

At the Crossroads: the NCA Celebrates Chiropractic's Fortieth Anniversary

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Abstract

Nearly 40 years after D.D. Palmer's seminal work in chiropractic the members of the profession's largest membership organization gathered in southern California to celebrate and to plan the profession's future. The annual meeting of the National Chiropractic Association (NCA), predecessor of today's American Chiropractic Association, attracted 2,000 conventioners and featured a broad cross-section of the chiropractic arts. Despite an economic depression that ravaged the nation, straight/mixer feuding over scope of practice, and the growing threat from organized medicine posed by basic science legislation, this meeting saw the NCA set in motion processes that would greatly alter the content and quality of chiropractic education and, eventually, the character of the profession. No less significant were the choices that were not made (e.g., clinical research development) and the alternative priorities these pioneers recognized (e.g., nationwide publicity). This paper provides a glimpse of the NCA's convention and considers the implications of some of the choices made then and their impact today.

Introduction

To quote Dickens, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." It was the fortieth anniversary of D.D. Palmer's development of chiropractic and the ninetieth anniversary of his birth. The chiropractic profession in 1935 felt besieged: by the economic hard times which had fallen on the entire country, by its own internal warfare, and especially by the growing and increasingly successful attacks from organized medicine, particularly the American Medical Association (AMA). It was a moment of crisis and of opportunity. In September, 1935 the soon-to-be-elected president of the National Chiropractic Association (NCA), C. Sterling Cooley, D.C., captured some of the flavor of determination that would see them through. Cooley (1935a&b) took the podium at the NCA's convention in Hollywood to deliver his address, "At the crossroads!," in which he paraphrased W.E. Henley's "Invictus":

Out of the night that covers us,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
We thank whatever Gods there be
For our unconquerable Soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
We have not winced or cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
Our head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find us, unafraid.

It matters not how straight the gate,
How charged with punishment the scroll,
We are the Master of our fate;
We are the Captain of our Soul.

Although prophets abounded, no one could have predicted with certainty just how significant the NCA's "Fortieth Anniversary National Chiropractic Convention" would be, nor that it would mark the beginning of a "classic reformation" (Gibbons, 1985). The reshaping of chiropractic education from its

early, proprietary roots, and thereby of the profession itself, is a phenomenon still in progress today. Perhaps a better appreciation of this evolution and of the unresolved issues that still confront the profession may derive from a closer look at this "crossroads" in chiropractic history.

The Times

In the third decade of this century chiropractors were weary. Turner (1931, p. 292-3) noted that by 1930 members of the profession had collectively experienced some 15,000 prosecutions, including trials for unlicensed practice, malpractice and negligence. Although Cooper (1985) suggests that by 1932 organized medicine considered chiropractic a doomed sect and that "a relatively small number of AMA allegations and investigations appeared" in the early 1930s compared with the prior three decades, chiropractors of the period had little sense of relief. Chiropractic's arch-nemesis, Morris Fishbein, M.D., editor since 1925 of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, was in his prime. Despite the passage of chiropractic licensing laws in 41 American states by 1935 (Whitten, 1935), political medicine's continuing campaign, particularly the introduction of basic science legislation, threatened the viability of the neophyte profession and compounded the misery of the economic depression. Some chiropractors feared that organized medicine intended to absorb chiropractic in order to confiscate its methods (e.g., Cooley, 1935a).

In the early 1930s the struggle among the various camps of chiropractors was once more warming up. It had reached a crescendo in the mid-1920s with B.J. Palmer's introduction of the neurocalometer (Keating, 1991; Keating & Rehm, 1993), his ouster from the Universal Chiropractors' Association (UCA) and the formation of the Chiropractic Health Bureau (forerunner of today's ICA). The 1930 amalgamation of the broad-scope American Chiropractic Association and the UCA to form the NCA had been a hopeful sign, and portended calmer times and greater unity on the national scene at least. In selected states, however, political fratricide continued in full swing. Followers of BJ and of super-straight T.F. Ratledge, D.C. of Los Angeles had been locked in a scope of practice battle with the naturopathic/mixer faction of DCs in California for several years. Turner (1931, p. 143) noted that:

In California, where the 'progressives' attained recognition by securing places on the examining board in 1928, much friction has occurred between the California Chiropractic Association and the Progressive Chiropractic Association of California. An effort on the part of the latter organization to increase the number of hours in the study course from the present legally required 2,400 to 3,600, thereby including electro-therapy, hydro-therapy, biology, physics, minor surgery, optometry, obstetrics (including twenty-five bedside deliveries) and general hospital work, was regarded by the conservatives as a surrender of fundamental principles such as might result in eventual domination by the medical boards of the country.

Table 1 about here

Law suits over the legal limits of practice, like the Steele case in San Jose which had lingered in the courts for several years (Lee, 1935b; Liberal, 1933), were not uncommon, and the rhetoric within the profession was frequently acrimonious (e.g., Saga, 1935; Steele, 1935; New, 1935; Once, 1935; Rodgers,

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1935; Wood, 1935) (see Table 1). In Iowa broad-scope chiropractors lost a test case over the use of physiotherapy which was apparently brought by B.J. Palmer and his followers (Watkins, 1935). In Oregon William Alfred Budden, D.C., N.D., former dean of the National College of Chiropractic and president of the Western States College, School of Chiropractic and School of Naturopathy, noted with disdain Palmer's alliance with the allopathic community to defeat proposed legislation that would have increased educational standards (Budden, 1935a). Typically, when the dispute among chiropractors reached a state house, the door was thereby opened for organized medicine to exert its influence. *Montana Chiolite* editor C.O. Watkins (1936a) suggested that "The only constructive Chiropractic legislation passed in 1935 was in Connecticut where Chiropractors were permitted to treat patients under the Industrial Accident Law."

