

Daniel Drake first came to Cincinnati to study medicine. He lived in the city intermittently during his adult life and was among the city's major promoters. This portrait of Drake

by Charles Meurer was given to the Society by Mrs. Otto Juettner in 1953.

Daniel Drake and His Influence on Medical Journal Literature in Cincinnati

Billie Broaddus

... I picked up Mansfield's "Memoirs of Daniel Drake," and was completely fascinated by the character and the life work of Drake. Posterity has done nothing for this great man. He seems to be entirely forgotten. ... The life work of Drake and the immediate and remote effects of his labors on the evolution of medical practice and education in this part of the country are not unworthy of being placed beside those of the immortal Rush.

Otto Juettner
Cincinnati, Ohio
January 19, 1909

In recent years there has been a resurgence of interest in achieving excellence in our endeavors, thus it seems quite appropriate that we remember Dr. Daniel Drake



on the anniversary of his 200th birthday. Dr. Drake was a man who maintained a faithful search for the pursuit of excellence throughout his public and professional life. He was an individual of unique spirit and "one of the great standard bearers of civilization" in this country.¹ He left a great legacy in what was then the West but none so great as his contribution in championing the development of a body of medical literature in Cincinnati during the 1800's.

Drake was essentially a leader and a pioneer. Born "amid surroundings of direst poverty, this remarkable man possessed a massive intellect which, combined with tireless energy, placed him in the front rank of American physicians."² Shortly after Drake was born on October 20, 1785, near Plainfield, New Jersey, his parents migrated to Mason County, Kentucky. When Drake's family stood at Cumberland Gap, they were among those leaving behind old traditions and a past bound by historical New England threads. In the West the role of such people was critical, "for

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Drake's parents Isaac and Elizabeth Shotwell migrated to Mason County, Kentucky. (Photos courtesy University of Cincinnati Medical Center)

Isaac Drake jokingly said that one day his son would become a doctor.



a new territory, free from the restrictions of fashion and tradition, offered itself as a blank slate upon which a rewritten drama of human experience might be played out.²³ Frontier life with all its disadvantages would be offset by the freedom of intellectual thought, movement of society, and the opportunity for man to fulfill his own potential.

However, “charming and interesting it is to feel a historical continuity... there are times when we step out of history and strike a new course, breathe freely, view a new landscape.”²⁴ If we do not introduce new ideas, new changes then we die. Whether as a profession or a nation, this is true. It was in such a spirit that Drake’s family was free to establish new lives for themselves and their children.

On their initial trip West Drake’s father met a young medical student, Dr. William Goforth, who eventually became young Drake’s preceptor. In their discussions, Mr. Drake “jokingly stated his son would one day become a doctor.”²⁵ The father’s resolve to elevate himself and his family was played out as he “predestined his son,” at the age of two and a half, for the medical profession.⁶ In 1800, at age

fifteen, Daniel was sent to Cincinnati to live and begin his apprenticeship as a medical student with Dr. Goforth. Five years later, Dr. Goforth presented young Drake with a diploma. This was the “first medical diploma ever conferred on a Cincinnati student and the first issued West of the Alleghenies on any student of medicine.”²⁷ (Drake later received his medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania.) This first diploma was the beginning of many firsts for Daniel Drake.

In 1818, “Drake went before the General Assembly of Ohio to ask for two charters for two educational institutions.”²⁸ Without a dissenting vote, the General Assembly granted charters for the Cincinnati College and the Medical College of Ohio. Thus, he founded the first medical school of Ohio, which received its first class in 1820. In his “Inaugural Discourse on Medical Education,” at the opening of the medical school, Drake presented an earnest plea to raise the standards of medical education.⁹



Drake was an original, a man whose spirit was filled with fire, all times ready to stand up and fight for his ideals. “Drake was a man of innate ability, indomitable will, tireless energy, and great ambition; a man whose keen sensitivity sometimes led to controversy and who was on occasion apparently neither conciliatory nor diplomatic.”¹⁰ The effect of his personality is illustrated by the fact he was expelled from the college he founded at the end of the second session. The controversy that followed afterwards was referred to as

