

The Epochal Medico-Legal Dictum of Tait in 1883

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Case Blog

This is a scintillating case report interconnecting the above arenas thus: E.T., aged 18 years, was treated in the last stage of emaciation. The presence of a large quantity of fluid in the abdomen was apparent. I opened the abdomen on April 17th, and removed about three pints of purulent fluid. I emptied and cleansed the cavity as well as I could, and fastened in a drainage-tube. The tube remained in position above a week, and, during that time, a large quantity of purulent fluid and small pieces of purulent lymph were discharged. When the stitches were removed, the wound opened completely, and several large masses of this white purulent clot were extracted, one of them being as large as a normal human kidney. The wound healed in June, and about September she had completely recovered her health. This is the kind of operation which would have been regarded as madness about five years ago, but I think its success is enough to justify my rule concerning all these cases – “When the doctor is in doubt, and the patient in danger, make an exploratory incision, and deal with what you find as best you can.” [1].

References

1. Tait L (1883) An account of two hundred and eight consecutive cases of abdominal section. *British Medical Journal* i: 300-304.
2. Wilson I. B. Onuigbo (2007) Expert evidence, Medical Foundation Publishers, Enugu Nigeria.

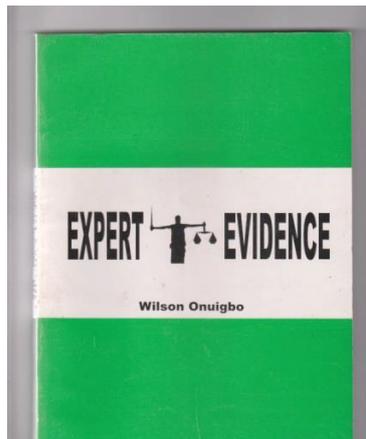


Figure 1: Expert evidence [2]

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