The "straights" viewed demands for increased education as part of the "mixers" efforts to expand chiropractors' scope of practice beyond the hands-only adjustment of the spine that B.J. Palmer had insisted upon for decades. James R. Drain, D.C., president of the Texas Chiropractic College in San Antonio, privately noted his concern that the NCA was too willing to endorse physiotherapy as a legitimate method for chiropractors; he encouraged the formation of an organization of straight schools (Drain, 1935). Ratledge similarly favored such an organization, and expressed his views in a letter to Carl S. Cleveland, Sr., D.C., president of the Kansas City college that bears his name (Ratledge, 1935b). Some of the flavor of the straight chiropractors' opposition to educational reform was captured in a letter from T.F. Ratledge to C.E. Barrows, D.C. of the NCA:

....I have had only the friendliest interest in the N.C.A. and have patiently watched and waited for it to become more chiropractic minded and less 'Drugless' minded.

....In my casual contacts with the N.C.A. in Omaha and Denver while attending the International Chiropractic Congress I have always been keenly disappointed at finding their policies so weak toward Chiropractic and so strong toward Naturopathy and all the "drugless" methods, as well as their hatred for Dr. B.J. Palmer and all other Chiropractors who viewed chiropractic as a complete and a sufficient practice unto itself....Believing so thoroughly in chiropractic I cannot but feel that with present policies the N.C.A. is enemy number one of chiropractic.

In this criticism of the N.C.A. I do not intend to suggest that the majority who constitute its membership and officers are not honorably motivated, but instead, I believe that they are uninformed as to the great science of Chiropractic and the great field for research in chiropractic which should be made instead of dividing their efforts between all the various medical ideas that are being considered as "drugless" and upon which so much time, energy and money are being wasted by the N.C.A....

....I am still unalterably opposed to the proposal to druglessize, naturopathicize or medicalize chiropractic. Naturopathy is more a menace to chiropractic than organized medicine ever was. Medicine was right out in the open in its efforts to absorb chiropractic while Naturopathy wheedles about Chiropractic being a "valuable part of Naturopathy itself." Naturopathy is medical in principle and in application while chiropractic is not medical in either principle or application (Ratledge, 1935a).

Budden, on the other hand, was among a growing number of chiropractors (e.g., Beatty, 1935a; Watkins, 1934) who believed that improvements in the training of chiropractors were the only way to defeat the greatest threat from organized medicine: basic science legislation. These laws required that before a DC could sit for a licensing examination in chiropractic, s/he must first pass a test in the subjects of anatomy, bacteriology, chemistry, pathology, physiology, public health and the like. Such exams were

usually administered by non-clinicians, such as university-based professors in the basic sciences, and were viewed, with some considerable justification, as blatant attempts to eliminate non-medical practitioners, particularly chiropractors, osteopaths and naturopaths (Sauer, 1932; Gevitz, 1988).

Figure 1 about here

The earliest prototype of a basic science board, established in Tennessee in 1915, examined only the applicants' credentials, such as possession of a high school diploma, courses taught in the applicant's healing arts institution, moral character of the prospective licensee, etc. (Gevitz, 1988). However, later boards conducted examinations in the required subjects, and in some states included members of the healing arts. In Minnesota the basic science board was authorized to enforce the requirement that its certificate be obtained before practicing, and DCs who defied the law were prosecuted (Gevitz, 1988). Chiropractors (straights and mixers), osteopaths and other alternative healers charged that such exams were administered from an "allopathic" viewpoint, and were therefore extremely unfair (see Figure 1). It was also charged that basic science examiners were not always blinded to the examinee's intended profession, thereby introducing bias into the grading process (Sauer, 1932). Metz (1965, p. 100) reported that no chiropractors were licensed in Nebraska from 1929 to 1950 owing to the basic science barrier enacted in that state in 1927. In a letter to future NCA leader A.W. Schweitert, D.C. the president of the Nebraska Board of Chiropractic Examiners had expressed the following sentiments:

In reply to your inquiry will say that the basic science law in Nebraska has been very detrimental to chiropractic. We have not had a single new chiropractor in the state since the basic science law went into effect. There have been five applicants for admission, but all failed, which was nothing more than we expected. I have been told that one member of the board said that no chiropractor should pass the board while he was on it. Of course that is the intention of the law. Any teacher knows that they can fail anyone. It is not a question of qualification or training (Ashworth, 1928).

By 1935 at least 9 states had enacted basic science legislation (see Table 2), and legislative battles in several other jurisdictions were underway. Cooper (1985) suggests that as many as 18 states had erected basic science barriers to practice by the early 1930s and Gevitz (1988) notes 17 basic science states by 1942; this combined with the depressed economy had reduced chiropractic education to a total enrollment of 1,400-1,500 students and 21-25 active schools by the middle of the decade (Cooper, 1985; Gibbons, 1985). Although chiros in several states defeated efforts to introduce basic science legislation in 1935 (e.g., Colorado, Kansas, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and South Dakota), Beatty (1935b) noted in March of that year that at least 6 schools in various states had been forced to close owing to basic science laws. Iowa was then in the throes of a struggle over basic science which the chiropractors would lose that year. Iowa-based editor Loran M. Rogers, D.C. filled the pages of the NCA's *The Chiropractic Journal* with essays and editorials deriding basic science legislation (e.g., Burdwell & Spears, 1934; Rogers, 1935a).

Table 2 about here

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Medical hegemony also involved refusal to reimburse chiropractors and other "drugless healers" for services rendered to the poor under Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs, particularly the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and the Social Security Act (Rogers, 1935b; Weiant, 1935). Rogers (1935c) reported an attempt to have various devices classified as "drugs" so as to come under the regulatory provisions of the "Federal Food, Drugs and Cosmetic Act," a tactic that further threatened medical domination over chiropractors and eventual loss of the DCs' ability to compete in the health care market.. Rogers (1935d) also noted the U.S. Supreme Court's dismissal of an appeal for exemption from medical licensing from Texas chiropractor Henry Clay Allison on the grounds that the states alone had the right to determine the laws governing the healing arts. In New York, an "open" state (i.e., no licensing for chiropractors), the NCA president's brother, Lyndon Lee, was in the midst of an extended battle with the state medical board and the attorney general's office (Lee, 1936). Chiropractors and other alternative healers in the empire state were under similar attack (e.g., Schreier, 1938). Chiropractors in that state had unsuccessfully campaigned for a licensing law in New York for two decades. California chiropractors and naturopaths had only recently fended off an attempt to restrict the use of x-ray to medical physicians (Lee, 1935b).

