



# General Anaesthesia

## Fourth edition Volume 2

### Editors

**T. Cecil Gray, MD, FRCP, FRCS, FFARCS**  
Formerly Dean of the Faculty of Medicine  
and Professor of Anaesthesia,  
University of Liverpool

**J. E. Utting, MA, MB, BChir, FFARCS**  
Professor of Anaesthesia,  
University of Liverpool

**John F. Nunn, MD, PhD, FFARCS**  
Head, Division of Anaesthesia,  
Clinical Research Centre, and  
Hon. Consultant Anaesthetist,  
Northwick Park Hospital,  
Harrow, Middlesex  
Dean, Faculty of Anaesthetists of the  
Royal College of Surgeons of England

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## Preface to the fourth edition

It is eight years since the publication of the third edition of this work. The fact that it is still in demand may be taken as a tribute to the foresight and contemporary approach of the authors. However, anaesthesia has not stood still and it would be generally agreed that a new edition is required.

It is interesting that over these years the 'comprehensive' text has more than held its own against the specialized monograph. Indeed, the pendulum of taste and student opinion seems to have swung rather more toward it. The qualified specialist no less than the student often prefers one book for reference rather than a library.

This edition comprises mostly new material and involves many new authors. By reinserting chapters on 'Anaesthesia for...' there is rather more emphasis on practical aspects than in previous editions but, the Editors hope, with no detriment to the theoretical basis of practice. Experience in the medicolegal field persuades one that it is fault in practice and slackness in technique which result in disaster more often than does lack of theoretical knowledge.

As its title implies, this work is concerned primarily with 'General Anaesthesia', but we have come to believe that there must be some reference to local and regional anaesthesia. We have aimed to indicate the theoretical background of these techniques, their indications and their dangers, rather than to provide a detailed exposition of nerve block techniques, which are so well described elsewhere.

Intensive therapy has now become an essential field of activity for anaesthetists and Professor John Utting is warmly welcomed as having a special responsibility for this section of the work. Indeed, he has played a large part in determining principles and in the planning of the whole.

Once again the Editors have allowed different styles of presentation. It seems desirable that within acceptable limits authors should be given freedom to express their views in the way they think best. Some of the authors also prefer not to use detailed references but to indicate the bibliographic sources which they have used. The Editors have respected this viewpoint.



We are greatly indebted to all our authors, all of whom are fully occupied with their professional work and must find it difficult to give time to contribute in this way to the literature. May they find reward for their effort in the help that these volumes will give to anaesthetists all over the world, both those established and those training in their specialty.

Finally, we are grateful to the Publishers and especially to the staff who have been closely connected with this work and have throughout been helpful and co-operative.

This will be the final edition for the senior Editor who with complete confidence hands on this work, which he inherited from the late Dr Frankis Evans, to those who have played the greater part in bringing to fruition this present edition.

July 1979  
TCG. JFN

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## Preface to the first edition

We would like to acknowledge our gratitude to our Publishers for their assistance. We are deeply indebted and most grateful to all those who, despite the pressure of their own work and publications, have added to the value of these pages by the teaching and wisdom contained in their contributions.

September 1959  
Frankis T. Evans  
T. Cecil Gray

The editors approached the task of revising *Modern Practice in Anaesthesia* and of bringing it up to date with trepidation. The field of anaesthesia is expanding so widely and developments are taking place so rapidly that a 'textbook' appeared impracticable. Up to now the student has had to rely on a series of special monographs, many excellent examples of which have been published over the last few years. Yet those of us who deal with postgraduate students are aware that the need is still felt for a book suitable for both study and reference and as comprehensive as it is practicable to make it. This accounts for the considerable popularity of a famous synopsis. We present these two volumes on *General Anaesthesia*, therefore, hoping to fill this need.

