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# AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF OAKLEY SMITH

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THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF DOCTOR OAKLEY SMITH



This autobiography could just as easily run into 800 pages as to satisfy itself with 80 pages or even 8 pages. But it is not going to be 800 pages, or even 80 pages as I count them. The time it would take to compose a great number of pages could better be spent in my making more discoveries and more inventions which would directly help in the cure of disease and thereby help all humanity.

Hence the brevity of my story about myself.



The above is a landscape of my parents' farm which was located on the outskirts of Herbert Hoover's hometown of West Branch, Iowa. This farm was easily one of the most beautiful in the whole State of Iowa. It had the biggest barn, the deepest well, the tallest windmill, and the largest house of any in that vicinity. It was the "equally beautiful" income from this farm that enabled my parents to try out all kinds of treatments in their frantic but vain attempt to get me cured of a very stubborn condition of ill health.

I was born January 19, 1880.

The picture below was taken of me when I was about a year and a half. According to this picture and what my mother told me of my childhood, I was stubby, chubby, healthy, and as strong as a young ox.



My stubbornness drew to me the nickname of "Stub", and stayed with me until after I suffered an attack of scarlet fever, which changed my whole physical make-up. This was at the time when I was about four years of age. The aftermath of the scarlet fever left me skinny, pale, puny, and I remained that way for the next sixteen years. My parents did not accept my fragile condition "sitting down". They constantly did everything in their power to restore my state of health. They never gave up. They were not the giving-up type.

When I was five or six, I was taken to the great Dr. Hauser, the outstanding medical doctor in the adjacent town of Iowa City. What I best remember about Dr. Hauser is that the medicine he had me take was most distasteful, just plain nasty. I was to take a spoonful of it three times a day. It resulted in no benefit to me. My paleness, weakness and puniness remained. The medicine was always distasteful.

By the time I was ten or eleven, my parents became desperate. If medicine wouldn't do any good, perhaps a change of climate would, and we moved to the State of Oregon. Nothing was too costly or too difficult for them to try. The change of climate which went with our stay in Oregon did not improve my health. It was for two years that we made our home in Eugene, Oregon. My parents continued to keep their ears open for anything that might do me good. They heard of a famous "spring" of water, which reportedly was curing people of various illnesses. It was called "Foley Springs", and located 60 miles east of Eugene, high up in the Cascade Mountains. They took me there, where I drank from the Foley Springs during all one summer and fall. I rather liked the water; it was hot and had a good taste, but, for my health, it did not do any good nor prove beneficial in any way.

Soon after, we returned to our home in Eugene, and my folks heard of still another health-giving spring. This was a "cold water" one, and very rich in sodium. It was located in a little hamlet, called "Sodaville". Father and Mother took me there. We stayed for several weeks, and during that time I drank that Sodaville water morning, noon and night and in-between times. No health benefit to me, though, came from that venture.

Then they heard of a Doctor Snodgrass. He advised a liquid of some kind that had the taste of wintergreen in it. Instead of drinking plain water I was to drink this "wintergreen" water. I drank so much of it that to this day I dislike candy or anything else that has even the slightest taste of wintergreen. Like all the other remedies, that did no good. I was still sickly, puny, skinny, weak.

After spending two years in Eugene, Oregon, the family then moved back to Iowa. Then I remember we made a trip from Iowa to Chicago, to attend the Chicago Worlds' Fair, in 1893.

About this time we shifted our home from the farm to Iowa City, which is eight miles west of the farm. My parents were still on the alert for word of someone, or anything, that would restore my health. They had been in Iowa City only a few weeks when they heard of a new kind of doctoring, or treatment. The principal exponent of that new idea was a Doctor Newbury. He called himself a Homeopath and the system he used was called "Homeopathy". They took me to him. He started giving me medication in the form of little pills which I was to take from time to time. He would change from one kind of the little pill, to another kind of the little pill. As far as I could see, they all looked the same, but, according to Dr. Newbury, they weren't the same, because each had been saturated in a different kind of drug. I kept up this "little pill treatment" under Dr. Newbury for nearly two years. I got the same kind of "no good results" from the Homeopath as I had gotten from the "nasty" medicine I'd taken, the different kinds of climate, and the "hot" and "cold" spring water which I had tried.

