

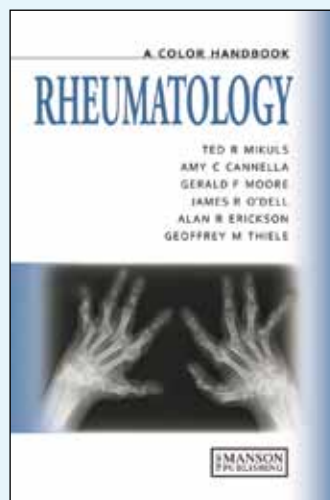
A Color Handbook of Rheumatology

Ted R Mikuls, Amy C Cannella, Gerald F Moore, James R O'Dell, Alan R Erickson, Geoffrey M Thiele
Manson Publishing 2013
Price £29.95. Pp 224
ISBN 978 1 84076 173 3

This beautifully illustrated handbook is designed for GPs and trainees in general medicine rather than rheumatology specialists and admirably fulfils its role as a ready reference text for those readers. In a concise 200 pages, it covers all the main rheumatological conditions with plentiful clinical photographs and clear colour figures to explain concepts such as the role of T and B lymphocytes in autoimmunity.

Each section contains essential facts and details (such as prevalence figures and drug doses). I found the boxes detailing definitive classification criteria for each condition and the bulleted lists of common clinical features especially helpful.

The book is clearly written primarily for an American audience so that some sections (e.g. non-pharmacological treatment of rheumatic disease) have less relevance to NHS practice than others. Sections on management of the autoimmune conditions are short and



lack detail. There is very little on use of the new biologic drugs in any disease, but it must be remembered that physicians in the target audience for this book will not ordinarily be prescribing or monitoring those drugs.

This is an excellent basic guide to rheumatology for non-specialists and early stage rheumatology trainees, but one would use more detailed specialist texts in deciding

on management of complex cases.
Anisur Rahman, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, London

The Stomach: A biography

Jeremy H Baron
CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform 2013
Price £32.65. Pp 358
ISBN 9781477429792

Dr Jeremy Hugh Baron is a distinguished, now retired, physician. He trained in Oxford, London and New York and has worked throughout his career in clinical and academic gastroenterology. He has written numerous books and articles in this field, but has also published on bioethics and on social responsibility in medicine.

This latest publication is a historical tour de force. It covers the history of the alimentary tract with, as its name suggests, special emphasis on its uppermost part, from earliest recorded times of Sumerian and Assyrian civilisation to the present day. In fact, I have not come across a book of medical history so meticulously researched. Not only clinical publications but also the classical literature of Chaucer, Shakespeare and others has been reviewed.

Dr Baron has also searched old medical and surgical case books, hospital records, series of pathology reports and ancient bills of mortality in order to document the rise and fall of gastroenterological and related diseases through the ages and to relate them to dietary and other lifestyle changes. He brings us into the present by a masterly discussion of the *Helicobacter pylori* story and the role of the non-steroi-

dal anti-inflammatory drugs in peptic ulcer disease.

This is a book that everyone interested in gastroenterology will find to be a treasure trove of information concerning the history of this subject.

Harold Ellis, Guy's, King's and St Thomas' School of Biomedical Sciences, London

Landmark Papers in General Surgery

edited by Graham J MacKay, Richard G Molloy, Patrick J O'Dwyer
Oxford University Press 2013
Price £55.00. Pp 399
ISBN 978 0 19 964425 4

This is the latest addition to the 'Landmark Papers' series and is an excellent and highly recommended resource for general surgeons of all sub-specialities. The first chapter considers the challenges particular to the design and analysis of surgical trials and includes accurate and clear descriptions of commonly used methodologies. This sets the tone for the thoughtful and pragmatic commentaries which accompany the well-chosen papers in the remainder of the book, covering the fields of general, emergency, trauma and sub-speciality surgery.

One hundred and nineteen topics are covered

across the ten subsequent chapters which undoubtedly represent many areas of decision making common to contemporary practice. For each topic, the most authoritative and relevant publications have been selected to address the specific clinical dilemma under consideration and a standardized format enables rapid digestion of the pertinent details. A concise introduction to the subject is followed by a summary of the key elements of the study's design, including cohort size, specific outcome measures, follow up and exclusion criteria. The results are summarized efficiently with reference to the primary and selected secondary outcomes to enable comparisons to be drawn between the trials. The final section is devoted to a critique of the papers, including the inevitable imperfections in design and the applicability of the findings to individual practice.

The sometimes polarized interpretations of the broader surgical community are also reflected.

This is a really useful and extremely readable book which has compiled and summarized the excellent if invariably flawed research on which we all base our practice. It is relevant to a broad audience.

Christopher Thorn, Great Western Hospital, Swindon

