

**METHODS OF
ANALYTICAL
HISTOLOGY
AND
HISTO-CHEMISTRY**

EDWARD GURR
F.R.I.C., F.L.S., M.I.Biol., F.R.M.S.

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by

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PREFACE

This book is concerned almost exclusively with the identification, by colour reactions, of chemical groups and compounds, observable under the microscope, in the sites they occupy in both normal and pathological tissues, by methods that can be carried out without the use of costly and elaborate equipment beyond that which is normally on hand in the average biological laboratory. It is hoped that the book will prove to be of service to a wide variety of workers in histological, pathological and general laboratories.

The methods described herein have been set out fully and as concisely as possible, so that they can be followed step by step at the laboratory bench without interruption for reference to other literature during the course of practical work.

Some of the sections of the book are introduced by brief explanatory matter for the convenience of those who may have forgotten certain biochemical definitions and have not the time or the facilities to refer to other books for these; many users of this book will no doubt be working in isolated parts of the world without ready access to libraries, and with few books at hand. The introductory matter is in smaller print than the practical methods, so that readers who have no need for the brief definitions comprised in the introductory pages can pick out the practical methods at a glance without unnecessary reading.

The book is not encyclopaedic in scope: procedures, which require costly treatment, such as X-ray spectography, ultra-violet spectography, freezing-drying, etc., have been omitted because comparatively few laboratories at the present time are equipped with facilities for carrying out such techniques.

Analytical histology, or histo-analysis and histo-chemistry, are experimental branches of biology, and the emphasis of this book is directed towards practical work. Apart from the introductory matter at the beginning of some of the sections of this book, the only theoretical considerations will be found at the end of some of the methods under the headings 'Notes and Observations' where, in some cases, chemical formulae are given; it is hoped that these notes and observations will be of service. It is felt that theoretical discussions of the different schools of thought have been dealt with at length and very adequately in other works, and the inclusion of similar discussions here would defeat the purpose of this book.

Although the majority of the methods described here are sometimes referred to elsewhere as 'histochemical', I have chosen the title 'Analytical Histology and Histo-Chemistry' because I feel that the latter term would preclude a number of useful analytical matters which cannot strictly be described as histochemical. The view is held in some quarters that histochemistry is not chemistry, because the exact nature of histochemical reactions are not fully understood and cannot be equated in detail with chemical formulae. There is something to be said for this point of view, but it should be borne in mind that histo-chemistry, compared with other branches of chemistry, is a young science, and those who enter it at the present time cannot expect to meet with ready-made and well-established

laws along the lines obtaining in other branches of chemistry; and because of this the subject should not be dismissed: rather should it be regarded as the earlier investigators regarded other branches of chemistry: as a field for exploration and development.

It is hoped that this book will be of some service in suggesting ways and means by which histological procedures may eventually be resolved on a chemical basis, but a great deal of work involving the co-operation of biologists, chemists, physicists and others is needed before this object can be achieved.

In the writing of this book many references have been made to numerous journals and standard works, chief of which are as follows:

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- WEST, E. S., and TODD, W. R. (1955). *Textbook of Biochemistry*. (The Macmillan Company, New York).

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GENERAL LIST OF CONTENTS

Section 1	Proteins and Amino Acid Groups	3
Section 2	Carbohydrates	67
Section 3	Lipids	..	..	..	111
Section 4	Nucleic Acids	..	..	..	143
Section 5	Pigments	..	..	..	163
Section 6	Enzymes	..	..	..	179
Section 7	Organic Substances, Miscellaneous	..	..	..	211
Section 8	Inorganic Substances	..	..	..	233
Section 9	Sundry Technical Methods	..	..	..	249
Section 10	References - Addition and General	..	..	..	257
Section 11	Appendix	..	..	..	271
	Author Index	..	..	..	309
	General Index	..	..	..	315

DETAILED LIST OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1

PROTEINS AND THEIR COMPONENT AMINO ACID GROUPS

Introduction	3
----------------------	---

ARGININE

J. R. Baker's Method (modified Sakaguchi reaction) .. .	11
Emil Liebmman's Reaction (modified L. E. Thomas method) ..	13

HISTIDINE

Landing and Hall's Method	15
-----------------------------------	----

KERATIN AND SULPHUR-CONTAINING AMINO ACID GROUPS

Asscher, Turner and de Boer's Methods for vaginal epithelium:

Michrome MF4 Stain (Edward Gurr)	19
Papānicolaou Stain	22

Barnett and Seligman's Methods:

For SH groups alone (DDD Method)	23
For SH and SS (DDD-thioglycollate Method)	27
For SS groups alone (DDD Method)	29
For SH and SS groups (Neotetrazolium Chloride Method) ..	30

