

In 150 consecutive autopsies I found it—

Coiled under the transverse colon,	10 cases.
Coiled under the stomach,	1 case.
Coiled in front of and above the transverse colon,	5 cases.
Coiled and lying over the transverse colon to the left,	2 “
Passing up over the liver, without adhesions,	2 “
Passing up under the liver,	1 case.

Studying the organ in man, we are at a disadvantage, for most of the human subjects of the pathologist and anatomist have been bed-ridden for some little time, or may have suffered from disease of the abdominal cavity. With long continuance in the supine position, it is more than probable that this floating membrane becomes liable to assume relationships which would rarely be found in those suddenly killed. My observations tally with McLeod's suggestion that when the omentum is coiled up, the subject, in most cases, has been upon his back for some little time.⁶

On the other hand, where the omentum seems particularly voluminous, completely covering over the whole anterior aspect of the lower abdomen, I have found that there may again be deception. Thus, only on Sunday last, at an autopsy upon an individual presenting cerebral disturbance with no abdominal lesion, the edge of the membrane passed well beyond the pelvic brim into the pelvis; but here the stomach was large and full, the transverse colon crossed a good inch below the umbilicus, and as a consequence the increased size of the omentum was only apparent.

Granting all this, we must, however, grant also that there are variations—great variations. It can be most voluminous; it is also stated to have been found completely absent. Personally I have not come across this last condition. In the above-mentioned 150 autopsies, there were two subjects, both old men, in which the omentum had a shrunken appearance and was only an inch and a half across, while in a third case, a phthisical patient of twenty-six years, it was represented by three tags of delicate reticulated membrane, one 6 x 6 cm. (2.25 x 2.25 inches), arising from the postero-inferior aspect of the middle region of the transverse colon, one 7 x 6 cm., from the antero-inferior aspect of the same region, while a third, 6 x 14 cm., passed up from the left extremity of the transverse colon to beneath the left lobe of the liver.

⁶ Durham points out that in rabbits and guinea pigs in which peritonitis has been induced, the omentum becomes rolled and folded up, and notes that he observed a similar condition in a young child. While such rolling up does occur in association with acute peritonitis, my notes show that it is far from being a form of constant condition. (Durham, p. 9, "Pathology," IV 1897, p. 355.)