THE SEGMENTAL SENSORY INNERVATION OF THE SKIN OF THE SHEEP

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Veterinary Science from Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand,

by

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1967
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I welcome this opportunity to record my gratitude to Professor D. A. Titchen for his encouragement and continued interest and assistance throughout this undertaking, and to Mr Anthony James, Neurosurgeon to the Wellington Hospital, for his advice on operative procedures and for allowing me the opportunity to witness laminectomies in humans. I am indebted to Mr B. A. Barnett and Mrs M. Nandrup for their capable surgical assistance, to Mr B. A. Reynolds for help in processing the skin sections, and to Mr D. Ward for other histological preparations. Mr G. Burns prepared Figures 1, 3 and 4, and took the photographs on which the figurines and Figure 18 were based. I also wish to thank Mr J. C. Newhook for the radiographs from which Figure 1 was prepared, Mr R. Faulding for making the special surgical instruments shown in Figure 4 and Messrs C. Hawthorne, B. O'Sullivan and C. Ross for their assistance in the care of the sheep. I have received much help from Miss M. Campbell and other members of the Library staff, and I owe special thanks to Mrs A. Titchen for the quality of the illustrations, and to Mrs J. Franks for typing this thesis.
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SUMMARY

The interest in the segmental basis of cutaneous sensory innervation evinced by the ancient Greeks was developed into a major contribution to experimental biology by the studies in man and animals by Sherrington, Head and Foerster. The present study is one of a number of more recent investigations of the dermatomes in animals from which a great deal of comparative information has been obtained. The particular significance of a study of the functional anatomy of the sheep in relation to veterinary medicine has been discussed.

The experimental work described in this thesis involved particular consideration of the following:

1. The features of the topographical anatomy of the vertebral column of the sheep which were found to be of importance in the experimental procedures.

2. The value of the "remaining sensibility" technique as a means of defining the dermatomes of the sheep.

3. The use of figurines and photographs in the schematic representation of the experimental results.

4. The justification for basing the definition of the dermatomes largely on the responses to pinch stimuli.

5. A discussion of the features of the dermatomes of the sheep in relation to embryological development and the observations which have been made in other species.

6. The changes in muscle tonus in the limbs which followed
section of the dorsal spinal nerve roots or damage to the spinal cord.

7. The aberrations in feeding, defecation, micturition and respiration produced by various dorsal root sections.

8. The major pathways in the spinal cord followed by the primary afferent fibres, as revealed by the Marchi technique.

9. A general consideration of the significance of studies such as the present, and their possible extension to include deeper somatic or visceral structures.

Details of the dorsal root sections undertaken have been provided in an appendix.