
BREAKING (OLD) NEWS: A VETERINARY SURGEON BECAME A SEXOLOGIST-PSYCHOANALYST. A HISTORICAL REFLECTION OF SEXOLOGY

AVI OHRY

Emeritus Professor of Rehabilitation Medicine, Tel Aviv University, Israel

Corresponding author email: aohry@hotmail.com

Abstract

Theodore James Faithfull (1885-1973), the grandfather of the singer Mariann Faithfull, was a veterinary surgeon who became a psychotherapist and sexologist. His remarkable personal story, is an important part of the history persons who envisioned modern sociology. This article brings a "meeting point" between history of medicine, medicine, sociology, psychology, sexology and veterinary medicine. The names of Sir Patrick Geddes FRSE (1854-1932), Dr. Theodore James Faithfull (1885-1973), his son, Robert Glynn Faithfull (1912-1998), and Victor Branford (1863-1930), are listed among those who envisioned modern sociology.

Key words: Theodore James Faithfull, historical, sexology.

APPROACH

As a rehabilitation medicine physician, I regularly co-operate with the multidisciplinary health professional team (1). Naturally, the process of a successful rehabilitation process, needs the assistance of experts from various other fields, such as: bio-engineering, physical education, law, and more. It occurred that we need even the assistance of veterinarian surgeon: when we adopted electro-ejaculation apparatus developed by a veterinarian (2) and used it in spinal cord injured patients (3), and when we trained Capuchin monkeys to assist tetraplegics (4). The contributions of veterinarians to the history of medicine, is relatively unknown to the readers of medical literature. Only a few historians recognize that veterinary history has a significant place in general medical history and in the overlapping aspects of human and animal medicine. I

have reviewed some historical facts about the contributions of veterinarians to general medicine. These are also a few examples of veterinarians, who became famous as writers, politicians and inventors (5). I was fascinated with the fact that we use on a daily basis, terms, signs and symptoms or eponyms from the animal world (6). "As companion animals become more central to individuals and families, there are countless ways that veterinary medical practice can benefit from understanding human psychology ... we focus on key areas of care for companion animals that are integrally linked to their human caregivers' psychological reactions and behavior, including health maintenance, managing illness, and end-of-life care." (7)

Years after my article was published, (5), I came across the remarkable story of Dr. Theodore James Faithfull (1885-1973), the

grandfather of the singer Marianne Faithfull, a veterinary surgeon who became a psychotherapist and sexologist, through the biographical database of persons mentioned in "Envisioning Sociology", which contains "notes on the various intellectual, business and political associates of Geddes and Branford, together with others with whom they were connected..." (8). In this list, we can find five physicians: Dr. Arthur John Brock, (1879-1947), an Edinburgh graduate who met Sir Patrick Geddes FRSE (1854-1932) in 1899 while still a medical student, and took up the environmental work of Pierre Guillaume Frédéric le Play (1806-1882) who was a French engineer, sociologist and economist. Brock worked at Craiglockhart Hospital in Edinburgh, where he treated shell shock patients including the poet Wilfred Owen (1893-1918), poet-writer Siegfried Loraine Sassoon CBE MC (1886-1967) and historian-author Robert Graves (1895-1985); Sir Arthur Thomson (1861-1933), a lecturer in medicine and biology at Edinburgh University, and a Professor of Natural History at Aberdeen, 1899- 1930 who was also a close associate of Patrick Geddes in his biological work; Dr. Aubrey Thomas Westlake, (1893- 1985) who, in 1938 left London to live at Sandy Balls, developing organic farming and herbal and alternative medicine. He is known as a prominent British authority on radiesthesia, alternative medical therapies, and holistic health; Alfred Salter (1873-1945), a medical partner of Aubrey Westlake in Bermondsey, London. He became a Labour MP for Bermondsey West. He wrote the "Salter Report on road and rail transport". In 1932; and John Norman Glaister, (1883-1961) a psychiatrist, who after First World War, became involved with the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry. He founded Braziers Park School of Integrative Social Research in 1950.

One patient is found in that list: Frederick Victor Rubens Branford- Powell, (1892-1941), the son of actor Mary Branford, nephew of Victor Branford. He was educated at the universities of Edinburgh and Leiden. Serving as a captain in the Royal Naval Air Service, Branford was badly wounded at the Battle of the Somme, when he was shot down over the

sea off Cadzand in the Netherlands coast and swam ashore, where he was interned and later, treated at Craiglockhart Hospital and lived on a disability pension. He is known as a war poet.

*"The hearts of the mountains were void,
The sea spake foreign tongues,
From the speed of the wind I gat me no breath,
And the temples of Time were as sepulchres.
I walked about the world in the midnight,
I stood under water, and over stars,
I cast Life from me,
I handled Death,
I walked naked into lightning,
I had so great a thirst for God."* (9).

And one veterinarian surgeon and his son. Theodore James Faithfull, (1885- 1973) a Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and a Major in Veterinary Corps, who became a pioneer of psychoanalytical ideas.

"He ran a 'progressive' school for problematic children, The Priory Gate School, which encouraged nudity for both pupils and staff in sports and art classes and allowed swearing. When the school, unsurprisingly, closed in the 1930s following allegations of indecency, Faithfull moved to Hampstead and started his new career as a sex therapist. 'He invented a device he called the "Frigidity machine' to unlock primal libidinal energy and had a policy of not taking baths. Theodore was considered a pioneering influence on an ideology known as "New Psychology", a term used to embrace theories popularized by Sigmund Freud and Wilhelm Reich (10). I could not find evidence about his educational training, when he shifted veterinary medicine to human medicine.

His son, Robert Glynn Faithfull (1912-1998), was a British Army intelligence officer. With Dr. Norman Glaister, they formed the Braziers School of Integrative Social Research after the Second World War. He is the Father of singer Marion 'Marianne' Faithfull.

Theodore James Faithfull's list of books is impressive. Some evoked much debate and dispute:

1. A handbook of sex education. A handbook for parents and teachers. 1970.
2. Eros, Philia and Agapè. An essay on love, 1957.

3. Plato And The New Psychology, 1928.
4. The Future of Women and Other Essays, 1967.
5. Bisexuality: An Essay on Extraversion and Introversion, 1927.
6. Psychological Foundations; A Contribution to Everyman's Knowledge of Himself, 1933.
7. Letters to Margaret - a Simple Introduction to Psychology, 1941.
8. The Mystery of the Androgyne: three papers on the theory and practice of psycho-analysis, 1938.

CONCLUSION

Sir Patrick Geddes FRSE (1854-1932) was a Scottish biologist, sociologist, advocate of social reconstruction (11-12), geographer, philanthropist and pioneering town planner.

In 1919, Geddes co-operated with his son-in-law, the architect Frank Mears, on a number of projects in Palestine. He designed a plan for the Hebrew University of Jerusalem at the request of the British psychoanalyst, Dr. David Eder (13), who headed the Zionist Organization's London Branch.

In 1925 he submitted the town planning in Jaffa and Tel Aviv. His associate, the sociologist Victor Branford (1863-1930), was the founder of the Sociological Society and was made an Honorary member of the American Sociological Society. "Together with a circle of co-workers, they set out a distinctive vision of sociology and built the professional framework they thought was needed for its development. Working initially in Edinburgh and then in London, Branford was the central organizer of sociological activity in the first decades of the twentieth century. While also following a career in finance and banking that took him to New York and involved him in the telephone and railway systems of Cuba, and South America" (8).

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16. David Eder (1865-1936), socialist, psychoanalyst, Zionist and modern saint. *Med Hist* 2011;55(1):61-84.