Then, with their persistent and constant concern over my health, my parents heard, again, of still another, an entirely different kind, of treatment. This was one which cured people without the use of drugs or medicine. It was called "Osteopathy". At this time I was seventeen. There was no doctor of Osteopathy in Iowa City. In fact, there was only one osteopath in the whole state of Iowa. He was located in Des Moines. The headquarters of Osteopathy was at Kirksville, Missouri. Without any regard for the distance or the expense, my mother hustled me up, and we spent all night and all day on a train traveling to this little out of the way village of Kirksville. There were several Doctors of Osteopathy giving treatments in different rooms of what was called the A. T. Still Osteopathic Infirmary. I was placed under treatment by Dr. Charlie Still, the son of the Founder of Osteopathy. I also took treatment of a Dr. Carl P. McConnell, who was an M.D. as well as an Osteopathic doctor. According to Dr. McConnell, he had given up medicine as a practice, and studied Osteopathy. Again I received no benefit.

We had not been in Iowa City more than two or three months when we learned of still another kind of doctoring. This one was called "Chiropractic". Headquarters were at Davenport, which was some 50 or 60 miles from our home

in Iowa City. My mother took me to Davenport, where we met a "D.D. Palmer", the Founder of Chiropractic. Not unlike all the other doctors, he freely claimed that he would be able to cure me. Like Osteopathy, he did not prescribe medicine. He merely manipulated the back bone. It was more rough and a heavier treatment than osteopathic treatment. I took treatment every day six days a week for five months. For a brief while I felt I was getting some better, but that feeling was only brief, so the chiropractic treatment proved to be a failure, too.

I awakened one morning which, according to the calendar, was February 1, 1899. It was my brother Horton's birthday. As I was awakening a thought came to my mind. I remember well, even to this day, that I found myself thinking to myself, if there can't anyone or anybody find out what the matter is with me and how to treat and cure me, I shall find out myself.

In the fall of 1899 - I was 19 - I enrolled as a special student at the Medical School, University of Iowa. One might say I was a "free-lance" student. I took classes in anatomy, physiology and dissection. I also attended classes and took voluminous notes in each class--, in histology, pathology, material medica, and witnessed approximately two or three hundred surgical operations. I recited in anatomy, physiology and dissection, but did not recite and was not called upon, in the other classes. I kept up that plan for two years. I did not want to become a medical doctor. I was just interested to find out how to cure myself.

My brother Horton was also a student at the University, but in the Department of Civil Engineering. He was not only a good student, but he was an outstanding one. He was one of four out of the whole university to receive an honorary award of a Sigma Psi Key.

Our home was only about sixteen blocks away from the university campus. We both lived at home. One day I said to Horton, "I want you to give me a treatment. I'll originate what you are to do. Your job will be just to do it". I discovered it was just as natural for me to originate or create new kinds of manipulative treatment as it must be for a composer to create new music. I placed a pillow under my hip, one under my chest, and I lay on the floor, and said, "Hort, I want you to put your hands on my back and I want you to push, pull and twist my vertebra in accordance with my instructions". Horton did not want to become a doctor of any kind. He didn't want to treat patients but, like my other brother, and my father and mother, he had become very much concerned, and worried, with respect to my fragility. Ralph and Horton were athletes. I was not. I was not physically strong enough to be athletic. This disturbed and bothered my brothers so much that I had no difficulty at all in getting Horton to cooperate with me and give me whatever kind of manipulative treatment I originated for him to give. I would say, "Now, Hort, that twist was too much", or, "Hort, you didn't push hard enough", or, "Hort, you pushed too hard", or, "Hort, make your push, pull or twist in such-and-such a direction". At each treatment I found myself originating an entirely new kind of manipulative technique. Techniques and methods never used on me by the osteopath or chiropractor. I was not trying to build a new profession, I was just trying to get myself cured.

Horton gave me a treatment every day five days a week. I had him keep that up during all the time I was in medical school and while he was studying



civil engineering. Within two or three months my paleness began to subside. My cold hands and feet began to take on warmth. My vitality began to rise. I was getting cured. Before my brother had reached the time when he was to graduate and leave home, I had become the happy recipient of the most wonderful cure I ever heard of. I became so energetic and so well that I could work all day and way into the night.