Bennett's RSR Method, for SH groups	32
---	----

Chevremont and Frederic's Method for SH and SS groups ..	36
--	----

KH.1 (Edward Gurr) for vaginal epithelium and smears ..	37
---	----

KH.8 (Edward Gurr) for vaginal epithelium and smears ..	38
---	----

KH.9 (Edward Gurr) for vaginal epithelium and smears ..	38
---	----

Michrome MF4 Stain (Edward Gurr) for vaginal smears ..	39
--	----

Papanicolaou Stain for vaginal smears	40
---	----

TRYPTOPHANE, TYROSINE AND HISTIDINE

Danielli's Coupled Tetrazonium Reaction	41
---	----

TRYPTOPHANE

Ehrlich's Indole Reaction	49
M. Romieu's Method	50

TRYOSINE

J. R. Baker's Millon Reaction	51
Bensley and Gersh's Millon Reaction	52

DETAILED LIST OF CONTENTS

MISCELLANEOUS METHODS FOR PROTEINS

AMINO GROUPS

Ninhydrin Reaction (J. A. Serra's Method)	54
---	----

CONNECTIVE TISSUE

R. D. Lillie's Allochrome Method	56
--	----

ELASTIN

Gomori's Aldehyde Fuchsin	57
Weigert's Method	59
Orcein Method	60
Margolena and Dolnick's Method for Elastin, Collagen and Keratin	61

HYALINE

Mallory's Phloxin-Haematoxylin Method	62
---	----

KERATOHYALIN

Permanganate-Haematoxylin Method	63
--	----

KERATOHYALIN AND ELEIDIN

Congo Red-Haematoxylin Method	64
---------------------------------------	----

SECTION 2

CARBOHYDRATES

Introduction	67
----------------------	----

POLYSACCHARIDES

Periodic Acid-Schiff Method (R. D. Hotchkiss)	79
Sodium Bismuthate-Paranitrophenylhydrazine (or Schiff) Method (J. F. Lhotka)	85
Lead Tetra-Acetate-Schiff Method (Shimizu and Kumamoto) ..	86
E. E. Post and J. D. Lauder milk's Method for Cellulose	88

SPECIAL METHODS FOR GLYCOGEN

Bauer-Feulgen Method (H. Bauer)	89
Best's Carmine Method	90
Iodine Method (T. Langerhans)	91
Digestion Test for Glycogen, Mucin, and Starch	91
Diastase Digestion Method (R. D. Lillie and J. Greco) for differen- tiating between glycogen, mucin and starch	92

POLYSACCHARIDE SULPHATE ESTERS AND HYALURONIC ACID

Gentian Violet Method (Kiyoshi Harada)	93
--	----

DETAILED LIST OF CONTENTS

MUCIN

Mucicarminic Method (H. W. Southgate)	95
---	----

MUCOPOLYSACCHARIDES

Alcian Blue-Chlorantine Fast Red Method (L. Lison) .. .	96
Alcian Blue-Carbol Fuchsin Method (R. E. McKinney) for bacterial polysaccharides .. .	97
Alcian Blue-Haematoxylin Method (H. F. Steedman) for Acid Mucopolysaccharides .. .	100
Thionin Metachromatic Method (S. H. Bensley) for Acid Mucopolysaccharides .. .	101
C. W. Hale's Method for Acid Mucopolysaccharides .. .	102

MUCOPROTEINS

Bismark Brown Methods (E. H. Leach):	
(a) for water stable mucoproteins .. .	103
(b) for water-labile mucoproteins .. .	103

MISCELLANEOUS METHODS FOR CARBOHYDRATES

Acetylation for confirmation of polysaccharides .. .	105
--	-----

AMYLOID

Congo Red Method (H. Benhold) .. .	106
Dahlia Metachromatic Method (A. C. Lendrum) .. .	106

ASCORBIC ACID

Silver Method (A. Giroud and C. P. Leblond) .. .	107
--	-----

GLUCOSE AND LACTOSE

Barium-Silver Method (K. Okamoto, L. Kadota and Z. Aoyama) ..	108
---	-----

SECTION 3

LIPIDS

Introduction .. .	111
-------------------	-----

FATTY ACIDS

Fischler's Method .. .	119
Identification and localization of lipids in general, employing simple fat soluble colours:	
Lipid Crimson .. .	120
Oil Red O .. .	121
Sudan 4 or Scarlet R .. .	121

