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Harvey Cushing's *Life of Sir William Osler*: 1925-2025

Harvey Cushing's (1869-1939) Pulitzer Prize winning *Life of Sir William Osler* was first published one hundred years ago by Oxford University Press on 16 April 1925. Ever since that time, it has remained the principal source of primary biographical material on William Osler (1849-1919), one of the medical profession's great leaders at the turn of the twentieth century. Cushing was chosen as Osler's biographer within weeks of the latter's death when Lady Grace Osler (1854-1928) read his January 1920 obituary of her late husband for the *Boston Evening Transcript*. Over the following five years, Cushing worked closely with 'Tanta Grace', amassing an extraordinary archive of original letters and correspondence materials relating to his subject. In the end he turned out a one-million-word life-and-letters style manuscript which was cut down to about 700,000 words for the publishers. The biography sold over 15,000 copies in one year when first printed and was very well received by Osler's generation who felt that the "beloved physician" was made to "live again" in Cushing's expansive monograph. In this centenary review of Cushing's *Life*, we re-examine the authors' highly successful twenty-five-year mentor-protégé relationship with Osler and study the life of the biography from its inception to final printing in 1982. Few physicians have inspired like Osler, a pervasive belief in the humanistic outlook and core philanthropic objectives of the medical profession. Harvey Cushing's *Life of Sir William Osler* – one of the truly great medical biographies of the past century – helped to memorialise and perpetually uphold that belief.