I had become the recipient of a miracle, and I was making use of that miracle. Then ambition hit me. Under the guise of working out a method of treatment that would help me, I had unexpectedly created a brand new health profession. Eventually I coined the name NAPRAPATHY for this new profession.

I commenced to treat many of my family and neighbors. I quit medical school in 1901, after having put in two STRENUOUS years there as a special student. I came to Chicago and opened an office at State and Madison. Only three families in Chicago had ever heard the name "Oakley Smith", and none of those three had ever heard the name "Naprapathy". Armed with Naprapathy, I started practice. I met people. I started to get patients.

I see now that I have been telling the story of my own life. The facts are that the story of my life dovetails completely and perfectly with the story of the origination and development of Naprapathy. At that time I was Naprapathy!

I started to have patients who wanted to become Naprapaths, so I began to organize classes of students. I think the reader would like to know, and I am sure I would like to tell him, how it happened that my father was in the position to "shell out" money to me during the early years when I was making no charge for the giving of treatments. My first interest was to find out how to cure myself. Not only did I teach my brother Horton how to treat me, but in so doing I learned how to treat others. I not only originated new techniques by having Horton treat me thus and so, but I originated still more techniques by having patients of my very own. I did not charge patients at that particular period. My sole interest was to gain knowledge, not to build a bank account.

By this time my oldest brother Ralph had gone into the practice of law and was making a good living at it. My brother Horton was carrying out his ambition of building bridges, railroads and skyscrapers. He, too, was making a good living. I told you how he was worried about my ill health. Now he had something else to worry about. I was not making any money, and I didn't seem to him to be even remotely interested in either making money or in making a living for myself. That definitely bothered Horton.

I can remember how on a certain Christmas day, when Ralph and Horton and myself were all together at home for the holiday, Horton got me out in the kitchen by myself. He stood looking out of the window, with his back to me, apparently so I couldn't see his face. While thus positioned he gave me about a five-second speech. "Oak, when are you going to learn how to make a living?" I remember I didn't answer, but, to myself I said, "Make a living? Why, do I have to make a living? I am getting along all right, and am having a wonderful time without making a living"!



Then, the next thought that went through my mind-- "Perhaps Father won't always be alive. I will not always have a father to whom I can go with the oft-repeated request for money".

I remained silent as far as Horton was concerned, but I started immediately to cease my "free clinic places of action", which I had in Iowa City and the nearby city of Cedar Rapids. I moved to Chicago and started practice.

I was a success from the very beginning. I was not only making cures, but I was making money! By my eighth month I was taking in over \$500 a month, with a 3-hour office schedule. I was so confident of my ability to both succeed and to cure that I closed my office and then went to Europe, where I spent the summer in Bohemia. You see, the Bohemians had a spinal treatment. Some unknown Bohemian at some unknown date in history, invented the "Napravit Thrust". It was a real invention. It was not an instinct. If a child falls on his knee he instinctively rubs it. Rubbing is an instinct that one inherits, but we do not inherit an invention or a discovery. So the Napravit Thrust was invented.

What I did was to take the simple Napravit Thrust and elaborate upon it to a point where it could do more than just cure a tired back or a lame back. The Bohemians used it to just cure tired backs and lame backs. After a day of hoeing in the fields, one Bohemian would say to another, "Napravit me", and he would lie on the ground and his partner or fellow-worker would give little pushes on the spine.

I coined the word "Naprath". The first half of that word stems from the Bohemian word Napravit. The last half of the word is from the Greek "pathos". "Pathos" means feeling, as centuries past pathos took on the meaning of bad feeling. As time still passed "bad feeling" took on the meaning of bad tissue. It grew from the subjective to the objective. Thus it grew.

As Naprapathy has grown and perfected itself, it has given a special attention to the cause. So what the total word NAPRAPATH means is, to correct the cause. Napravit means to correct, fix, or make right. Pathos means cause. At least it means that in the Naprapathic sense.

To the editors of encyclopedias and dictionaries, the discovery of the ligatite constitutes the beginning point of the "Profession of Naprapathy".

I well remember the very day and the very hour when I made that discovery. It was at 11:45 P.M., November 16, 1905. It took place at my laboratory desk, which was in the northwest corner of my bedroom. In the southwest corner was an enormous wagon wheel, which revolved not vertically, but horizontally. In order to get the quickest kind of action, I would always have a small library open and ready for use on that wheel.

