

# Preface

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The appendages at the end of our forelimbs tend to attract the evolutionary and clinical limelight, but our feet are as important as our hands for our survival and success as a species. We tend to take them for granted, yet the many millions of modern humans who run either competitively or for recreation, or who play sports such as soccer, tennis, and badminton, or who ride, or dance, or swim, or climb, or who stand and walk as part of their work, all depend on their feet. We submit them to unreasonable loads, and expect them to survive our pounding them on hard pavements. We also add insult to injury by squeezing them into fashionable but uncomfortable footwear which does not conform to the shape of the foot.

All this means that many professionals make their living caring for our feet. Worldwide many hundreds of thousands of professional people spend most of their working life looking after the foot. They include orthopaedic surgeons, rheumatologists, diabetologists, orthotists and prosthetists, physical therapists, and podiatrists of whom there are at least 15,000 in the United States of America alone.

In the English language there are two classic books about the foot, both by anatomists. In 1935 the American anatomist Dudley Morton wrote the first edition of *The Human Foot*, and in Great Britain Frederick Wood Jones' seminal book, *Structure and Function as Seen in the Foot*, was published in 1944. But since these pioneering efforts great strides have been made in our understanding of the evolution and function of the foot. This book is not intended as a replacement for the Morton and Wood Jones monographs, but instead it is designed to provide contemporary users and healers of the foot with some context about feet. Neither is it intended to be a clinical textbook. Instead, we hope it will appeal to a wide constituency, including the professionals who care for feet, and to the many categories of 'users', such as long distance runners and soccer and tennis players who depend on their feet to take them where they want to be, whether it is the finishing line of a marathon, or a place on a field or a court from where they can kick the winning goal, or play the decisive shot.

This book, the combined effort of an orthopaedic surgeon and an anatomist/palaeoanthropologist, is not intended to be comprehensive but to stimulate readers to go off on their own voyages of discovery. We have subtitled it *A Companion to Clinical Studies* because we hope that clinicians will find within its covers information that will deepen their understanding of the function and evolutionary history of this intriguing structure.

Writing any book always requires help from others. LK thanks the many friends and former colleagues who provided assistance. These include David Bowsher, Director of Research at the Pain Relief Foundation, Liverpool; Professor Robin Crompton of The University of Liverpool; Professor Adrian Lees of Liverpool John

Moore's University; Professor Phillip Tobias at his alma mater, The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg; Susan Barnett, senior research fellow of The University of the West of England and member of the Foot Pressure Interest Group; Peter Seitz of Novel GmbH, Munich; and Roger Mann, Oakland, California. All were invaluable sources of information and advice. In addition, John Kirkup, a retired orthopaedic surgeon in Bath, was LK's advisor on history, and Drs. Harish Nirula and Harry Brown of the Artificial Limb Fitting Centre at the Wrexham Maelor Hospital gave generously of their time and expertise to provide information about amputations and prostheses. Alun Jones and Andrew Biggs of the Photographic Department at the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, Oswestry were a bastion of support and dealt efficiently with all the illustrations. My secretary Anne Leatham cheerfully coped with the long hours involved in typing draft chapters and references. Last, but not least, I am grateful for the support and constructive criticism which were always available from my wife, Naomi, and from my younger son, Paul.

BW is particularly grateful to four of his teachers. Eldred Walls taught him the anatomy of the foot, Michael Day introduced him to palaeoanthropology, Owen Lewis emphasised the importance of rigorous comparative anatomy, and Leslie Klenerman taught him orthopaedics. BW and NG are also especially grateful to Brian Richmond and Elizabeth Strasser who reviewed drafts of Chapter 1; any errors that remain are due to our intransigence. We appreciate help from Phillip Williams and Matt Skinner for generating figures and tables for Chapters 1 and 2. We thank Pilou Bazin for providing translations of articles in French. We are also grateful to the many experts, especially Osbjorn Pearson, Jennifer Clack, Will Harcourt-Smith, and Susan C. Antón, who patiently answered our questions and enquiries, as well as to the authors and publishers who allowed us to include their illustrations in this volume. BW thanks the Henry Luce Foundation for support and NG wishes to acknowledge the support of an NSF IGERT Graduate Studentship Award.

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<http://www.springer.com/978-1-85233-925-8>

The Human Foot

A Companion to Clinical Studies

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2006, X, 182 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-1-85233-925-8