Although many chiropractic leaders viewed increased basic science training as a capitulation to medicine, a number of school leaders and field practitioners were regularly calling for uniform, higher standards of education for future chiropractors and for greater support from the field (e.g., Acquaviva, 1934; Beatty, 1935a; Bonham, 1932; Budden, 1951; Schulze, 1933; Steinbach, 1936; Watkins, 1932, 1934). Palmer graduate and future NCA Director of Education John J. Nugent, D.C. of Connecticut would later declare that he had written the basic science statute for his state in 1924 (Gibbons, 1985); presumably, he was an earlier endorser of such legislation. Homer G. Beatty, D.C., president of the NCA's National Council of Educational Institutions, called upon all chiropractic schools to send representatives to the NCA's 1935 meeting for the purpose of finding consensus on standards of education (Beatty, 1935c). Wayne F. Crider, D.C. of Maryland, president of the Council on State Examining Boards, announced a plan to evaluate the chiropractic colleges and called upon all state examining boards to send representatives to the convention:

Plans will be presented whereby our schools may be rated according to EXACTLY WHAT THEY HAVE AND ARE DOING - BY MERIT ALONE. This scale, when perfected, can be tied in with any state laws now existing.

Further, the legislative committee will have a draft of proposed legislation embodying within it the corrections of errors that are only too evident in many of the present acts.

Many have been wondering just how it is possible to combat the pro-medical, Basic Science campaign being waged during the past ten years. One answer is - to present a program that has superior merit. This is the duty of the State Examining Boards - to lead the way to formulating and adopting such a program to hand down to our profession for concerted action. Unfortunately in this we have been grossly negligent. Lethargy for years has been the rule and for which many states have paid a very dear price. Shall we accept this assignment? There can be only one answer - yes!

The council officers take this opportunity of inviting every State Chiropractic Examining Board to send either an official delegate or observer to the Hollywood meeting. It is imperative that concerted action be achieved in the future (Crider, 1935a).

The Hollywood Convention

The NCA's 1935 convention would be the first national gathering of chiropractors to be held on the west coast. Convention arrangements were handled locally by people whose allegiances were closely linked to a single school and to the state's broad-scope professional organization. Gordon M. Goodfellow, D.C., N.D., a 1925 graduate of the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic (LACC), former faculty member and then vice-chairman of the Board of Trustees of the College of Chiropractic Physicians & Surgeons (CCP&S) and vice-president of the broad-scope National-Affiliated Chiropractors of California (NACC), served as "Chairman of the Local Arrangements" ([Convention, 1935](#)). Assisting him in planning the convention were J. Ralph John, D.C. (former president of the International Congress of Chiropractic Examining Boards and a charter member of the NCA), C.O. Hunt, D.C. (secretary of the California Board of Chiropractic Examiners and secretary-treasurer of the NACC), A.F. Blair, D.C. (president of the NACC), and E.P. Webb, D.C., N.D. and Rangnar C. Bertheau, D.C., N.D., chairman of the Board of Trustees and president, respectively, of the CCP&S. The CCP&S was, at that time, probably the only non-profit chiropractic college in the state ([Keating, Dishman et al., in press](#)). Perhaps not coincidentally, it would be the CCP&S, later renamed the Southern California College of Chiropractic, which would provide a model for the Flexner-like merger ([Gibbons, 1985](#)) of weaker, proprietary institutions into stronger, professionally controlled, non-profit colleges, when in 1947 this school amalgamated with the privately-owned, for-profit LACC ([Keating, Dishman et al., in press](#)).

Interestingly, the CCP&S' name was consistently abbreviated to "College of Chiropractic Physicians" in all NCA literature of the period. Deliberately minimized was the instruction in minor surgery and obstetrics provided by both the CCP&S and the LACC, and the practical clinical exposure to such methods available at Los Angeles' Bellevue Chiropractic Hospital, which provided maternity and surgical services, and where interns from CCP&S were welcome to train. The hospital's president, John W. Koer, D.C., N.D., was also vice-president of the LACC. It would later be announced that the NCA executive board decided at the convention that NCA assistance in legal defense of members would no longer be available in cases of "coagulation of tonsils and dehydration of hemorrhoids, which practice has been construed to be the practice of surgery" ([NCA News, 1935](#)). The NCA's decision produced consternation among many broad-scope chiropractors, and not only in southern California. Budden of Portland indicated that the "Western States College stands foursquare behind the members of the profession who are engaged in electrotherapy as a part of chiropractic" ([Budden, 1935b](#)).

Promotion of the convention began early in the year with advertisements in *The Chiropractic Journal* for the "*Chiropractic Special*," a train which would leave Chicago on the morning of Thursday, July 25 "over the Chicago & Northwestern and Union Pacific" tracks. Numerous articles and editorials in the NCA's magazine extolled the marvels of the golden state. The rear covers of the April through August issues of the *Journal* boasted the attractions of southern California, including the California-Pacific

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International Exposition in San Diego that year, an attraction available to delegates following the convention. The promotions also promised:

You will appreciate the unusual comfort, the fine food, splendid service, the cool air-conditioned trains. The cost of your trip on the *Chiropractic Special* from Chicago to Los Angeles, including lower berth, all meals en route and Boulder Dam side trip (but not including rail fare), will be only \$27.25. The round trip railroad fare, Chicago to California, will be only \$86.00. Rates from other points and for other accommodations will be proportionately low ([Advertisement, 1935](#)).

Figure 2 about here:

The trip by train from Chicago to Hollywood required three days, and constituted both a part of the meeting for chiropractors who boarded and a part of the vacation package for doctors who brought their families for an adventure in exotic southern California. (The cover of the December, 1990 issue of *Chiropractic History* depicts some of the travelers on the *Chiropractic Special*). By 11PM Thursday the travelers reached Omaha, and by midday on Friday arrived in Cheyenne, Wyoming. After picking up additional conventioners in Salt Lake City the *Special* headed for Las Vegas, where the voyagers disembarked for the trip "via motor coaches" to visit Boulder Dam and a motorboat ride on the new lake created by the dam, then under construction (see Figure 2). Early Sunday morning the train was boarded in San Bernadino by the welcoming committee, consisting of Drs. J. Ralph John, James E. Slocum, R.C. Bertheau and Ben S. Williams, who "made them aware of their arrival in the 'sun-kissed land' by showering everyone with oranges galore" ([Rogers, 1935f](#)). The *Special* arrived in Los Angeles at 8:30AM, and the conventioners were shuttled to the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel (see Figures 3 and 4), which was reputedly frequented by movie stars.