DETAILED LIST OF CONTENTS

Sudan Black	122
Sudan Blue	123
Sudan Brown	124
Sudan 3 Gelatine	124
SPECIAL METHODS EMPLOYING SUDAN COLOURS	
J. R. Baker's Sudan Black Method, for lipids not stained by other Sudan colours	125
J. R. Baker's Pyridine Extraction Method, for confirmation of lipids	128
Casselmann's Acetylated Sudan Black, for confirmation of lipids	129
Haematoxylin-Michrome Lipid Crimson for fatty acids, neutral fats, etc.	129
OTHER METHODS FOR LIPIDS IN GENERAL	
Popper's Phosphine Method	130
Pearse and Lillie's Performic Acid Method for lipids with unsaturated bonds	131
TRIGLYCERIDES AND ACIDIC LIPIDS	
J. Lorrain Smith's Nile Blue Method	132
CHOLESTEROL	
Digitonin-Bismuth Trichloride Method (Grundland, Bulliard and Maillet)	133
Schultz-Smith Method	134
CHOLINE-CONTAINING LIPIDS IN GENERAL	
Landing, Uzman and Whipple's Method	135
LECITHIN, ETC.	
Borax Ferricyanide Method	136
PHOSPHOLIPIDS	
J. R. Baker's Acid Haematein Method	136
Menschik's Method	138
SECTION 4	
NUCLEIC ACIDS	
Introduction	143
FEULGEN NUCLEAR REACTION	
For deoxyribonucleic acid	153
FEULGEN-NAPHTHOIC ACID HYDRAZIDE (FNAH) REACTION	
(A. G. Everson Pearse) for deoxyribonucleic acid	154

DETAILED LIST OF CONTENTS

METHYL GREEN-PYRONIN

(J. Brachet) for distinguishing deoxyribonucleic and ribonucleic acids	155
--	-----

METHYL GREEN-TOLUIDINE BLUE

(R. Korson) for distinguishing deoxyribonucleic and ribonucleic acids	158
---	-----

SECTION 5

PIGMENTS

ARGENTAFFIN GRANULES

Diazo Coupling Method	163
Fontana's Silver Oxide Method	163
Gibb's Indophenol Reaction	164

BILE PIGMENTS

Iodine Method (Stein)	165
-------------------------------	-----

CAROTENE

A. Steiger's Method	166
-----------------------------	-----

HAEMOGLOBIN

Dunn's Leuco Patent Blue Method (Edward Gurr's modification) ..	167
Benzidine Method (Pickworth)	168

HAEMOSIDERIN IRON

Quincke's reaction	169
Haematoxylin Method	170

LIPOFUSCINS

Gomori's Chrome Alum Haematoxylin Method	171
Carbol Fuchsin-Haematoxylin Method for acid fast lipofuscins ..	173
Schmorl's Method	173

LIPOFUSCINS AND MELANINS

Lillie's Nile Blue Method, for the differentiation of lipofuscins and melanins	174
Hueck's Method, for the differentiation of lipofuscins and melanins ..	175

HAEMOFUSCIN, MELANIN AND HAEMOSIDERIN

Haematoxylin-Basic Fuchsin Method, for distinguishing haemofuscin from melanin and haemosiderin	176
---	-----

SECTION 6

ENZYMES

Introduction	179
Celloidin Protection of Enzymes	179

DETAILED LIST OF CONTENTS

CARBONIC ANHYDRASE

Kurata's Carbonate Method	180
-----------------------------------	-----

CHOLINESTERASES

Gomori's Myristoyl Choline Method	181
Koelle's Acetylthiocholine Method (Gomori's modification) ..	183

ESTERASE

Gomori's α -Naphthyl Acetate Method	184
Gomori's Naphthol AS Method	185

β -GLUCURONIDASE

Burton and Pearse's Ferric Hydroxyquinoline Method	186
--	-----

LIPASE

Gomori's Tween Method	187
-------------------------------	-----

5-NUCLEOTIDASE

Gomori's Method	188
-------------------------	-----

OXIDASES

The G Nadi Reaction for cytochrome oxidase	189
Graham's α -Naphthol Method for oxidase granules in blood smears	190

PEROXIDASES

Sato and Shoji's Method, for leucocytes	191
Mitsui and Kamezawa's for leucocytes	192

PHOSPHAMIDASE

Gomori's Lead Phosphate Method	193
--	-----

ACID PHOSPHATASE

Gomori's Lead Phosphate Method	194
Mather and Norman's Method, for acid phosphatases in malignant and benign disease of the prostate gland	196

ALKALINE PHOSPHATASE

Gomori's Calcium Cobalt Method	197
Gomori's Sodium Naphthyl Phosphate Method	198

PYROPHOSPHATASES

Kurata and Maeda's Methods:	
(a) For Acid Pyrophosphatases	200
(b) For Alkaline Pyrophosphatases	201

DETAILED LIST OF CONTENTS

SUCCINIC DEHYDROGENASE

Seligman and Rutenber's Blue Tetrazolium Method	203
Semenoff's Methylene Blue Method	204
Straus's Triphenyl Tetrazolium Chloride Method	204