Accepted authorities on the various aspects of medicine touching on anaesthetic practice have written on their special subjects. Such diverse authorship must lead inevitably to varying literary styles and modes of presentation, and in many places emphasis is achieved by the overlapping of text between two chapters; this emphasis is intended to drive home the important points and teaching. A variety of views are expressed on some subjects or techniques. Here we have permitted freedom of expression where the teaching propounded would be acceptable to a reasonable body of opinion — even though we ourselves were not always in agreement. When necessary the authors have been asked to incorporate at least some reference to other acceptable points of view.

An early decision was taken to omit detailed consideration of local anaesthetics. This field is amply covered elsewhere.

One further point which has concerned us is the place of anatomy and physiology in a textbook of anaesthesia. In these basic sciences the knowledge demanded of the modern anaesthetist is so extensive that it would appear as if only the original textbooks would cover the ground. However, we feel that there is a place for chapters dealing in detail with many specialized parts of these subjects, knowledge of which is of immediate importance to anaesthetists in their everyday work. The chapters on physiology and anatomy were written with this guiding principle in mind.

The chapter on neurophysiology is by design somewhat more comprehensive, as this information is not readily available to anaesthetists, especially those who are not within reach of a medical library.

We would like to acknowledge our gratitude to our Publishers for their assistance. We are deeply indebted and most grateful to all those who, despite the pressure of their own work and publications, have added to the value of these pages by the teaching and wisdom contained in their contributions.

September 1959

Frankis T. Evans

T. Cecil Gray



## Contributors

*Clive P. Aber*, BSc, MD, FRCP  
Consultant Physician/Cardiologist, Department of Cardiology,  
Hull Royal Infirmary, and Kingston General Hospital, Hull

*Aileen K. Adams*, MB, ChB, FFARCS  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge;  
Associate Lecturer, University of Cambridge

*R. S. Ahearn*, MB, BS, FFARCS, FFARACS  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Liverpool Hospital

*A. C. Allison*, MA, DPhil, BM, BCh, FRCPath  
Director, International Laboratory for Research on Animal Diseases,  
Nairobi, Kenya

*A. Angel*, BSc, PhD  
Reader in Physiology, University of Sheffield

*Herbert G. R. Balmer*, MA, MD, FFARCS, FFARCS(1)  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Plymouth General Hospitals

*Peter Baylis*  
Solicitor of the Supreme Court

*Norman A. Bergman*, MD, FFARCS  
Professor and Chairman, Department of Anesthesiology,  
University of Oregon Medical School, Portland, Oregon

*D. R. Bevan*, MA, MB, BChir, MRCP, FFARCS  
Associate Professor, Department of Anaesthesia, McGill University,  
Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal, Quebec  
Formerly Senior Lecturer/Consultant Anaesthetist, St Mary's Hospital,  
London

x *Contributors*

*Gerald W. Black*, MD, PhD, FRCP(I), FFARCS

Consultant Anaesthetist, The Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children,  
and Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast

*Malcolm Brown*, BSc(Eng), PhD, MInstP, MIEE, CEng

Principal Physicist, Liverpool Area Health Authority (Teaching);

Hon. Lecturer in Medical Electronics, University of Liverpool

*R. Bryce-Smith*, MA, DM, FFARCS

Consultant Anaesthetist, Nuffield Department of Anaesthetics, Oxford;

Lecturer in Anaesthetics, University of Oxford

*Geoffrey W. Burton*, BSc, MB, ChB, FFARCS, DA

Consultant Anaesthetist, Bristol Health District (Teaching);

Clinical Lecturer in Anaesthetics, University of Bristol

*Gordon H. Bush*, MA, DM, FFARCS, DA

Consultant Anaesthetist, Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool

*T. N. Calvey*, BSc, MD, PhD

Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology, University of Liverpool;

Hon. Consultant, Whiston Hospital, Prescot, Merseyside

*Donald Campbell*, MB, ChB, FFARCS

Professor of Anaesthesia, University of Glasgow;

Hon. Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Infirmary, Glasgow

*Ian W. Carson*, MD, FFARCS

Consultant Anaesthetist, Cardiac Surgical Unit, Royal Victoria Hospital,  
Belfast