In 1800 Drake began a medical apprenticeship with Dr. William Goforth who five years later presented the young Drake with a diploma. (Photo courtesy University of Cincinnati Medical Center)

In 1805 Drake received a diploma, the first medical diploma ever conferred on a Cincinnati student and the first conferred west of the Alleghenies to any student of medicine.

the "Thirty year war."¹¹

Among the other firsts in Drake's public and professional career were establishing the first public hospital in Ohio—the Commercial Hospital and Lunatic Asylum of Ohio, installing the "first soda fountain in the West," founding the "Circulating Library Society," spurring the opening of "a museum for the study of western antiquities and natural history," organizing the "first eye infirmary," and being one of the "founders and principal supporters of the Western Literary Institute" centered in Cincinnati.¹² In addition, he was a leading author, editor, practitioner, and teacher.

Some call the 1960's the era of the paper explosion. Drake's contribution as a medical author, editor and publisher could be described as a one man paper explosion of the 1800's. As the West expanded so did the need for medical knowledge and Daniel Drake was instrumental in setting the standards for the medical profession's publishing.

John Shaw Billings, in discussing medical journal publications says, "It is not in textbooks or systematic treatises on special subjects" that the greater part of the original contribution to the literature of medicine is made. "Since the year 1800, medical journals have become the principal means of recording" this literature. The first "American journal was a quarterly, the *Medical Repository*" sometimes called the *New York Medical Repository* which started in 1797.¹³

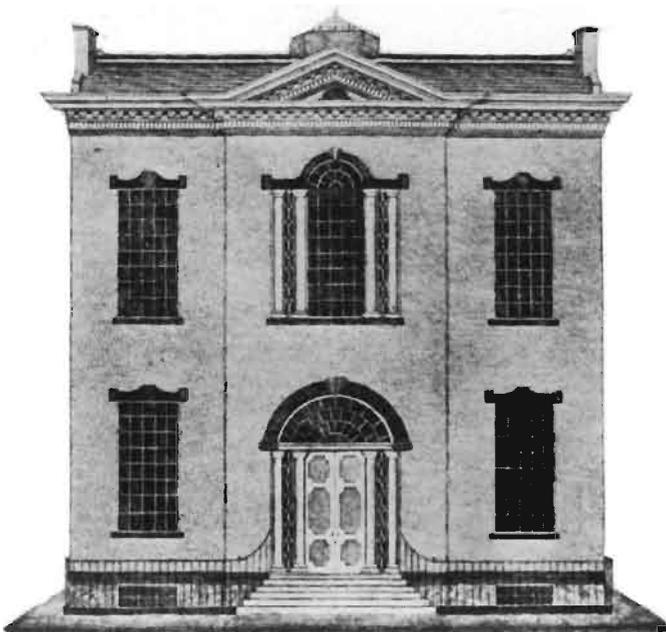
"In 1800, the total population of Ohio was 45,365. ...By 1840, it had grown to 1,619,467 and with this increase in population, there came a proportional increase in



physicians."¹⁴ Later, as settlement took place west of the Alleghenies, the publication of medical journals spread. "At first physicians and teachers would enter into agreement with the publisher to prepare the medical journals. In some cases, a group of physicians would form an association and edit and publish the medical journal. ... As the growth of medical schools spread, it became necessary to have a medical journal associated directly or indirectly with the faculty."¹⁵

Most "new medical journals sprang up along the Atlantic seaboard in the large cities" of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore.¹⁶ Nevertheless, Daniel Drake's invitation to the medical profession in Cincinnati that they, the physicians, had a duty beside that of patient care was the impetus for the publication of forty-three journals from 1822-1899. He viewed publication as an obligation of the professional to contribute to the common bank of professional knowledge from which they themselves had drawn.