Figures 3 and 4 about here:

The Hollywood meeting apparently attracted some 2,000 chiropractors and students ([Lee, 1935b](#)). If this figure is anywhere close to accurate, it would represent approximately 14% of the estimated 14,000 chiropractors in the United States ([Schulze, 1935](#)). It is tempting to think that the turnout belied the economic hard times that had come upon the nation, but it should be recalled that California was one of the chiropractically densest jurisdictions in the nation ([Gevitz, 1988](#)), and southern California was home to a great many chiropractic schools. C.O. Hunt, D.C., secretary of the California Board of Chiropractic Examiners, indicated that of the 3,352 licensed DCs in the state, 1,685 were located in the Los Angeles area ([Watkins, 1936b](#)). Paul Smallie, D.C., then a student at the Ratledge Chiropractic College in Los Angeles, recalls "a huge attendance" and "a spirit...of it being a very special time and filled with a program of the very latest in educational presentations" ([Smallie, 1992](#)); however, his mentor, T.F. Ratledge, did not attend the festivities ([Interview, 1992](#)). Out-going NCA president Ruland W. Lee, D.C. also described the convention in glowing terms:

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We thought 1934 in Pittsburgh was wonderful - and it was. But whoever dared dream of such a convention as 1935 in Hollywood, California, proved to be? Greeted by the Governor - entertained in exclusive clubs - ladies and guests whisked about for lavish entertainment, yet behind all this was an educational and scientific program packed in, pressed down, and full to overflowing. What a week!....Truly, life begins at forty... (Lee, 1935a).

Table 3 about here

The program was indeed chock-full of activities (see Table 3). Technique presentations were especially popular, and student-doctor Smallie, like many other budding chiropractors, was eager to take in all that was offered. Fred J. Carver (brother of Willard) was in attendance, lectured on anatomy and technique and held many informal discussions with students and doctors (Interview, 1992). Smallie had previously met James Drain while visiting with his elder brother at Drain's San Antonio school. The Texas chiropractor lectured on "philosophy, and in a presentation entitled "Why chiropractic always works," expressed the opinion that:

We can always find the cause of disease in the person who has it whether it can be adjusted or not. We should teach people that everyone who takes adjustments does not get well but that our adjustments are harmless. No one can be over adjusted and positively no injury can come from our adjustments. We should establish confidence in the science of Chiropractic by telling the truth about it and calling people's attention to the good that is in it without exaggeration. The chiropractor should feel in his own mind that Chiropractic is superior to all other methods of healing the sick and should radiate such confidence to the public and then live the part. We chiropractors should recognize Chiropractic authority and quote it freely and frequently (Drain, quoted in Slocum, 1935).

Straight chiropractor Drain's sentiments paralleled those of NCA's chief publicist, broad-scope practitioner and National School of Chiropractic graduate Harry K. McIlroy, D.C. of Indianapolis, whose previous public relations efforts had involved popularization of the angel insignia via the American Society of Chiropractors (Nash & Keating, in prep). McIlroy spoke in his capacity as Chairman of the Central Committee of the NCA Bureau on Public Education; Slocum (1935) described the Indianan's remarks:

The New Bureau has reached the conclusion that the effects obtained by publicity, however accomplished, are without a doubt well established and conceded by everyone - the public have come to realize that advertising or publicizing a product or theory is the guarantee of its quality or authenticity.

Doctor McIlroy displayed a prospectus for the new Chiropractic lay magazine "Progress" upon which the Bureau is laboring and which they hope to soon present to the profession for their consideration and approval. The magazine is about the size of the "Liberty" and designed to give Chiropractic the breaks and medicine the falls in a smooth dignified manner (Slocum, 1935).

Many other presentations focused on various techniques. Among these was DeJarnette's sacro-occipital technique, which was featured as "clinical research," and an extensive discussion, later published in its entirety in the NCA's *Journal*, of the history and methods of x-ray by the president of the NCA's Council of Roentgenologists, Warren L. Sausser, D.C. of New York City (Sausser, 1936a-c). Karl J. Hawkins, D.C., a regular presenter with the National Chiropractic Clinics and the northwest circuit of state association conventions, discussed x-ray methods and chiropractic hospitalization for psychological disorders. Francis J. Kolar, M.D., D.C. of Wichita, Kansas, demonstrated diagnostic methods used in his

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bloodless, manipulative surgery procedures. William G. Edwards, D.C., author of *Glanopathy* (Edwards, 1934), discussed his procedures for the internal disorders. Homer Beatty, president of the University of Natural Healing Arts in Denver, discussed a variety of adjustive methods, and Budden of Western States College considered the prerequisites for competent diagnosis:

The successful development and use of any worthwhile system of diagnosis, therefore, must rest upon the following propositions:

1. A knowledge of human morphology and embryology and the ability to apply such knowledge to the problems of human disease.
2. A clear grasp of the segmental arrangements of the human body and the interaction of visceral upon somatic segments, together with an appreciation of the appearance of same under careful examination.
3. A definite understanding of the significance of the fact that man belongs to the biological order of the orthograde vertebrates.
4. A working acquaintance with modern neurology.
5. The ability to successfully arrange the conclusions arising from the use of the above sciences and add up such conclusions so as to arrive at the correct answer.

This may seem to be a hard and difficult road to follow, yet the successful doctor, or at least diagnostician, must be prepared to devote the whole of his time and effort thereto, if he wishes to stand at the head of his profession, and I take it that such an ambition should be the goal of all who have the interests of humanity at heart (Budden, quoted in Slocum, 1935).

