, whether basic scientist or practising clinician, will find something of interest in the publication. It is certain that the contents of this collection of articles will act as a factual base from which future research will develop and thereby assist further progress in the diagnosis and treatment of this condition.

Manchester, October 1981

E. Charlton Edwards
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