

News, Notes and Queries

THE FIRST NOTTINGHAM MEDICAL SCHOOL: 1833–1835?

DURING the first half of the nineteenth century there was a definite move towards imposing more regulations upon medical education.¹ The increasing growth of cities encouraged building of large general hospitals in the provinces and new medical schools were established in association with these hospitals. Schools were founded and have survived from that time at Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Newcastle, Bristol and Liverpool. Schools were also founded at Hull, York, Nottingham, Exeter and Bath¹ but did not survive. Of these centres Nottingham is the first so far where it seems likely, indeed certain, that a medical school will again be established. Until now little information has been thought to be available about the first Nottingham School^{1,2} although Jacob³ did, in fact, publish data from the records of the Nottingham General Hospital. According to Jacob, in September 1833 a Medical School Committee asked the Hospital Weekly Committee to allow the attendance of the students of that school 'to be benefited by the instruction which the hospital affords' and in October 1833 the following rules were drawn up:

STATUTES AND DIRECTIONS OF THE NOTTINGHAM GENERAL HOSPITAL. 1834

(Pupils)

Direction 1st: All legally admitted Pupils or Students of Medicine and Surgery being 18 years, shall be admitted to see the practice of the Physicians and Surgeons of the Hospital for three years on a payment of a fee of twenty guineas.

Direction 2nd: A Pupil for one year or less may be admitted on a payment of twelve guineas. Direction 3rd: One fifth of all such fees shall be paid to the funds of the Hospital and the remainder divided equally amongst the Physicians and Surgeons.

That providing six pupils shall enter on the above terms the medical officers will fix stated days and hours of attendance at the hospital, which they will keep so far as may be compatible with private professional engagements.

That the regularly indentured apprentices of the medical Officers of the hospital shall be exempt from any payment, in order to gain admission to the practice of the hospital, except the admission fee of one guinea to the funds of the hospital.

I have been unable to trace the records of the General Hospital for the period in question but these statutes and rules are confirmed in respect of the first three directions by a report in the *Nottingham Review* for 4 April 1834 of the general meeting of the Board of Governors of the General Hospital. The *Nottingham Review* also reports that no pupil was allowed to be admitted into the wards of the hospital unless accompanied by one of the medical officers, that the power of reprimand or dismissal for misconduct in any pupil was vested in the Weekly Committee, that the Medical Committee was instructed to draw up rules and regulations for the attendance of the pupils and that none of these regulations was to extend to the apprentices of the surgeons of the hospital.

Further evidence of the formation and activities of the school occurs in notices and comments in other local papers besides the *Nottingham Review*, viz. the *Nottingham Journal* and the *Nottingham and Newark Mercury*. These reports and notices are usually in the same terms as in the *Nottingham Review*. The most noteworthy in

News, Notes and Queries

respect of the formation of the school is given on Friday, 7 June 1833 where it is reported:

At an Adjourned Meeting of the Medical Practitioners of the Town and Neighbourhood of Nottingham held at the Exchange Room on Tuesday Evening last, to proceed in the Establishment of a Medical School it was resolved that the following lectures, if practicable, be given viz: Anatomy and Physiology, Theory and Practice of Medicine, Surgery, Chemistry, *Materia Medica*, Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children, Clinical Medicine, Clinical Surgery, Medical Jurisprudence, Botany; and that every established Medical Practitioner of the Town and County desirous of Lecturing on any of the above subjects is requested within seven days of the date hereof to deliver to Mr. Davison, Surgeon, Nottingham, a sealed paper with his Signature specifying the subject upon which he wishes to lecture in order that he may be balloted for.

