

## Book Case

Mr Barry Clements, 6 favourites from my bookcase.

### THE GREATEST GAME EVER PLAYED: VARDON, OUMET AND THE BIRTH OF MODERN GOLF

Mark Frost, (Sphere, 2003)



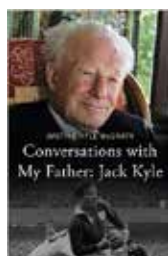
*'There are many things in life that will catch your eye, but only a few will catch your heart - pursue these'* Mark Nolan.

These are 'passions' I guess and we are blessed with hosts of quotes from Mandela to Einstein which motivate us to lead more fulfilling lives - Just google them! One of my lifelong passions is golf and throughout my life it has always been there like a old friend whose stories never lose their mirth or warmth. It is both consistent and reliable in bonding lifelong friendships and providing much joy.

This book by Mark Frost tells the story of the conception of the modern game of golf and in particular sowed the seed of the transatlantic rivalry that germinated with this story and has flourished into the spectacle that descends upon us every other Autumn in the form of the Ryder Cup. In this book Mark Frost relates the romantic 'David and Goliath' tale of how Francis Quimet, an obscure amateur golfer and local boy defeated the illustrious Englishman Harry Vardon in the 1913 US open at the 'Country Club' Brookline. I've had the honour of gracing the hallowed turf in Brookline when I represented the Irish Universities versus US Colleges in 1982 and gave my opponent a proverbial 'Dog Licence' 7&6 making 2 at three of the four par three's - A cherished indelible memory!

### CONVERSATIONS WITH MY FATHER: JACK KYLE

Justine Kyle McGrath, (Hachett Books, 2014)



What can I say - If we

ever cared to dream and aspire to all that we ever wished for - Jack Kyle would be a reasonable role model! This book makes my list as it ticks all the boxes for me as a surgeon, sportsman and son.

The term legend is over used today but Jack was the archetypal 'Legend' in all senses of the word. He captained Ireland to their fabled Grand Slam victory in 1948 and was given official recognition by the IRFU in 2002 as their 'greatest ever player'.

I was recommended this book by a surgical colleague, Brian Rees who himself was a Welsh International hooker and its easy to see how this book was his 'cup of tea'. I'm not sure what it is about Surgeons and Rugby - should it be hollering for all ones worth at the Kingspan on a Friday night to the legendary status of Surgical Internationals such as Irwin Snr, Wilson and Kyle. We love it - it brings out the gladiator in us in one form or another.

Jack's daughter Justine Kyle McGrath makes no secret of the fact that she grew up blissfully unaware that her dad was anything but a family - and a medical - man - How humbling is that! This is a searingly honest and intimate book that celebrates Jack's double life as a sporting legend and pioneering surgeon. It was Jack's brush with death that provoked the proximity between Justine and her Father which eventually convinced this reluctant hero to allow this publication. It's this element of the book that I find most salutatory and I am encouraged to spend more time with my Father and cherish that bond - while I still can.

### CLINICAL ANATOMY 13TH EDITION

Harold Ellis and Vishy Mahadevan (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013)

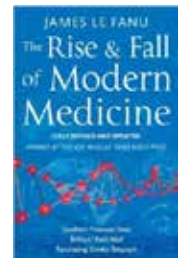


This book was first published in 1960 - before I was born! Harold qualified in 1948 - a great year in medicine and rugby - The NHS was born and Jackie Kyle was winning a Grand Slam - Harold Ellis is one of the greatest Anatomy teachers alive, 90 this year, and believe it or not

he's still as active and entertaining as ever - He is truly a great raconteur and teacher. I've used this book on many occasions from undergraduate days through my Anatomy Demonstratorship and many more times as practising Surgeon and teacher. Where this book is better than all the rest is that it gives the subject of anatomy perspective and relevance! Professor Ellis makes anatomy interesting. I have been fortunate enough to meet him in person when attending a lecture back in the 80's in the Samuel Irwin Lecture theatre, where, as a guest of Mr Odling-Smee, he lectured on Modern Management of Breast Cancer. He told stories in series for about an hour and captivated his audience throughout. The greatest thing I take from this book relates to the author. It reflects his energy, clarity and the art of teaching well - something I can only aspire to.