*R. S. J. Clarke*, BSc, MD, PhD, FFARCS

Reader in Anaesthetics, Queen's University of Belfast

*D. F. Cochrane*, MB, ChB, MRCS, LRCP, FFARCS, DA

Consultant Anaesthetist to Avon Area Health Authority (Teaching),

Frenchay Hospital, Bristol

*R. S. Cormack*, BA, BSc, BM, BCh, FFARCS

Consultant Anaesthetist, Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow, Middlesex;

Hon. contract with Clinical Research Centre, Harrow, Middlesex

*J. Selwyn Crawford*, MB, ChB, DA(London), MD(Illinois), FFARCS, FRCOG

Consultant Anaesthetist, Birmingham Maternity Hospital;

Hon. Lecturer in Obstetric Anaesthesia and Analgesia,  
University of Birmingham

*A. Cuschieri*, MD, ChM, FRCS, FRCS(Ed)

Professor and Head of the Department of Surgery,  
Ninewells Hospital and Medical School, Dundee

*Harold T. Davenport*, MB, ChB, FRCP(C), FFARCS

Consultant Anaesthetist, Northwick Park Hospital,  
and Clinical Research Centre, Harrow, Middlesex

*A. R. de C. Deacock*, FFARCS, FRCP(C), FACA

Consultant Anaesthetist, The Royal Free Hospital,  
and The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, London

*A. W. Diamond*, FFARCS

Consultant Anaesthetist, Frenchay Hospital, Bristol

*P. M. E. Drury*, MA, MB, BChir, FFARCS

Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Liverpool Hospital, and  
Part-time Lecturer, Department of Anaesthesia, University of Liverpool

*John W. Dundee*, MD, PhD, MRCP, FFARCS

Professor of Anaesthetics, Queen's University of Belfast

*Edmond I. Eger, II*, MD

Professor and Vice Chairman for Research, Department of Anesthesia,  
University of California, San Francisco

*G. E. Hale Enderby*, FFARCS

Senior Consultant Anaesthetist, Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead,  
Sussex

*Anne McKenzie Florence*, MB, ChB, FFARCS

Consultant Anaesthetist, Broadgreen Hospital, Liverpool;  
Clinical Lecturer, Department of Anaesthesia, University of Liverpool

*I. C. Geddes*, MD, FFARCS, DA

Senior Lecturer, Anaesthetic Unit, The London Hospital

*A. A. Gilbertson*, MB, ChB, FFARCS

Director, General Intensive Therapy Unit, Royal Liverpool Hospital;  
Lecturer in Anaesthesia, University of Liverpool

*H. J. Goldsmith*, MD, FRCP

Consultant Physician, Royal Liverpool Hospital and  
Liverpool Regional Nephrological Centre

*T. Cecil Gray*, MD, FRCP, FRCS, FFARCS

Formerly Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Professor of Anaesthesia,  
University of Liverpool



**V. A. Grimshaw, MA, MB, BChir, FFARCS**  
Consultant Anaesthetist, The General Infirmary at Leeds

**M. J. Halsey, MA, DPhil**  
Member of Scientific Staff, Division of Anaesthesia,  
Clinical Research Centre, Harrow, Middlesex

**C. D. Hanning, BSc, MB, BS, FFARCS**  
Research Fellow, Shock Study Group, Department of Surgery,  
University of Glasgow;  
Senior Registrar in Anaesthesia, Department of Anaesthetics,  
Western Infirmary, Glasgow

**M. D. Hargreaves, MB, ChB, FFARCS**  
Consultant Anaesthetist, The General Infirmary at Leeds

**A. M. Hewlett, MB, ChB(Otago), FFARCS**  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow, Middlesex

**B. C. Hovell, MB, ChB, FFARCS**  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Department of Anaesthesia, Hull Royal Infirmary

**Gough Hughes, MD, MRCS, LRCP, FFARCS, DA**  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Liverpool Area (Teaching) and  
Liverpool Regional Hospital Board; Lecturer in Anaesthesia,  
University of Liverpool