The notice was signed by Mr. Davison as Chairman and a report of the meeting held appeared on 21 June.⁴ Forty-one practitioners had attended and six had voted by proxy and the following elections were made:

Anatomy and Physiology:	Mr. G. Mills White and Mr. Henry Attenburrow
Anatomical demonstrations:	Mr. Thomas Allen and Mr. Joseph Thompson
Theory & Practice of Medicine:	Dr. J. C. Williams
Chemistry:	Mr. Grisenthwaite
<i>Materia Medica</i> :	Dr. Howitt
Midwifery & Diseases of Women & Children:	Mr. John Wright
Medical Jurisprudence:	Mr. Charles Attenburrow
Botany:	Mr. Booth Eddison

As might be expected, these names included several of the leading local practitioners of the time, including Dr. John Calthrop Williams the author of *Practical Observations on Nervous and Sympathetic Palpitations of the Heart*,⁵ whose considerable attainment has been described by O'Donovan.⁶ Williams mentioned in the preface to the first and second editions of his book that these *Observations* formed a portion of his lectures on the Principles and Practice of Physic delivered at the Medical School of Nottingham in 1835, and indicates also that he had been a pupil of Laënnec. These lectures are noteworthy for a very clear appraisal of what was later called 'effort syndrome' or 'disorderly action of the heart', which Williams with other contemporaries distinguished from angina pectoris. Dr. Howitt is perhaps Godfrey Howitt, a member of the Society of Friends and the first President of the Nottingham Medico-Chirurgical Society, author of the standard work the *Flora of Nottinghamshire* and indeed a distinguished botanist.⁷ All the lecturers mentioned were, at some time, honorary staff of the General Hospital with the exception of Mr. Grisenthwaite and perhaps Mr. Charles Attenburrow. Mr. Oldknow, who was later appointed as lecturer in surgery, was another member of the honorary staff. Drs. Williams and Howitt, Mr. Booth Eddison and Mr. Caunt who was, later, appointed to lecture, were all at some time presidents of the Nottingham Medico-Chirurgical Society.

Perhaps some discord arose from the above proceedings since on 30 August 1833⁸ a notice appeared of 'a special public meeting of the legalised Medical Practitioners of the Town and County of Nottingham' on 2 September 'to take into consideration the validity of the election to the Chair of Anatomy and Physiology at the public meeting held June 18, and in case such be declared null then to proceed to the election

News, Notes and Queries

of two lecturers to the above Chair. By order of the Committee, Robert Davison, Chairman. Candidates, Mr. Caunt, Mr. G. M. White, Mr. H. Attenburrow'. More pleasantly, the same number of the paper carries a report of a portrait in progress of Mr. Attenburrow by Mr. T. Barber which had been ordered for the General Hospital Committee room to give recognition to his 'long tried service', 'respected and venerated' characteristics and his position as the 'father of the medical profession of Nottingham'. By November 1833⁹ the establishment of Chairs and plans for lecturing were in full swing. Notice of the following lectures appeared. The introductory lecture to each course was to be given at Bromley House at 7.00 p.m. each evening in the following order:

Anatomy & Physiology	Tues. 20th Nov.	Mr. G. M. White
Chemistry	Thurs. 28th Nov.	Mr. Grisenthwaite
Materia Medica	Sat. 30th Nov.	Dr. Howitt
Theory & practice of Medicine	Tues. 3rd Dec.	Dr. J. C. Williams
Surgery	Thur. 5th Dec.	Mr. Oldknow (one of the N.G.H. surgeons)
Midwifery & Diseases of Women & Children	Sat. 7th Dec.	Mr. J. Wright

All these lectures were free to the public and tickets of admission were available from the Lecturers. The subsequent courses were given at the rooms of the medical school in St. James' Street, a street which still houses the Nottingham Medico-Chirurgical Society, and is close to the General Hospital. The schedule of lectures, lecturers and fees¹⁰ is as follows:

