



**Figure 1: Carver-Denny Chiropractic College in Oklahoma City (courtesy of James Edwards, DC)**

CHIROPRACTIC (GENERAL)

## 100 Years Ago in Chiropractic

Joseph Keating Jr., PhD



**Figure 1: Carver-Denny Chiropractic College in Oklahoma City (courtesy of James Edwards, DC).**

All in all, 1907 was a good year for chiropractors. In Davenport, Iowa, enrollment at the Palmer School of Chiropractic (PSC) was growing, from four students in 1902 when B.J. Palmer, DC, took charge as manager to 96 students in 1907.<sup>5</sup> The PSC's alumni were spreading out around the nation and the globe. Some were practicing and some also were teaching, so as to doubly spread

the new health concept. (See Table 1.) Charles Ray Parker, DC, graduated from PSC in 1905, and promptly opened a school in Ottumwa, Iowa. The Parker School had graduated Willard Carver, LLB, DC, and L.L. Denny, DC, and these two were now operating the Carver-Denny Kiropractic College and Infirmary in Oklahoma City.<sup>14</sup> Among Carver's earliest students was Tullius de Florence Ratledge, who took his degree in 1907. Dr. Ratledge is best remembered as the founder, in 1911, of what is today the Cleveland Chiropractic College of Los Angeles.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 2: Alva Gregory and D.D. Palmer, presumably in Oklahoma City (Texas Chiropractic College Archives).**

Meanwhile, the founder of the profession, D.D. Palmer, was teaching (briefly) with his partner, Carver graduate Alva Gregory, MD, DC, at the Palmer-Gregory College of Chiropractic in Oklahoma City.<sup>3</sup> In California, Thomas H. Storey, DC, another early Palmer graduate, was teaching and practicing. Among his patients and soon-to-be students was Charles A. Cale, founder of the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic in 1911.<sup>8</sup> Further up the coast, in Oakland, Palmer alumnus Harry D. Reynard, DC, was operating the Pacific School of Chiro-Practic and serving as vice president of the Golden State's naturopathic society.<sup>8</sup> Still further north, in Portland, Ore., Palmer graduate John E. Marsh, DC, had founded the Marsh School and Cure, an institutional ancestor of today's Western States Chiropractic College.<sup>6</sup>



**Figure 3: Dr. John Howard and the National School's graduates, 1907 (courtesy of the National University of Health Sciences).**

B.J. Palmer had competition in chiropractic's hometown. In 1906, another Palmer alumnus, John F.A. Howard, DC, opened the National School of Chiropractic (today's National University of Health Sciences in Lombard, Ill.). In 1908, Howard would move the tiny institution to Chicago, where a greater volume of patients, students and cadavers were available. In the short term, Howard was a competitor for the PSC's potential student pool.

By 1905, two chiropractic schools bore similar names: the American School of Chiropractic & Nature Cure founded in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and the American School of Chiropractic (ASC) in New York City. The former had been founded by 1901 Palmer graduate Solon Massey Langworthy, DC,<sup>2,5</sup> perhaps the first chiropractor to be accused of "mixing." Langworthy's school was already fading from the scene by 1907, but Benedict Lust, MD, DC, who operated the ASC alongside his

American School of Naturopathy,<sup>10</sup> would take broad-scope chiropractic into areas that infuriated the "straight" chiropractic wing of the profession.

Table 1: Several early schools of chiropractic, 1896-1908

Founding Date	Institutional Name	Location	Founder
1896	Palmer School of Magnetic Cure	Davenport, Iowa	D.D. Palmer
1903	American School of Chiropractic & Nature Cure	Cedar Rapids, Iowa	Solon Massey Langworthy, DC
1904	Marsh School of Chiropractic	Portland, Ore.	John E. Marsh, DC
1904	Pacific School of Chiro-Practic	Oakland, Calif.	Harry D. Reynard, DC
1905	American School of Chiropractic	New York City	Benedict Lust, MD, ND, DC
1905	Parker School of Chiropractic	Ottumwa, Iowa	Charles Ray Parker, DC
1906	Carver-Denny Kiropractic College	Oklahoma City	Willard Carver, LLB, DC, and Lee L. Denny, DC
1906	National School of Chiropractic	Davenport, Iowa	John F.A. Howard, DC
1907	Palmer-Gregory College of Chiropractic	Oklahoma City	D.D. Palmer and Alva Gregory, MD, DC
1908	D.D. Palmer College of Chiropractic	Portland, Ore.	D.D. Palmer and L.M. Gordon, DC
1908	Texas Chiropractic College	San Antonio	J.N. Stone, MD, DC
1908	Michigan College of Chiropractic	Grand Rapids, Mich.	N.C. Ross, DC
1908	Ratledge System of Chiropractic Schools	Guthrie, Okla.	T.F. Ratledge, DC
1908	Minnesota Chiropractic College	Minneapolis	Robert Ramsay, DC



**Figure 4:** First campus of the NSC was the same building where Harvey Lillard had received the first chiropractic adjustment.



**Figure 5:** Campus of the American School of Naturopathy, 1907 (courtesy of John F. Thie, DC).



**Figure 6: Dr. Benedict  
Lust, circa 1918  
(courtesy of John F.  
This, DC).**

The most significant event for chiropractors in 1907 was the acquittal of 1906 Palmer alumnus Shegetaro Morikubo, DC.<sup>5,11</sup> A graduate also in philosophy from a university in Tokyo, Morikubo was a student at the PSC during D.D. Palmer's trial and jailing in Scott County in March and April 1906. Later that year, after award of his DC, Morikubo joined Dr. B.J. Palmer and more than a dozen other Palmer alumni to establish the longest-lasting legal protective society of chiropractors: the Universal Chiropractors Association (UCA). (The UCA is the earliest forerunner of both today's American Chiropractic Association/ACA and the National Chiropractic Mutual Insurance Company/NCMIC.) When Morikubo was arrested in 1907 for unlicensed practice in LaCrosse, Wis., the UCA's secretary, B.J. Palmer, hired state Senator Tom Morris to defend the young doctor. Morris (future lieutenant governor of Wisconsin) persuaded the district attorney to drop the charges of practicing medicine and surgery without a license, since Morikubo had neither given drugs nor performed surgery. Instead, Morikubo was tried for practicing osteopathy without a license.



