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## Forensic Images: Mascagni's Plate of the Internal Mammary Lymph Nodes

## Wilson IB Onuigbo\*

**Image Article** 

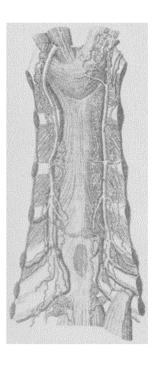
Department of Pathology, Medical Foundation and Clinic, Enugu, Nigeria

\*Corresponding author: Wilson IB Onuigbo, Department of Pathology, Medical Foundation and Clinic, 8 Nsukka Lane, Enugu 40001, Nigeria, E-mail: wilson.onuigbo@gmail.com

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## **Image Article**



**Figure 1:** Mascagni's plate of the internal mammary lymph nodes, published in Siena, 1787.

Published in Siena in 1787 was a plate made by Mascagni in Siena [1]. It was reproduced by Richard Handley [2] in a Presidential address containing a brief history of the internal mammary lymph nodes (Figure 1).

When were these nodes first recognized? Elsewhere, [3] I showed that such firsts in the cancer literature were often false! In this context, Handley stated that "The first mention of them in English was by W. C. Cruikshank and he is generally credited as being their discoverer in the English-speaking world." [2].

Incidentally, it is noteworthy that Cruikshank had worked with John Hunter in his London School of Anatomy. Not surprisingly, his own master knew of this phenomenon as shown in his lectures made during 1786 and 1787, and "taken in short-hand by Mr Nathaniel Rumsey." [4].

In conclusion, I am persuaded that, perhaps, the better word to use should be not "first" but "early." [5,6]. Incidentally, William Harvey [7] wrote on 28th April, 1652, with regard to such priority claims as follows: "why may not the thoughts, opinions, and manners now prevalent, many years hence return again, after an intermediate period of neglect"? Consequently, literature searches ought to be given more stringent attention than had hitherto been undertaken.

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