In the year 1818-1819 Drake issued "proposals for a journal."¹⁷ However, other duties interfered with his entering publication at that time although he had received an indication of interest from "two to three hundred subscribers."¹⁸ Drake continued to challenge his colleagues in the pursuit of excellence in his Discourse II delivered to the Cincinnati Medical Library Association entitled "On the Origin and Influence of Medical Periodical Literature; and the Benefits of Public Medical Libraries." He stated: "If we predict great things, let us labor to bring them forth."¹⁹ Drake exhibited an illustrious example of devotion to the improvement of medicine and the development of learning in general.



Drake also founded the Medical College of Ohio and in his inaugural address urged that the standards of medical education be raised.

Drake is credited with installing the first soda fountain in the west.



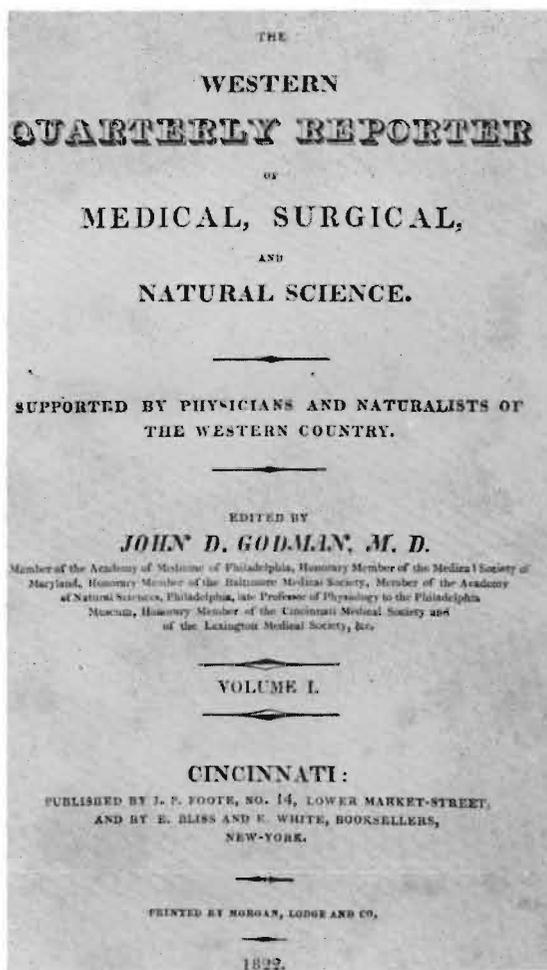
However, Dr. Drake did not publish the first medical journal in Cincinnati. The credit belongs to Dr. John D. Godman²⁰ who edited the *Western Quarterly Reporter of Medical, Surgical and Natural Science* in 1822. Godman was twenty-four years old when he graduated from the Medical Department of the University of Maryland. His reputation as a remarkable anatomist and promising surgeon had secured him an appointment at the Medical College of Ohio at age twenty-seven. It had been Daniel Drake who thought of securing an additional teacher, but Drake himself was eliminated from the college by his colleagues by the end of the semester. Disgusted by the intrigues, Godman left the teaching institution after only one year and he founded and edited the first medical journal in Cincinnati. He discontinued the journal after six issues and left for Philadelphia.

Ever an admirer of Godman, Drake wrote for Godman's journal. Together, Godman and Drake have the honor of being the foremost writers in the West. The two men, however, were distinct individuals which was clearly demonstrated in their writing. "Godman was correct, erudite, and polished. Drake was trenchant, vigorous, and full of fire and animation."²¹

Drake wielded his pen as few medical men had done. The only thing equal to his pen was his tongue. "Artful silence was foreign to him."²² Although Drake was not Cincinnati's first editor and publisher of medical journals, he was co-editor of the *Western Medical and Physical Journal*

founded in 1827, editor and publisher of the *Western Journal of Medical and Physical Sciences*, 1828-1838, and senior editor of the *Western Journal of Medicine and Surgery* (Louisville), 1840-1849. Truth, perspective, conciseness, and originality were the guidelines set down by Drake, to those who wished to write for the journal.