In the northeast corner of that same room were a line of hooks on which my clothes were hung. In the southeast corner was the bed. It certainly was a plain environment, but in those days environment didn't matter. I was searching for some cause of disease that no one else had ever put his finger on.

One of my ancestors was the Founder of Uniontown, Pennsylvania.

The next two pages are negatives of letters assumedly he wrote to me. The originals may be found in the Smith-Beeson Genealogy, on file in the Copyright Department of the Congressional Library at Washington, D.C.

The facts concerning me are so perfectly true and so accurately stated that I am having them included as a part of this autobiography.

## OAKLEY SMITH

As one compares the principal life events of Oakley Smith with the principal life events of his great-great-grandfather, Henry Beeson, the duplications which are noted are little short of the uncanny.

We know of no plainer way to portray this duplication of life events than to "make believe" that the great-great-grandfather were alive today and writing a letter to his great-great-grandson somewhat as follows:

Uniontown, Pennsylvania  
May 19, 1943.

Dear Oakley of the Ligatite:

According to the calendar, I would be celebrating this day the 200th Anniversary of my birth. That of itself, however, would represent no reason why I should be addressing this letter to you at this time. The reason that I am writing you is not only because you are a direct descendant of mine but because your life events are such an uncanny duplication of mine that I feel sure you will be interested to learn of this parallelism direct from me.

My recorded name was Henry Beeson, though my neighbors always referred to me as Henry of the Mill.

Genealogically, you yourself are a Beeson (as well as a Smith) since your mother was a Beeson—Ann Beeson Smith—and a direct descendant of mine.

As I look over the history of my family in the "Beeson Genealogy," as written and published by Jasper Luther Beeson, Ph.D., and then compare your various activities with those of mine, I am astonished at the unbelievable similarity and doubtless you too will be.

Allow me to call attention to a few such points of similarity between your life and mine.

1. I find that you, like myself, are a Founder.
2. I find that the name of what you founded, like the name of what I founded, is recorded in the most widely published of all reference books.
3. I find that you, like myself, made direct contribution to the armed forces of our respective periods.
4. I find that your name, like my own, has been accorded a place in the pages of encyclopedias.
5. I find that you did your "founding" when you were exactly the same age that I was when I did mine. This fact alone is almost too much to believe.

That no one may feel that these several points of almost exact duplication, separated as they are by nearly two centuries of time, represent just an interesting piece of fiction and are not fact and reality, I will come right down to specific dates and places.

Relative to point 1. What I founded was a city, namely, Uniontown, Pennsylvania, now a thriving metropolis of 25,000. You will find a bronze plaque stating that fact in the foyer of the Uniontown Courthouse.

What you founded was a science, namely, Naprapathy. This fact is so widely known that no one would think of questioning it.

Relative to point 2. The name of what I founded is recorded in geographies.

The name of what you founded is recorded in dictionaries.

Geographies and dictionaries stand at the top as being the most widespread of all types of reference books.

Relative to point 3. That which I contributed to the armed forces of my day consisted of thousands of barrels of flour which I furnished to the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. In recognition for this service I was given land grants direct from the Government amounting to upwards of 90,000 acres.

That which you contributed to the armed forces of your day consisted of certain new and original health-exercises which you invented.

The compensation which you got for your contribution was, in my opinion, greater than land grants, greater than anything material, since it consisted of priceless commendations from high ranking officers in charge of thousands upon thousands of servicemen who were benefited thereby.

Relative to point 4, and the interesting fact that both of us have been accorded encyclopedic recognition—a type of recognition that comes to but a few.

Under the name of Uniontown in the latest edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica you will find the name of Henry Beeson.

In the same encyclopedia under the name of Naprapathy will be found the name of Oakley Smith.

Relative to point 5, the point that refers to a coincidence so strange and unbelievable that no one would be expected to accept it unless indisputable proof could be furnished. I refer to the believe-it-or-not fact that each of us was exactly the same age of 25 when we did our respective "founding." But such is the truth nevertheless.

Since I was born in 1743 and since it was in 1768 when I founded the City of Uniontown, it can be seen that I was 25 when this occurred.

Since you were born in 1880 and since you founded Naprapathy in 1905, it can be seen that you too were 25 when that occurrence took place.