Prominent among Californian presenters was Palmer graduate Clyde F. Gillett, D.C., N.D., who had served on the faculty of the San Francisco College of Chiropractors and Drugless Physicians and by 1933 was teaching at the CCP&S. Gillett had already earned a reputation in the profession for his books and lectures on the conservative and manipulative treatment of eye, ear, nose and throat disorders and irisdiagnosis (e.g., Gillett, 1928). In numbers reminiscent of Mahlon Locke, M.D.'s high volume manipulative foot practice in Ontario (Keating et al., 1992; Robinson, 1935a-c), H.A. Post, D.C. of Oakland demonstrated his "million dollar" foot adjustment, and would later boast that "I examined 350 chiropractors at the NCA convention...only 6 without some arch trouble" in his advertisements for the "Post System for Feet" (Post, 1935). Charles H. Wood, D.C., N.D., president of the LACC, presented his heretofore "secret adjustment" for arthritis; Wood's LACC had scheduled its annual homecoming for the week prior to the NCA meeting (Attend, 1935). The CCP&S offered a "Foot Technic, Post Graduate course given during the National Convention" under the supervision of M.J. Pullman, D.S.C., D.C. (Foot, 1935).

One of the honors ceremonies was a meeting of the Pioneers Club, comprised of chiropractors in practice for 25 years or more. Among those so honored was Charles A. Cale, D.C., N.D., a 1909 graduate of the Storey School & Cure in Los Angeles. Cale was the founder of both the LACC and the CCP&S (Keating, Dishman et al., in press; Keating, Jackson et al., in review), and at the time of the convention was serving as president of the Chiropractic College of America and as dean of the California University of Liberal Physicians, both in Los Angeles. W. Martin Bleything, D.C., N.D., a 1908 graduate of the Pacific College of Chiropractic (later to become Western States College), professor of pathology and clinical director of the LACC, was honored for his 27 years in practice (Rogers, 1935f). The NCA's

new president, Cooley, who had graduated in 1908 under Old Dad Chiro during the latter's short stay at the Palmer-Gregory School in Oklahoma City, was also among the "Pioneers," as was the NCA's retiring vice-president, O.L. Brown of Akron, Ohio, a Palmer/Davenport graduate with 26 years of practice. Presenter Fred J. Carver, who was an early graduate of his brother's original Carver/Denny school in Oklahoma, Robert Ramsay, a 27-year veteran from the Minnesota Chiropractic College and O.A. Thompson, a 1909 graduate of the original Ratledge School in Guthrie, Oklahoma, were also among the honored senior doctors in attendance.

Figures 5 and 6 about here

Another attraction of the convention was the "most perfect body" contest (Fortieth, 1935). Held in the Memorial Auditorium to accommodate a large public audience (see Figures 5 and 6), the contest was a major promotional feature of the convention, and attracted the attention of photojournalists, who disseminated pictures of the winners and contestants. A collage of newspaper clippings of the convention, published in the September issue of NCA's *Journal*, suggested "more than 2500 column inches in California newspapers broadcast throughout the nation by Associated Press, United Press and International News Services" (Fortieth, 1935). A radio interview with James E. Slocum, D.C., director of NCA's National Chiropractic Clinics and future NCA Director of Research, was broadcast live from the convention over station WFAC (Rogers, 1935f). California Governor Merriam's opening remarks lent additional status to the meeting (Lee, 1935b; Rogers, 1935f). President Bertheau of the CCP&S arranged for a renowned choral group, of which he was a long-time member, to join the many entertainers featured at the conference.

Table 4 about here

The Path Less Traveled?

While the educational programs unfolded and the various honors ceremonies, contests and entertainment went on, the committees and councils of the NCA simultaneously conducted the business part of the meeting. The election of officers brought only one new face to the ranks of the organization's most senior leaders (see Table 4), that of Gordon M. Goodfellow, D.C., N.D. His reputation in California would now become nationwide; the following year he was elected president of the organization, and thereafter served for 12 years on the NCA's executive board (Rehm, 1980). However, Goodfellow's addition to the NCA's official family seems to have been quite important, for he also served, with Crider, Watkins and Nugent, on the newly formed Committee on Educational Standards.

The NCA governance structure had reasons to feel confident in its ability to influence events, for it noted an extraordinary 51% increase in membership over the previous year (Rogers, 1935f, 1936), and counted 21 state associations as affiliates (NCA News, 1935). Some sense of the organization's agenda

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and priorities was provided by out-going president Ruland Lee in his final presidential address. He blasted organized medicine, suggesting:

The time has long since passed when government can look to medical sources for authentic information concerning **all** healing methods. The states have recognized the merit of various drugless schools, hence the separate licensing provisions. Our work has developed into a comprehensive science entirely distinct from medical practice. Training and education in medicine do not, by any means, equip a student for practice in Chiropractic.....The old school has assumed an attitude that suggests to the public that it is the possessor of ALL healing knowledge....

Too much of our time has been spent in crying on the shoulder of the Legislator, the Editor and the Public, concerning the terrible treatment new health views receive from medical interests. In an effort to off-set this medical attack we have attempted to ape medical educational standards, ethics, legislative protection, and other methods. I can not shout too loudly: "It's time we stood up like men on our own two feet and set forth a program which will command respect for our own standards and beliefs"....The National Association has....started on the road of expansion. It has been lifted out of the sphere in which former national associations functioned in a limited way for so many years - that only of protection and defense....We are ready and willing to assume responsibility for that leadership which will safeguard the interests of the public and the profession in their relation to each other (Lee, quoted in [Slocum, 1935](#)).