**Figure 7: Dr. Shegetaro  
Morikubo**



To make the case for the Japanese-American doctor (whose race was an issue), Morris called expert witnesses to the stand who held both chiropractic and osteopathic diplomas. The experts testified that chiropractic and osteopathy had "separate and distinct" philosophies and modes of practice. Osteopaths, it was erroneously claimed, were only interested in the "rule of the artery" (i.e., the circulation) and chiropractors were only concerned with the role of the nervous system in health and illness. Their assertions were supplemented by the wording of an early text, *Modernized Chiropractic*,<sup>12</sup> which reaffirmed the unique "philosophy" of chiropractic. The jury took less than 30 minutes to decide that Dr. Morikubo was not guilty of practicing osteopathy when he practiced chiropractic. It was the first major legal victory for the profession.



**Figure 8: Attorney Tom Morris**

Mr. Morris' winning arguments in the Morikubo case would be reiterated in numerous criminal trials of chiropractors in the years to come. As well, Dr. Palmer, who had attended the trial in his capacity as secretary of the UCA, hired Morris as chief legal counsel of the protective society. Morris and the attorneys who succeeded him (Arthur T. Holmes, Robert D. Johns, Robert Johns, Jr., Daniel T. Flaherty) continued to serve the legal needs of chiropractors into the 1980s.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, B.J. had his PSC faculty award him the first "Philosopher of Chiropractic" (PhC) degree in 1908. In parallel to Morris' status as UCA's chief legal counsel (1907-1928), B.J. anointed himself the "chief philosophical counsel" of the profession, and the rest, as they say, is history.

The chiropractic profession saw the continuing proliferation in 1907. As well, it marked a turning point in the fortunes and outlook for chiropractors, who had previously known only defeat when political medicine drew upon the police powers of the state in its efforts to contain and eliminate the younger profession. It was a time to remember.



**Figure 9: Dr. B.J.  
Palmer**

If your interest in chirohistory has been stimulated, then consider joining the Association for the History of Chiropractic (AHC). Founded at Spears Hospital in Denver in 1980, the AHC is a non-profit, membership organization whose goal is the discovery, dissemination and preservation of the saga of chiropractic. The AHC held its first annual Conference on Chiropractic History at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., in 1981, and has held similar conferences each year since at various chiropractic colleges and other sites. The AHC's 2008 Conference on Chiropractic History will be held in conjunction with the centennial celebration of the Texas Chiropractic College. Details about the upcoming conference will be forthcoming from the AHC's executive director, or by checking the AHC Web site at [www.historyofchiropractic.org](http://www.historyofchiropractic.org).

The AHC publishes a scholarly journal, *Chiropractic History*, in which chiropractors and interested observers contribute their expertise to telling and interpreting the rich lore of the profession. Published twice per year, *Chiropractic History* is distributed to all members of the AHC as a membership benefit. Membership in the AHC can be obtained by sending your name, address and check for \$75 (\$30/year for students) to the AHC's executive director:

Glenda Wiese, Ph.D.,  
*Executive Director*  
Association for  
the History of Chiropractic  
1000 Brady Street,  
Davenport IA 52803 USA

#### References

1. Gallaher H. *History of Chiropractic*. Guthrie, OK: Co-operative Publishing Co., 1930.
2. Gibbons RW. Solon Massey Langworthy: Keeper of the flame during the "lost years" of chiropractic. *Chiropractic History*, 1981;1:14-21.
3. Gielow V. *Old Dad Chiro: A Biography of D.D. Palmer, Founder of Chiropractic*. Davenport, IA: Bawden Brothers, 1981.
4. Jackson RB. Willard Carver, LL B, DC, 1866-1943: doctor, lawyer, Indian chief, prisoner and more. *Chiropractic History*, Dec. 1994;14(2):12-20.
5. Keating JC. *B.J. of Davenport: The Early Years of Chiropractic*. Davenport, IA: Association for the History of Chiropractic, 1997.
6. Keating JC. Early chiropractic education in Oregon. *Journal of the Canadian Chiropractic Association*, March 2002;46(1):39-60.
7. Keating JC, Brown RA, Smallie P. Tullius de Florence Ratledge: The missionary of straight chiropractic in California. *Chiropractic History*, Dec. 1991;11(2):26-38.
8. Keating JC, Phillips RB, Eds.: *A History of Los Angeles College of Chiropractic*. Whittier, CA: Southern California University of Health Sciences, 2001.
9. Keating JC, Sportelli L, Siordia L. *We Take Care of Our Own: NCMIC and the Story of Malpractice Insurance in Chiropractic*. Clive, IA: NCMIC Group, Inc., 2004.
10. Lust B. *Universal naturopathic encyclopedia, directory and buyer's guide: year book of drugless therapy*. New York, 1918.
11. Rehm WS. Legally defensible: chiropractic in the courtroom and after, 1907. *Chiropractic History*, 1986;6:50-5.
12. Smith OG, Langworthy SM, Paxson M. *Modernized Chiropractic*. Cedar Rapids, IA: Laurance Press, 1906.