Up to now I have listed points of similarity. There is one point of dissimilarity, however, that I would like to call attention to—a dissimilarity which is decidedly in your favor. In your case, the contribution which you made was of such an epochal nature that you were given the enviable distinction of being accorded a historic place in the pages of encyclopedias while you were yet alive, while in my case I followed the usual rule of not receiving my place in encyclopedic history until after I had been dead for nearly a century.

If you should wonder how I got my name "Henry of the Mill," it was like this. I built a flour mill on Red Stone Creek, Pennsylvania. A settlement immediately began to collect around that mill. That settlement was first known as Beeson's Mill, later as Beesontown, later as Uniontown. Instead of my being known by my regular name of Henry Beeson, I was known as "Henry of the Mill." That circumstance gives me a thought. In your case, your discovery of the Ligatite grew into a science, and the science into a profession, with every prospect that the science and profession you started will reach to every corner of the globe. In discovering the ligatite, you have not only started a revolution in the diagnosis and treatment of a whole category of diseases, but you have coined a word that is destined to become as commonplace and as familiar as such one-time-unheard-of-words as fracture, bacteria, airplane, and radio.

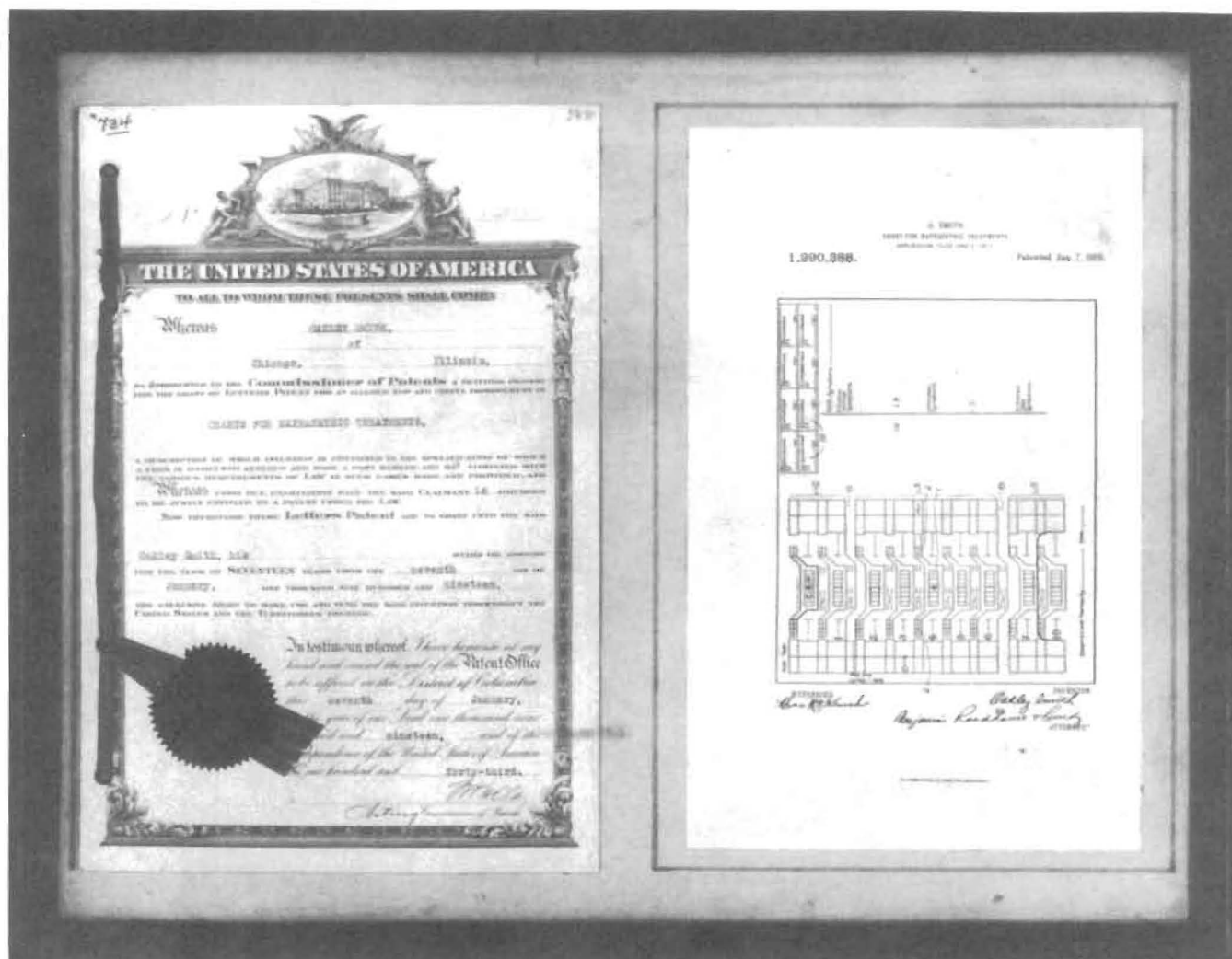
If I were "Henry of the Mill," why shouldn't you be "Oakley of the Ligatite"?