Perhaps not surprisingly, many of the issues that the NCA considered were related to image enhancement and means of countering organized medicine. Leo L. Spears, D.C. of Denver proposed that the organization assist the field in establishing "Free Chiropractic Clinics for Poor Children," and was appointed director of this project ([NCA, 1935](#); [Spears, 1935f](#)). The convention also hosted the first meeting of the NCA's Council on Chiropractic Hospitals and Sanitaria ([Gibbons, 1983](#)). C.O. Watkins, D.C., NCA delegate from Montana, secretary of the Montana Chiropractic Association and chairman of the Advisory Committee of the NCA's Bureau of Public Information, discussed his efforts to ensure inclusion of chiropractic care under the newly enacted federal social security program ([Highlights, 1935](#)). Retiring chairman of the board, J.H. Durham, D.C., proposed that a "professionally-owned and operated Chiropractic college" be established ([Rogers, 1935f](#)), and a committee comprised of Beatty, Crider and Thor H. Halstein, D.C., N.D. was appointed. Kelly C. Robinson, D.C. of New York City was appointed director of a newly formed Department of Radio Publicity, and the creation of a patient-education magazine was contemplated. Several weeks after the convention a number of NCA leaders met to further the latter publicity plan:

Officers of the National Chiropractic association will meet today in Excelsior Springs as guests of the Excelsior Chiropractic sanitarium. Among those who will be present are Dr. C. Sterling Cooley, president, Tulsa, Okla.; Dr. L.M. Rogers, secretary and treasurer, Webster City, Ia.; Dr. A.W. Schwietert, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Dr. H.K. McIlroy, Indianapolis, Ind. Dr. McIlroy is the chairman of the bureau on Public Education. These doctors are meeting in Excelsior Springs for the purpose of devising ways and means whereby the Chiropractic practitioner will have a publication to distribute among his patients and prospective patients. It was agreed at a recent Chiropractic convention at Los Angeles, Calif., that such a publication should be issued at regular intervals and distributed to the chiropractor. It was also intimated that the association members in part were contemplating the establishing of a Chiropractic college and sanitarium. This matter also will be discussed at the meeting. - *The Daily Standard* (Excelsior Springs) ([National, 1935](#)).

Although the full magnitude of its implications may not have been recognized at the time, undoubtedly the most important business of the convention was the joint meeting ([Crider, 1936](#); [Rogers, 1935f](#)) of

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"National Council on Educational Institutions" and "National Council of State Examining Boards." From this meeting evolved the NCA's Committee on Educational Standards, forerunner of today's Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE). The committee was proposed by Watkins (With, 1948), who had previously detailed a plan to prevent the spread of basic science legislation through the exclusive accreditation of chiropractic schools which elected to adopt a standardized curricula of four years of nine-months each (Watkins, 1934). The Committee on Educational Standards seems to have operated somewhat independently from the Joint Committee (of Examining Boards and School Heads) noted by Crider (1936). Crider also noted that there continued to be considerably greater consensus about the standardization of chiropractic education among representatives of the examining boards than among the college presidents. The Joint Committee determined (Crider, 1936) that in establishing a system for rating (i.e., accrediting) the chiropractic colleges:

1. It will be necessary to rate schools teaching the orthodox methods and those teaching the more liberal methods in separate categories as regards list of class hours and equipment.
2. All authorities agree, two thousand sixty-minute hours is the maximum that can be taught in three years of six months. This basis, although somewhat less intent, is used in compiling the scale and setting it as regards to curriculum.
3. It must be comparable with other professions' standards.
4. The Schools being commercial in character (with very few exceptions) it is necessary to give due consideration to financial stability of the Institution.
5. In accordance with the tendency of all state laws, wherever amended, the trend being upward from the three years of six months level, it became obvious the scale minimum for grade A probationary rating must be twenty-four months for the fundamental course and four years of eight months for the liberal course.
6. In order that all schools may have an opportunity to meet the final requirement of **fundamental** (three years of nine months) and the **liberal** (four years of nine), one calendar year - until January 1, 1937, is given for probationary rating of all Chiropractic Schools and colleges.
7. The scale must be so constructed as to include from the minimum of set requirements to the maximum as taught by any Chiropractic school of today

Crider acknowledged the difficulty involved in attempting to mandate the proposed standards through amendment of state laws governing the practice of chiropractic, but was determined to try. John J. Nugent, D.C., who would later (1941-1961) serve as the NCA's Director of Education, noted in an interview with sociologist Walter Wardwell that:

In 1935 we called a meeting in Hollywood, Calif., to which 19 state examining boards sent representatives. Initially we sought to raise chiropractic standards through uniform examinations, but soon saw that this would not work (Gibbons, 1985).

Indeed, not only would the proposed implementation have required extraordinary legislative actions in a variety of state and provincial jurisdictions, but it also threatened to open chiropractic laws to the meddling of organized medicine. As well, there were many chiropractic college leaders who were entirely unwilling to participate in any plan that would regulate the operation of their private businesses. The hostility of some school leaders (straight and mixer) is exemplified by a letter written in July, 1937 to NCA's executive secretary, Loran M. Rogers, from the Ratledge College president; T.F. Ratledge was not going to budge from the 2,400 hour curriculum mandated by California's Chiropractic Act:

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Gentlemen:

Your affiliate council, the "Council of State Chiropractic Examining Boards," through its President, Dr. Wayne F. Crider of Hagerstown Maryland, has notified me in writing of its avowed purpose of classifying the Ratledge Chiropractic College in spite of our previous written objection thereto.

On July 9th, we notified Dr. Crider that we would not consent to any classification whatsoever by the N.C.A. or any of its affiliates and definitely warned that in case he or the Council does attempt to so classify our institution among Chiropractic teaching institutions we will resort to the courts to recover any damages which we believe to have resulted to said Ratledge Chiropractic College by such classification....

...We regret to feel it necessary to call your attention to this matter but in view of the very arbitrary position assumed by the Council of State Boards of Chiropractic Examiners, whose purpose and ability are both highly questionable, from our point of view, we feel that we would not be fair with you if we did not advise you in advance of Dr. Crider's threat and of our defiance to same ([Ratledge, 1937](#)).

In the months immediately following the convention leaders of several proprietary, straight chiropractic schools began to organize an alternative to the NCA accreditation process. James Drain indicated that he would join with Ratledge and the Cleveland College in Kansas City in the formation of an alternative body ([Drain, 1936](#)), initially known as the Associated Chiropractic Colleges of America (ACCA) ([Cleveland, 1936](#)) and later as the Allied Chiropractic Educational Institutions (ACEI). This organization's formation seems to have been a reaction to the initiative of some of the most progressive schools ([Kightlinger, 1936](#)), who had organized the Affiliated Universities of Natural Healing. Apparently, the activities of the NCA and the Council of State Examining Board were not extensive enough or quick enough for these broad-scope educators. In a December, 1935 advertisement in NCA's *Journal* they announced the intent of their accrediting body:

We wish to encourage the profession in efforts toward reasonable, higher and broader standards; and wish to help blaze the way to greater progress and development in conformity with the great merits of chiropractic.

