

Pathology of Heart Disease in the Fetus, Infant and Child

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Michael T. Ashworth
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Pathology of Heart Disease in the Fetus, Infant and Child

Autopsy, Surgical and Molecular Pathology

Michael T. Ashworth

Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children

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at the time of publication. Although case histories are drawn from actual cases,
every effort has been made to disguise the identities of the individuals involved.
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For my sister, Anne.

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Preface

There are many books that deal with the pathology of congenital heart disease. Many books treat the pathology of non-congenital heart disease, but few do so from a paediatric perspective. I have read many of them and used them extensively over the years, but there is no single source where one can turn when faced with problems in the interpretation of the pathology of heart disease in the fetus and child. This book is an attempt to address this and to offer, primarily to the practising pathologist, a guide to the pathology of these disorders.

There has been an explosion of knowledge about heart disease since I began medical practice. Newer imaging methods have revolutionized its understanding. The pathology that I practised as a young consultant is no longer practicable. Soon, I suspect, most investigation of congenital heart disease, in death as in life, will be by means of imaging. The traditional cardiac pathologist will no longer practise in the fashion he or she once did. We belong to a profession whose horizons are changing, but before they do, I wish to make available the wealth of cases that I have seen over the years and the likes of which may not be seen in quite the same way again, but which are still valuable in understanding childhood heart disease.

I wish to express my thanks to the people who have helped this book come about. Firstly to Dr Jean Keeling who many years ago suggested I write a monograph on cardiac pathology, and to my late lamented colleague Dr Marian Malone at whose suggestion I began this particular work four years ago and who put me in touch with Cambridge University Press. My thanks to Professor Jem Berry who first encouraged me in paediatric cardiac pathology, and to Dr Audrey Smith who guided my first steps on that road. To my current Consultant colleagues at Great Ormond St Hospital, Neil Sebire, Liina Palm, Sam Levine and Thivya Sekar who have indulged my interest, and to my many pathology colleagues in the United Kingdom and abroad who have generously referred me cases over the years that have increased my understanding, even if I have not always increased theirs, I am grateful. To my clinical colleagues too numerous to list by name in cardiac surgery, cardiology and radiology in Bristol, Liverpool and London who have given of their time and experience, my heartfelt thanks.

Finally, in completing this work I can do no better than echo the words of the unknown ancient author of 2 Maccabees:

If it is well told and to the point, that is what I myself desired: if it is poorly done and mediocre, that was the best I could do.

(2 Mac 15:38)

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