Now you can see why I took the initiative of addressing you as I did.

Your great-great-grandfather,

HENRY OF THE MILL.





Stretched the whole width of the west wall and the north wall of the Naprapathic Research Laboratory at the College is a full dozen picture frames, which contain the "Letters Patent" from the Patent Dept. of the U.S. Government, indicating my inventions, each one of which represents a "break through" in the science of diagnosis and treatment of disease.

The picture above is a reduced photograph of the patent papers of my invention of Chartology.

Prior to this invention, no healing profession had any method whatsoever for recording what the fingers felt and what the hands did in making an examination and giving a treatment.

This beautiful, etched copy (nameplate) stands at the entrance of a certain treating room in the City of Chicago.



Beneath the caption THE SENTIMENTAL ROOM are four separate sets of initials. These are initials of people so important to the discovery, invention, development, perfection and spread of Naprapathy, that it can be truthfully said that the very existence of Naprapathy would never have been had any one of these four people never have lived. Each one represented an immeasurable influence. "RBS" are the initials of Robert Bankinson Smith, my father; the initials ABS are the initials of my mother, Ann Beeson Smith; the initials BAS are those of my dedicated wife, Byrd Arnold Smith; the initials AHB are of Albert H. Bruning (I never did know what the "H" stood for and it's too late now to find out), but he was so great in his devotion to the science and growth of Naprapathy that seldom does it ever happen that from one-third to one-half of every new class stems back to the seeds planted by Dr. Bruning.

Ever since I began the task of discovering, inventing and developing the Science of Naprapathy, the greatest of all offences was distraction or diversion; something that would take my thoughts off what I might be working on. I might prove this belief by the fact that not as many as a dozen times during the nearly half century I have spent in Chicago, have I ever actually counted any change that would be handed back to me after a cash purchase. If I were to count the change, I would have to spend a few seconds in so doing. Those few seconds could better be spent by my thinking about some discovery or some invention which would have had to do with perfecting and developing Naprapathy. A five-seconds worth of diversion or distraction could spell the difference between getting that discovery or getting that invention, or not getting them.

Only the other day I made a purchase that came to \$2.63. I handed the clerk a \$20 bill. As he counted out the change and placed it on the counter, I well remember that I was thinking, concentrating on a particular Naprapathic problem. I did not know for sure whether the clerk short-changed me or not. I can attribute the accomplishments associated with the development of Naprapathy to this willingness on my part to be oblivious to whatever surrounds me.

\* \* \*

\* \*

At 11:45 on the historic night of November 16, 1905, I saw something through the microscope that gave me a thrill of thrills. What I saw was a scar tissue knot located within the ligament which I had removed from the spinal column of a cadaver which I was dissecting. That scar tissue knot was connected with nearby nerves, arteries and veins. I instantly realized the importance of that discovery. I was so happy that all by myself I danced a jig.

I have told you this human side of the discovery of the ligatite because it may be just as fascinating to you as it was to me.



Positive proof of the magic results that come from Naprapathic treatment can be seen by taking a good look at this photograph of me taken when I was 41. It indisputably indicates my perfect state of health, which continued over the years from the time I was 20, which was when my health had been Naprapathically restored as indicated in the aforementioned story. My high degree of energy and vitality enabled me to put in 17 and 18 hours a day - seven days a week for the next 50 years - 52 weeks a year. This seems impossible, but it is positively true, and can be attested to by those who have been associated with me all these years.



If it is better health you would like, go to a Doctor of Naprapathy. If it is a BIG SUCCESS you would like, BECOME a Doctor of Naprapathy yourself.