		<i>1st Course</i>	<i>2nd Course</i>
Anatomy & Physiology	Mon. Wed. Fri.	3 gns.	2 gns.
Mr. Caunt & Mr. G. M. White	7.00 p.m.		
Anatomical demonstration	Tues. Thur. Sat.	3 gns.	2 gns.
Mr. Allen & Mr. J. Thompson	5.00 p.m.		
Chemistry	Tues. Thur.	3 gns.	2 gns.
Mr. Grisenthwaite	7.00 p.m.		
Materia Medica & Therapeutics	Tues. Thur.	3 gns.	2 gns.
Dr. Howitt	6.00 p.m.		
Principles & Practice of Medicine	Mon. Fri.	3 gns.	2 gns.
Dr. J. C. Williams	5.00 p.m.		
Principles & Practice of Surgery	Wed. Sat.	3 gns.	2 gns.
Mr. Oldknow	7.00 a.m.		
Midwifery & Diseases of Women & Children	Wed. Sat.	3 gns.	2 gns.
Mr. J. Wright	8.00 p.m.		
Botany	In the summer	£1 11 6d.	1 gn.
Mr. Booth Eddison			
Forensic Medicine	In the summer	£1 11 6d.	1 gn.
Mr. C. Attenburrow			
Clinical Medicine	Thurs.	£1 11 6d.	1 gn.
Dr. Mitchell Davidson	8.00 a.m.		
Clinical Surgery	Daily at the	£1 11 6d.	1 gn.
Mr. Attenburrow	Hosp. 8.00 a.m.		

The devotion of students taking all the courses and perhaps appearing for some lectures at 7.00 a.m. and others at 7.00 p.m. on the same day is worthy of notice, together with the daily instruction in clinical surgery by Mr. Attenburrow at the hospital at 8.00 a.m. Another advertisement for lectures, 45 in number in chemistry, appeared on 21 February 1834¹¹ it being stated that 'These lectures will, on being

recognized, qualify for medical examination at the Company of Apothecaries, London, and the Royal College of Surgeons of London, Edinburgh and Dublin.' On 31 October 1834¹² a notice appeared indicating that lectureships were vacant in chemistry, materia medica and surgery and this is the last notice specifically referring to the medical school which I have been able to trace in the local press and other records. The actual Minute Book of the General Hospital for the period has not been found although records of the Annual General Meeting of the Board of Governors of the hospital have been examined. The Nottingham Date-Book and Gray¹³ contain nothing further and the records of the Nottingham Medico-Chirurgical Society are also unavailable for the period in question. Anning¹⁴ states that the year of closure of the medical school was before 1851. However the only certain years of its existence are 1833–1835, the evidence for this last year appearing in Williams's book.

Williams⁵ in the preface to the first edition remarks 'these Observations, . . . originally formed the substance of my Lectures in this department, in a Course on the Principles and Practice of Physic, delivered last year, when assisting in the endeavour to establish a Medical School in Nottingham'. Jacob⁸ considered that these lines were in the past tense. They probably do indicate that the school had closed, although not with absolute certainty, and they confirm that it was still active in 1835.

Both before and after the life of the medical school regular notices appeared in the press of the activities of the General Hospital. The numbers of patients waiting for admission are given, e.g. 12 males and 2 females on 22 November 1835,¹⁵ and the number of patients in hospital e.g. 72 on the same date. References also appear in the annual reports of the General Hospital to the presence of apprentices. Pupils' admission fees are recorded in the 53rd annual report (for the account of 25.3.1834–25.3.1835) amongst others. Jacob³ gives details of the attendance of apprentices from 1786 until 1861 when apprentices are noted as ceasing in consequence of the Medical Bill of 1858 which replaced apprenticeship by a system of lectures.

THE FAILURE OF THE SCHOOL

It is difficult to know why the school failed, apparently so suddenly, but the lack of notices of its lectures or other reports makes it seem likely that it only lasted two or three years. Nottingham at the time was rapidly growing and had increased in population from 28,000 in 1801, to 50,200 in 1831. It had had more than its share of riots and had seen much of the Luddite movement but was quieter and more prosperous again from 1832–1833 and continuing to grow. It was, of course, an active centre of the lace trade and its population and clinical opportunities available to the students were comparable with those of many other provincial centres. The attainment of Nottingham doctors was also considerable and during the nineteenth century, besides those already mentioned, included Marshall Hall although he had moved from Nottingham to London in 1826.⁷ The Medico-Chirurgical Society which might have been expected to provide support and friendly relationships with the medical school was a flourishing body which established a useful library, still well preserved, of volumes of the period. The local Sneinton Asylum, founded in 1810 with 80 beds was the first County Mental Hospital to be established following 'Wynne's Act' of 1808 and like the General Hospital enjoyed the active support of the clergy and