A regular standard, four years of nine months each, course in Chiropractic and allied subjects is warranted by our profession and offered by the following school members of this affiliation:

(Membership open to qualifying schools)

WESTERN STATES COLLEGE, 438 SE Elder, Portland, Oregon

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE OF CHIROPRACTIC AND PHYSIOTHERAPY, 3400 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, Ohio

UNIVERSITY OF THE HEALING ARTS, 840 Asylum Ave., Hartford, Conn.

UNIVERSITY OF NATURAL HEALING ARTS, 1631 Glenarm St., Denver, Colorado

Write direct for catalogs or further information. Your support of the above educational standards through new students, is solicited ([Affiliated, 1935](#))

Conclusion

The fate of the Affiliated Universities of Natural Healing is not known to this writer. The activities of the NCA's educational reform movement eventually became centered in its Committee on Educational Standards, which was incorporated as the Council on Education in 1947 under Nugent's leadership. Although the ACEI's formal break with the NCA would not take place until July, 1940 ([ACEI, 1940](#); [Keating et al., 1991](#)), the straight college consortium commenced publication of its *ACCA News* circa 1937 with Carl Cleveland, Sr. as editor and publisher. Logan Basic College of Chiropractic in St. Louis, formed the same year as NCA's Hollywood convention, would remain in a "limbo" between the two camps for some years ([Gibbons, 1985](#)). The ACEI affiliated with B.J. Palmer's International Chiropractors' Association (ICA) in the early 1940s, and included a variety of mostly proprietary, shorter-

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course institutions, including the Cleveland, Carver, Columbia, Eastern, O'Neil-Ross, Palmer, Ratledge and Texas schools. During the 1950s the allegiances of at least one of these would switch: the Texas Chiropractic College under Julius Troilo, D.C.'s leadership became an NCA-accredited institution. The National College under Schulze and later Joseph J. Janse, D.C. was a strong supporter of the NCA's educational reforms, as were the Chiropractic Institute of New York, Canadian Memorial in Toronto, the CCP&S (renamed Southern California College of Chiropractic in 1938), the Lincoln Chiropractic College in Indianapolis, Metropolitan Chiropractic College in Cleveland, Ohio, the Northwestern College in Minneapolis and the Universal Chiropractic College in Pittsburgh.

The feud between the several camps of school leaders and national associations would continue for decades, and became somewhat bitter following the CCE's recognition by the U.S. Office of Education in 1974 (e.g., [Armstrong, 1979](#)). When Palmer College of Chiropractic sought and received CCE accreditation in the late 1970s, the ICA also chose to support the CCE, and the remaining ICA-affiliated institutions have since achieved CCE status. However, the continuing contest between the CCE and today's Straight Chiropractic Academic Standards Association may be seen as a continuation of events which flowed from the 1935 convention.

Despite their differences, adherents to both schools of thought ("philosophies") were united in 1935 in several ways. The AMA's campaign to eliminate the chiropractic profession provided a common enemy and basis for cooperation, in some respects at least. Although Palmer frequently sided with political medicine in opposing the legal initiatives of the "mixers," the factions were united in their belief that one of the greatest challenges facing the profession was the need for massive national advertising. Straights and mixers had occasionally collaborated in such campaigns (e.g., [Nash & Keating, in review](#)), and often worked in parallel if not in harmony to raise chiropractic's visibility among the public. Generations of chiropractors before and since the 1935 convention have seen advertising and marketing as the means of overcoming medicine's onslaught and of achieving chiropractic's "rightful place" in society. B.J. Palmer had even claimed to have developed the science "with printer's ink." Texas College's James Drain apparently spoke with sincerity when he insisted that chiropractic "always works," that "no harm can come from our adjustments," yet simultaneously spoke of advertising truthfully and "without exaggeration" (Drain, quoted in [Slocum, 1935](#)). Little recognition of the boundaries of propriety in health care marketing was in evidence among such leaders. Radio publicity (e.g., [Robinson, 1936](#)) and a patient magazine ([National, 1935](#)) were the NCA's chosen strategies at the fortieth anniversary; *Reader's Digest* campaigns are of more recent vintage.

Only rarely was the importance of substantive clinical research mentioned in the 1935 era, and this by rather junior members of the profession (e.g., [Dintenfass, 1934](#); [Lysne, 1934](#)). Although leaders such as Universal Chiropractic College president Leo J. Steinbach, D.C. had long advocated a concerted, profession-wide program of investigation, his efforts generally fell on deaf ears. As noted earlier, the

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NCA's chief publicists, McIlroy and Slocum, felt that advertising per se was the basis of substantiating clinical theories and methods: "the public have come to realize that advertising or publicizing a product or theory is the guarantee of its quality or authenticity" (Slocum, 1935). The positive press that a genuine scientific enterprise might have brought to chiropractors was very dimly perceived, if at all, and given the lack of research sophistication in the profession in its middle ages, a short-term publicity yield from scholarly clinical investigations was not really an option.

What was produced were endless advertising tracts reporting statistics of questionable validity, such as "percentage of recovery" statistics for a variety of named conditions (e.g., American, 1929; What, 1936, 1937). Meanwhile in Davenport, many hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent at the B.J. Palmer Research Clinic in the 1930s and later in a futile effort to create a chiropractic version of the Mayo Clinic. The dismal return in new knowledge from this effort, largely attributable to an inattention to the rules of evidence in clinical research, typifies the scientific naiveté of most DCs. The later efforts (1940-1970) of C.O. Watkins would similarly produce little real interest in testing the value of chiropractic methods (Watkins, 1944; Keating, 1987, 1988). Thirteen years after the Hollywood convention Watkins would propose formal training in the philosophy of science and in clinical research methods for all chiropractic students (Watkins, 1948). Ironically, Western States' Budden, who had led the campaign among college leaders to raise basic science educational standards, would reject clinical research training as a means of furthering chiropractic science (Budden, 1948). Not until the eightieth year of chiropractic would the broad-scope association (reorganized as the American Chiropractic Association in 1963) call for controlled clinical trials of the chiropractic manipulative arts (Dallas, 1975), and another decade would pass before the first such experiment would be reported (Waagen et al., 1986). In several respects the "rationalist" tradition that guided the NCA's long climb out of proprietary education and enabled the profession to meet the challenge of basic science legislation simultaneously impeded the development of the clinical science of chiropractic (Keating, 1989, 1990).