**G. H. Hulands, MB, ChB, FFARCS**  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow, Middlesex

**A. R. Hunter, MD, FRCS, FFARCS**  
Professor of Anaesthetics, University of Manchester

**Jennifer M. Hunter, MB, ChB, FFARCS**  
Senior Lecturer in Anaesthesia, University of Liverpool

**Bryan Jennett, MD, FRCS**  
Professor of Neurosurgery, University of Glasgow and  
Institute of Neurological Sciences, Southern General Hospital, Glasgow

**Clive Jolly, MB, BS(Lond), FFARCS, DA**  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Ipswich Hospitals, Suffolk

**Leon Kaufman, MD, FFARCS**  
Consultant Anaesthetist, University College Hospital and  
St. Mark's Hospital, London; Senior Lecturer in Anaesthesia,  
University College Hospital Medical School, London

*Joan J. Kendig, PhD*

Associate Professor of Biology in Anesthesia, Stanford  
University School of Medicine, California

*P. G. Lawler, MA, BM, BCh, MRCP, FFARCS*

Scientific Officer, Division of Anaesthesia, Clinical Research Centre and  
Hon. Senior Registrar, Division of Anaesthetics, Northwick Park Hospital,  
Harrow, Middlesex

*I. McA. Ledingham, MD, FRCS(Ed)*

Reader, Department of Surgery, University of Glasgow;  
Hon. Consultant Clinical Physiologist, Intensive Therapy Unit and  
Surgical Director, Accident and Emergency Department, Western Infirmary,  
Glasgow

*H. A. Lee, MB, BS, BSc, FRCP, MRCS*

Professor of Metabolic Medicine, University of Southampton;  
Deputy Director, Wessex Regional Renal Unit;  
Co-Director, Wessex Transplant Unit; Physician to St. Mary's Hospital,  
Portsmouth

*Julian M. Leigh, MD, FFARCS*

Director, Intensive Care Unit, Royal Surrey County Hospital, Guildford

*R. J. Linden, MB, ChB, PhD, DSc, FRCP*

British Heart Foundation Professor of Cardiovascular Studies,  
University of Leeds

*S. Lipton, MB, ChB, FFARCS*

Director, Centre for Pain Relief, Mersey Regional Department of Medical  
and Surgical Neurology, Walton Hospital, Liverpool;  
Visiting Fellow, Bio-Engineering Unit, Salford University;  
Clinical Lecturer, Department of Anaesthesia, University of Liverpool

*W. McCaughey, MB, FFARCS, FFARCS(I)*

Consultant Anaesthetist, Craigavon Area Hospital, Co. Armagh;  
Lecturer, Department of Anaesthetics, Queen's University of Belfast

*D. G. McDowall, MD(Ed), FFARCS*

Professor of Anaesthesia, University of Leeds;  
Hon. Consultant Anaesthetist, The General Infirmary at Leeds,  
and St James's University Hospital, Leeds

*Ronald A. Millar, MD, PhD(Ed), MSc(McGill), FFARCS, FACA, FRCP(C)*

Professor and Chairman, Department of Anesthesia,  
Health Sciences and Memorial University, St John's, Newfoundland

*James S. Milledge*, MD, FRCP(E)

Consultant in Respiratory Medicine, Northwick Park Hospital,  
and Member of Scientific Staff, Medical Research Council,  
Clinical Research Centre, Harrow, Middlesex

*John F. Nunn*, MD, PhD, FFARCS

Head, Division of Anaesthesia, Clinical Research Centre,  
and Hon. Consultant Anaesthetist, Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow,  
Middlesex

*Cedric Prys-Roberts*, MA, DM, PhD, FFARCS

Professor of Anaesthetics, University of Bristol;  
Hon. Consultant Anaesthetist, Bristol Royal Infirmary

*E. B. Raftery*, MD, BSc, FRCP

Consultant Cardiologist, Northwick Park Hospital,  
and Clinical Research Centre, Harrow, Middlesex