TYROSINASE

Dopa Reaction	205
-----------------------	-----

ZYMOHEXASE

R. J. L. Allen and G. H. Bourne's Method	206
--	-----

SECTION 7

MISCELLANEOUS METHODS FOR ORGANIC SUBSTANCES

ALDEHYDES

Arzac's Carbol Fuchsin, for carbohydrates and deoxyribonucleic acid	211
---	-----

BILE ACIDS

E. Forsgren's Method	212
------------------------------	-----

CARBONYL COMPOUNDS

Seligman and Ashbel's Method	213
--------------------------------------	-----

ACETAL LIPIDS

Plasmal Reaction (Cain)	214
Plasmal Reaction (Hayes)	215

CARBOHYDRATES, NUCLEIC ACIDS, PROTEINS

Himes and Moriber's Method for the simultaneous demonstration of DNA, Polysaccharides and Proteins	215
Methylene Blue Extinction (MBE) Method (Dempsey and Singer) for distinguishing nucleic acids from other basophilic substances; for comparative estimation of the degree of basophilia of certain structures; and for mucopolysaccharides and mucoproteins ..	218

EXTRACTION METHODS

Methods for Carbohydrates:

P.A.S. positive substances, removal with pectinase	219
Hyaluronic Acid, removal by hyaluronidase	220

Methods for Nucleic Acids:

Removal of both DNA and RNA

Hydrochloric Acid Method (Dempsey)	221
Perchloric Acid Method (Erikson)	221
Trichloroacetic Acid Methods (Schneider)	222

Removal of RNA

Perchloric Acid Method (Erickson)	222
Sodium Tauroglycholate Method (Foster and Wilson)	223

DETAILED LIST OF CONTENTS

Methods for Nucleic Acids:

Removal of Proteins

Pepsin Method for tryptophane-containing proteins	223
Trypsin Method, for basic proteins	224

FAT PEROXIDES

H. Dam's Dichlorophenol Indophenol Method	225
---	-----

HORMONES

Adrenaline and Noradrenaline (Hillarp and Hökfelt's Method) ..	226
Noradrenaline (Hillarp and Hökfelt's Method)	226

URIC ACID AND URATES

Gomori's Methenamine Silver Method	227
Schultz-Smith Method	228
A. C. Hollande's Method	229

SECTION 8

INORGANIC SUBSTANCES

Micro-Incineration	233
--------------------------	-----

ALUMINIUM, IRON, ETC.

J. A. Thomas and J. Lavollay's Method	234
---	-----

ARSENIC

P. Castel's Method	235
--------------------------	-----

BISMUTH

Komaya's Technique	235
--------------------------	-----

CALCIUM

Granadis and Mainini's Purpurin Method for calcium deposits ..	236
Schujeninoff's Sulphuric Acid Method for calcium deposits ..	237
Von Kossa's Silver Method for carbonates and phosphates of calcium	238

CHLORIDES

Silver Nitrate Method	238
-----------------------------	-----

COPPER

Okamoto and Utamara's Rubenic Acid Method	239
---	-----

GOLD

W. J. Robert's Silver Nitrate-Hydroquinone Method, for localization of gold in fixed tissues of experimental animals	240
--	-----

IRON (Ferric)

Bunting's Prussian Blue Method	241
--------------------------------------	-----

DETAILED LIST OF CONTENTS

IRON (Ferrous)

Schmelzer's Turnbull's Blue Method	242
--	-----

LEAD

Cretin and Frankenberger's Chromate Method	243
--	-----

MAGNESIUM

B. Broda's Method	243
Okamoto, Seno and Shibata's Method	244

POTASSIUM

Macallum's Sodium Cobalt Nitrite Method	245
---	-----

ZINC

L. B. Mendel and H. C. Bradley's Method	246
---	-----

SECTION 9

SUNDRY TECHNICAL METHODS

DEHYDRATING AND CLEARING

Dioxane Method	249
Ethylene and Propylene Glycol Method	249

EMBEDDING

L.V.N. (Low Viscosity Nitrocellulose) Method	250
Water wax Method	252

FREEZING-DRYING

A Simple Non-Vacuum Method (Blank, McCarthy and DeLamater) ..	253
---	-----

FROZEN SECTIONS

Cutting Frozen Sections on a Paraffin Microtome (J. E. Pauly) ..	254
--	-----

SECTION 10

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

SECTION 11

APPENDIX

Atomic weights	271
Buffer solutions	272
Reagent chemicals, molecular weights and solubilities of	275
Diazonium salts, structures of	278
Microscopic stains, etc., structures and solubilities of	283
Mounting media	302
Fixatives	303
Staining solutions	305

Section I

PROTEINS AND THEIR COMPONENT
AMINO ACID GROUPS