### THE RISE AND FALL OF MODERN MEDICINE [REVISED EDITION]

James Le Fanu (Abacus, 2011)

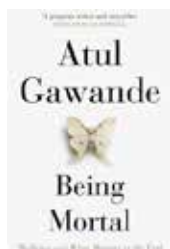


This book should be on the reading list for every prospective Medical Student during the 'purgatory' that exists between Upper sixth and University. To the best of my knowledge, it's on the reading list for prospective Oxbridge Medical Freshmen. The medical achievements of the post-war years rank as one of the supreme epochs of human endeavour. Advances in surgical technique, new ideas about the nature of disease and huge innovations in drug manufacture vanquished most common causes of early death, but, since the mid-1970s the rate of development has slowed, and the future of medicine is uncertain. How has this happened? James Le Fanu's hugely acclaimed survey of the 'twelve definitive moments' of modern medicine and the intellectual vacuum which followed them has been fully revised and updated for this edition. The Rise and Fall of Modern Medicine is both riveting drama and a clarion call for change. There are those that would challenge the 'Fall' element of le Fanu's

claims and the revised edition doesn't really achieve the desired effect when compared with the original publication in 2002. Nonetheless this publication is inspirational and provides perspective to anyone starting out on their medical career. It throws down the gauntlet on many fronts challenging the eager young mind to the possibilities and opportunities that a career in Medicine affords. After all - things are only impossible in one's mind!

### BEING MORTAL: MEDICINE AND WHAT MATTERS IN THE END

Atul Gawande (Profile Books, 2015)



I imagine no-one will be surprised to find that this book made the cut. Atul Gawande is rapidly becoming the 'Medical Philosopher of our time'. What's more, he's a Surgeon so we are kindred spirits. On the back of 'Complications' 2002, 'Better' 2007 and 'The Checklist Manifesto' 2009, in *Being Mortal*, Atul Gawande tackles the hardest challenge of our profession: Dealing with Death at a time when we are consumed with preserving life to the 'bitter end'.

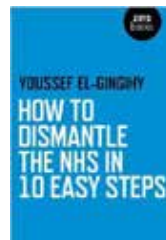
We are confronted with new language

such as 'Wilful neglect' and 'Avoidable harm', terms which ring loudly in our ears as we try to do what's best for our patients. As doctors we are privileged yet vulnerable as we exercise life and death decisions from day to day. Medicine is not an exact science. None the less, we must never be thwarted from the responsibility to practice what we have learned through experience. We can prepare well. Gawande eloquently deals with this thorny subject and provides a blueprint for our profession.

Paul Coelho, the novelist captures my sentiment perfectly. '*When you find your path, you must not be afraid. You need to have sufficient courage to make mistakes. Disappointment, defeat and despair are the tools God uses to show us the way*'

### HOW TO DISMANTLE THE NHS IN 10 EASY STEPS

Youssef El-Gingihy  
(Zero Books, 2015)



I am no heretic, but please indulge me for this last of my six choices. I would recommend this little book to you if you feel that your coffee time chat has become dull. The book is thought provoking for those of

us who feel the pressure and constraints imposed by the current NHS and I would guess that's all of us. Surveying the canvas of the past 30 years since qualification there have been significant changes - many that have slipped under the radar - perhaps we were working too hard to notice them! Although we are aware of pastoral responsibilities to our Junior peers, perhaps the 'all out strike actions' of recent times would suggest we are failing. With surgery waiting lists growing out of control and waiting list initiatives accepted as the norm, we bear no shame. People live longer but attend the Doctor more regularly. A&E attendances continue to climb annually and we resign ourselves to looking after 'unscheduled care' and 'cancer' - but still failing to make those targets. We nibble at the other elements, namely elective surgery with out-patient times and surgical procedures firmly 'on ice'. Are we in free fall? What's the future of the NHS? El-Gingihy provides a provocative, controversial explanation of why the NHS has slipped into disrepair in the past 25 years. If you want to understand the real story behind the headlines and find out how you can preserve the NHS for the future then this book is essential reading.