*G. Jackson Rees*, MB, ChB, FFARCS, FFARACS, DA

Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital and  
Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool;  
Director of Paediatric Anaesthetic Studies, University of Liverpool

*J. C. Richardson*, MB, ChB(Hons), DA, FFARCS

Clinical Lecturer and Consultant Anaesthetist,  
Liverpool Regional Cardiothoracic Surgical Centre, Broadgreen Hospital,  
Liverpool

*D. V. Roberts*, BSc, MD

Senior Lecturer in Physiology, University of Liverpool

*Frank L. Robertshaw*, MB, ChB(St Andrews), FFARCS, DOBstRCOG, DA

Chairman and Senior Consultant, Department of Anaesthesia,  
Park Hospital, Trafford Area Health Authority, Manchester

*James D. Robertson*, MD, FRCP(Ed), FRCS(Ed), FFARCS, DA

Professor of Anaesthetics, University of Edinburgh

*P. J. Sanderson*, PhD, DipBact, MB, BS, MRCPPath

Consultant Microbiologist, Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow, Middlesex

*Graham Smith*, BSc, MD, FFARCS

Senior Lecturer in Anaesthesia, University of Glasgow;

Hon. Consultant Anaesthetist, Western Infirmary, Glasgow

*Steven Lewis Snowdon*, MB, ChB, FFARCS

Senior Lecturer, Department of Anaesthesia, University of Liverpool;  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Liverpool Hospital



*Alastair A. Spence*, MD, FFARCS  
Reader in Anaesthesia, University of Glasgow;  
Head of University Department of Anaesthesia, Western Infirmary, Glasgow

*Norman C. Staub*, MD  
Professor of Physiology, Cardiovascular Research Institute, and  
Department of Physiology, University of California, San Francisco,  
California

*J. C. Stoddart*, MD, BS, FFARCS  
Consultant in Charge, Intensive Therapy Unit, Royal Victoria Hospital,  
Newcastle upon Tyne;  
Regional Consultant in Intensive Therapy (Northern Region)

*Leo Strunin*, MD, FFARCS  
Professor of Anaesthetics, King's College Hospital and Medical School,  
London

*Jean Sturrock*, BA, MPhil  
Member of Hon. Scientific Staff, Division of Anaesthesia,  
Clinical Research Centre, Harrow, Middlesex

*Edward Sumner*, MA, BM, BCh(Oxon), FFARCS  
Consultant Anaesthetist, The Hospital for Sick Children, London

*John Andrew Thornton*, MRCS, LRCP, MD, FFARCS, DA  
Professor and Head of Department of Anaesthetics, University of Sheffield

*M. E. Tunstall*, MB, BS, FFARCS, DOBstRCOG  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary

*J. E. Utting*, MA, MB, BChir, FFARCS  
Professor of Anaesthesia, University of Liverpool

*H. B. Valman*, MA, MD, FRCP, DCH, DRCOG  
Consultant Paediatrician, Northwick Park Hospital, and  
Clinical Research Centre, Harrow, Middlesex

*B. A. Walker*, MD, FRCP  
Consultant Physician, Royal Liverpool Hospital

*Richard William Ernest Watts*, MD, DSc, PhD, FRCP, FRIC  
Head, Division of Inherited Metabolic Diseases, Clinical Research Centre,  
Harrow, Middlesex;  
Hon. Consultant Physician, Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow, Middlesex

*D. C. White*, MB, BS, FFARCS  
Consultant Anaesthetist, Northwick Park Hospital, Harrow, Middlesex

xvi *Contributors*

**Norton E. Williams, MB, ChB, FFARCS**

Consultant Anaesthetist, Whiston Hospital, Prescott, Merseyside;

Lecturer (part-time) in Clinical Pharmacology, University of Liverpool

**H. Wilson, MD, PhD**

Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology, University of Liverpool

**T. N. P. Wilton, MA, MRCS, LRCP, FFARCS, DA**

Emeritus Consultant Anaesthetist to Avon Area Health Authority

(Teaching)

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