As one traces the Drake influence upon the formative years of the medical profession from the time Cincinnati was a small town through its expansion to a city in the second half of the nineteenth century, one can conclude that Drake was one of the outstanding men in the city who saw his opportunity and took it. The pursuit of excellence requires more than a "9 to 5" commitment. William Hazlitt states, "There is no path so steep as that of fame, no labor so hard as the pursuit of excellence." If Daniel Drake had not used his energy, his innate ability, and even his aggressiveness to challenge himself as well as his colleagues, the medical literature of Cincinnati would not be the wealth of historical documentation it is today.



John D. Godman began publishing the *Western Quarterly Reporter of Medical, Surgical and Natural Science* in 1822.

As a writer, Godman was described as correct, erudite, and polished. (Photo courtesy of University of Cincinnati Medical Center)

Drake was not only a prolific writer but also a founder, professor, and member of numerous institutions

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DANIEL DRAKE, M.D.,

AND

LUNSFORD P. YANDELL, M.D.,

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1852.

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1852.

AN ELECTION BALLAD.

To every Voter of Cincinnati Township:

Ha! to the polls, my friend!
Our freedom is at stake!
You must the boon defend,
Against one DOCTOR DRAKE.

Rub open both your eyes,
For dreadful to relate,
The town is fill'd with spies
Employed by DOCTOR DRAKE.

Their persons they disguise,
While in the streets they wait
Like spiders catching flies—
The tools of DOCTOR DRAKE.

Unstop and turn your ears
At every step you take,
Till each good patriot hears
The schemes of DOCTOR DRAKE.

These schemes I long have known,
They've often made me quake,—
Indeed, I weep and moan,
To think of DOCTOR DRAKE.

The city is his prey,
Its blood his thirst can't slake,
Then to the polls to-day,
And do up DOCTOR DRAKE.

Let every shop be bolted,
Hang up the hoe and rake,
Or else we shall be dolted,
And sold to DOCTOR DRAKE.

The town will ne'er have peace,
Nor any comfort take,
'Till from among our geese,
We thrust out this Wild DRAKE.

But hard he is to drive,
On land he glides—a snake
With many joints and eyes,
The cunning DOCTOR DRAKE!

On water see him swim,
And not the surface shake,
All smooth and light and trim—
The treacherous DOCTOR DRAKE!

You take a deadly aim,
Your fouling-piece don't shake,
He sees the flashing pan
And dives! oh, DOCTOR DRAKE!

Deep in the stream he sinks,
No ripples mark his wake—
You watch till each eye winks,
But see no DOCTOR DRAKE.

Again your gun you charge,
And swear his neck you'll break;
Down stream you gaze at large,
Up stream pops DOCTOR DRAKE.

Then try percussion caps,
No flash, you know, they make;
Shoot all at once, my chaps,
And kill off DOCTOR DRAKE.

**E. R. T.
J. B.**

The author presented this work at the Ohio Academy of Science on April 22, 1983.

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5. Juettner, p. 15.
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8. Emmet F. Horine, Daniel Drake (1785-1852) *Pioneer Physician of the Midwest* (Philadelphia, n.d.), p. 156.
9. Daniel Drake, "Inaugural Discourse on Medical Education; Delivered at the Opening of the Medical College of Ohio, in Cincinnati. November 11, 1821" (Cincinnati, 1820).
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12. *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 8, 11; Horine, p. 224.
13. John Shaw Billings, "Literature and Institutions." In *A Century of American Medicine 1776-1876*, ed. Edward J. Clarke, et. al. (Philadelphia, 1876), pp. 328, 330.
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16. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
17. Daniel Drake, "Discourse Delivered by Appointment Before the Cincinnati Medical Association, January 9th and 10th, 1852 (Cincinnati, 1852), p. 77.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
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21. Juettner, p. 75.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 71. The author has compiled a bibliography of medical periodicals published in Cincinnati from 1822-1899.

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"An Election Ballad," clearly demonstrates that everyone was not a supporter of Dr. Daniel Drake.