On reflection, C.S. Cooley appropriately described the profession in 1935 as "At the crossroads," for the NCA's celebration in Hollywood was a genuine turning point in the profession's history, and marked the beginning of chiropractic's middle age. The road traveled since may not be the one intended by those pioneers, nor, with nearly 60 years of hindsight, the optimal path. At that crossroads Cooley saw one path leading to oblivion, a second to "another forty years of 'wandering in the wilderness' of uncertainty, persecution and chaos," and a third which "leads to a land of promise - where truth rules supreme" (Cooley, 1935a). It was the best of times and the worst of times; the reader may contemplate to what extent it was a time very much like our own.

Figure Captions:

1. Cartoon view of basic science legislation from *The Chiropractic Journal* (NCA) 1936 (Apr); 4(4): 14; the original caption reads: "The medical monopolist is a modern highwayman. Basic Science legislation was cunningly conceived about ten years ago by the organized politico-medicos as an insidious and painless? method of gradually eliminating the Natural Healing Arts through the discriminatory use of the licensing provision in the various states. Let's examine the record! In 1933 (eight years after enactment) 112 medical doctors were examined by the Basic Science board of Connecticut, and 111 of them were passed. During the same period ALL chiropractors examined by them were failed. In 1933 (eight years after enactment) 89 medical doctors were examined by the Basic Science board of Wisconsin and all of them were passed. During the same period ALL chiropractors examined by them were failed! Politics (not qualifications) is the issue! THE BURNING QUESTION: Shall the People be Denied the Doctor and Method of their Choice?"
2. Cover of the August, 1935 issue of *The Chiropractic Journal* (NCA); the original caption reads "National convention-vacationers will view gigantic Boulder Dam enroute via the *Chiropractic Special*. Above photo was taken from the Arizona side of the world's greatest dam."
3. This photo was featured on the cover of the July, 1935 issue of *The Chiropractic Journal* (NCA); the original caption reads "Hollywood's largest and finest hotel - the Hollywood Roosevelt - will be official headquarters for the Fortieth Anniversary National Chiropractic Convention, July 28 to Aug. 2"
4. Hollywood Boulevard looking east from Highland Avenue, Los Angeles, 1935. The Planetarium can be seen in the background; from the NCA photographic collection.
5. This photo appeared in the August, 1935 issue of *The Chiropractic Journal* (NCA); 4(8):45; the original caption reads "The Perfect Body Contest on Tuesday evening, July 30, and The Great Public Meeting on Wednesday evening, July 31, will be held in this Memorial Auditorium, which seats over 3000 people. Two feature events at the Convention."
6. Photo appeared in the September, 1935 issue of *The Chiropractic Journal* (NCA); 4(9):13; the original caption reads "Above photo of tremendous crowd at the National Convention was taken July 31, in Memorial Auditorium (which seats 3000). Note B.P.O.E. "99 Chanters" in the fore-aisles and ten Perfect Body Contest Winners in the front center row."

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Table Captions:

1. "A Saga of San Jose (Dedicated to Bartlett Joshua Palmer) With Apologies to All by An Interested Observer"; from *The Chiropractic Journal* (NCA), April, 1935, p. 36
2. Enactment (through 1935) of basic science legislation in the United States; based on Gevitz (1988) and Sauer (1932)
3. Major speakers at the National Chiropractic Association's 1935 convention in Hollywood
4. Outgoing and newly elected officers and executive board members at the National Chiropractic Association's 1935 convention

Table 2: Enactment (through 1935) of basic science legislation in the United States;
based on Gevitz (1988) and Sauer (1932)

Origins & Early History of the NCA

<u>Dates of Enactment</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Dates of Enactment</u>	<u>State</u>
1925	Wisconsin	1929	Arkansas
1925	Connecticut	1929	District of Columbia
1927	Minnesota	1933	Oregon
1927	Nebraska	1935	Iowa
1927	Washington		

Table 4: Outgoing and newly elected officers and executive board members at the 1935 NCA convention

<u>1934-1935</u>	<u>1935-1936</u>
<u>Officers:</u>	<u>Officers:</u>
Ruland W. Lee, D.C., <i>President</i> , Newark NJ	C. Sterling Cooley, D.C., <i>President</i> , Tulsa OK
O.L. Brown, D.C., <i>Vice-President</i> , Akron OH	Gordon Goodfellow, D.C., N.D., <i>Vice-President</i> , Los Angeles
Loran M. Rogers, D.C., <i>Executive Secretary</i> , Webster City IA	Loran M. Rogers, D.C., <i>Secretary-Treasurer</i> , Webster City IA
C. Sterling Cooley, D.C., <i>Treasurer</i> , Tulsa OK	C.R. Hart, <i>Asst. Treasurer</i> , La Crosse WI
C.R. Hart, <i>Asst. Treasurer</i> , La Crosse WI	
<u>Executive Board:</u>	<u>Executive Board:</u>
J.H. Durham, D.C., <i>Chairman</i> , Louisville KY	O.A. Ohlson, D.C., <i>Chairman</i> , Denver
Wilbern Lawrence, D.C., <i>Member</i> , Meridian MS	Wilbern Lawrence, D.C., <i>Member</i> , Meridian MS
Arthur W. Schweitert, D.C., <i>Member</i> , Sioux Falls SD	Arthur W. Schweitert, D.C., <i>Member</i> , Sioux Falls SD
C.M. Guyselman, D.C., <i>Member</i> , Jackson MI	C.M. Guyselman, D.C., <i>Member</i> , Jackson MI
O.A. Ohlson, D.C., <i>Member</i> , Denver	Ruland W. Lee, D.C., <i>Member</i> , Newark NJ

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April 16, 1993

Thomas F. Bergman, D.C., *Editor*

Chiropractic Technique

735 Keokuk Lane

Mendota Heights MN 55120

Dear Tom,

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I would ask that you return all photographs to me when you are finished with them.

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