News, Notes and Queries

local nobility and gentry. The Duke of Newcastle had also given encouragement to the medical school with a donation of £500.¹⁶

By comparison with the information which Wetherill¹ provides for other provincial centres it does not seem that the fees were high. Those for the lectures shown amounted to 45 guineas. The General Hospital Board of Governors¹⁷ had also fixed a fee of 20 guineas for the clinical course of three years (one-fifth of this was kept by the hospital and the remainder divided equally amongst the physicians and surgeons). The total combined fee in 1834 thus appears to have been 65 guineas i.e. more than was charged at Glasgow in 1858 but apparently the same as was charged at York and much less than was charged at Bristol in 1858.¹ The York medical school flourished from 1834 until 1862 or possibly 1867.¹ Like the Nottingham school, when it closed no notice seems to have appeared announcing the event. There was no local competition in Nottingham between two institutions, a situation which obtained in nineteenth-century Sheffield⁸ and could possibly have been harmful. Moreover, the lack of a university with which the school could be joined was not then a critical problem—as witnessed by the long life of the York school in the same period. The reasons for the early demise of the Nottingham school thus remain obscure. Perhaps not enough pupils were attracted because sufficient opportunity and rival attractions existed at London, Oxford, Cambridge, Birmingham and Sheffield which all had schools in existence by 1832 and were not too distant. Perhaps, also, Nottingham with its recent history of riots (including the burning of the Castle in 1831) was too disturbed a centre to attract students. I have no evidence to support these speculations. Whatever the cause, it seems likely that despite a high standard of staff and good local support the school failed to attract enough pupils to justify continuation after the second or third year.

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News, Notes and Queries

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GOITRE IN TWO AFRICAN SCULPTURES

THE history of goitre in Central and West Africa is obscure. Greenwald¹ thinks that for many regions 'such as Nigeria, most of the Congo, and parts of East Africa the evidence is equally convincing that goiter is of recent occurrence . . .'. This may not be so. It may have been common from an early period even though references to it are few.

In the far north, in the Rif country of Morocco, goitre was reported by Leo Africanus² in 1510 and again by Marmol Caravajal in 1573.³ Mungo Park^{3a} noted it among the Mandingoes of Bambara on the Upper Niger in 1796. Bowditch⁴ found that it was common around Kumasi in Ashanti country. Daniell⁵ saw what may have been transient thyroid enlargement among adolescent girls on the Benin and Biafra coasts. Cameron⁶ referring to the Congo says 'The people here are greatly afflicted with goitre, and strangers residing amongst them are said to feel symptoms of that disease after drinking the water for a few days.' Native words for goitre are recorded in dictionaries by Bentley⁷ and Whitehead.⁸

These are the chief literary evidences for the occurrence of goitre in Africa. Ghalioungui⁹ emphasizes that iodine deficiency is not the only factor in the onset of goitre, it may also be due to genetic and other causes.

In contrast to much European or South American art, African native art is not greatly concerned with the representation of disease. There are exceptions, however, and a very striking one is shown in Plates 1 and 2. It is a West African Yoruba figure in the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, where it was exhibited from 1952 until 1964.¹⁰ According to William Fagg, it is 'in the characteristic style of Abeokuta, and particularly of the Ogundipe family who have flourished there as brass casters since the foundation of the town about 1830, working especially for the Ogboni society, which formerly exerted considerable political power but was primarily a cult of the earth spirits'.¹¹ The figure shows a kneeling woman. She wears a small waist apron, her hair is dressed into an elaborate crown and she holds a calabash box or lidded bowl—a common form of offering vessel for a particular cult such as that of the river goddess Oshun.

But the outstanding feature is the bilateral swelling of her neck. Within its strongly stylized art form the representation of this figure is basically naturalistic and there can be no doubt that it portrays a pathological condition. Goitre seems to be the most likely diagnosis, with the main thyroid enlargement spreading laterally rather