Illustrated pathology of the spleen

The major aim of this book is to de-mystify splenic pathology for non-specialist consultants and trainees in histopathology. The interpretation of pathological changes in the human spleen provides a significant challenge to the skills of even the most highly trained histopathologists. This comprehensive account of the most important and frequently encountered pathological conditions affecting the spleen is highly illustrated in colour throughout, with numerous detailed macroscopic and microscopic specimens. Emphasis is placed upon the importance of adequate clinical information and technical preparation of splenectomy specimens in obtaining the best possible histopathological assessment of the tissue. A systematic, analytical approach to interpretation of pathological changes is used throughout the book. This should enable readers to feel confident in their assessment of significant processes within the spleen

This volume serves as an illustrated atlas, as a bench manual, as a text and as a source of selected reference. It will be an indispensable guide.

Dennis Wright was Professor of Pathology at Southampton University from 1972, when the medical school was founded, until his retirement in 1995. Since then he has held the title of Emeritus Professor. Previously, he had been a Reader in Pathology at Birmingham University, preceded by a Readership at Makerere University in Uganda. He is a past President of the European Haematopathology Society, his election to this post being a reflection of his international reputation in the field of lympho-reticular pathology. He has maintained an interest in splenic pathology, particularly lymphomas involving the spleen, for many years.

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Illustrated pathology of

THE SPLEEN

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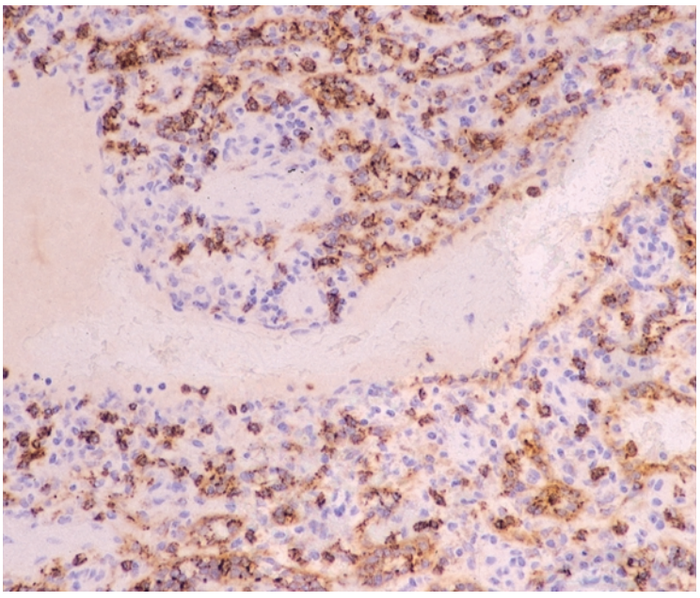

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Preface

The interpretation of splenic pathology is perceived as difficult by many histopathologists. Few diseases arise primarily within the spleen, and most pathology seen at this site represents involvement of the organ by processes originating elsewhere and/or also affecting other tissues in the body. Primary diagnosis has often been made from haematological, microbiological or histopathological investigations of other tissues by the time splenectomy is performed. The role of the histopathologist in most cases is to provide confirmation of the known, or suspected, diagnosis and to exclude unsuspected pathology.

Splenic pathology is an area of shared interest for histopathologists, haematologists, oncologists and surgeons. The key to successful interpretation of splenic pathology lies in obtaining adequate clinical information and in ensuring optimal tissue fixation. Dialogue between the various clinicians involved in diagnosis and care of individual patients is required to achieve these factors. Without this dialogue, no amount of expertise in splenic histology can provide full answers to clinical problems.

In this book, we have aimed to present a succinct, comprehensive account of those aspects of splenic pathology likely to be encountered by diagnostic histopathologists. We hope we have provided useful guidance to permit confident recognition of normal and non-specifically reactive histological appearances in the spleen. We have also attempted to convey principles of

systematic analysis which can be applied to achieve diagnoses following recognition of broad categories of abnormality affecting individual splenic compartments. The use of immunohistochemistry, cytogenetic and molecular genetic investigations to supplement morphological analysis is described where appropriate.

This book is aimed primarily for the use of general histopathologists at consultant and trainee levels. We hope that it will also be of value for histopathologists with specialist expertise in haematopathology, and to haematologists with an interest in this area.

We acknowledge that pathology in the spleen remains a challenging area for histopathological interpretation. For the foreseeable future, there will be occasions when no satisfactory, complete diagnosis can be made. None the less, we hope this book will convey some of our enthusiasm for the subject and that it will help make day-to-day practice of splenic diagnosis more rewarding for our fellow histopathologists. We hope also that some of our readers will feel encouraged to investigate further those aspects of splenic involvement by disease which remain unsolved at present.

Bridget Wilkins

Dennis Wright

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the many colleagues who have shared their interesting and challenging cases of splenic pathology with us in recent years. The opportunity we have gained, through them, to extend our experience of splenic pathology and see examples of rare disorders involving the spleen, has contributed significantly to our interest in the subject and our impetus to write this book.

Thanks are due to Duncan Kempson and, in particular, Stephen Bottoms from the Medical Illustration Department at Southampton General Hospital, who provided invaluable assistance with photography of macroscopic specimens. We should also like to thank Julia Berry for assistance with typing.