

Texts and Documents

DOCUMENTS CONCERNING JAMES COOKE, SURGEON, OF WARWICK

By R. A. COHEN, L.D.S., F.S.A.

Warwick

PRACTICALLY all the details of the life of James Cooke which have been published are taken from his writings,¹ but the discovery of the probate copy of his will in the Shire Hall, Warwick, the location of the original will and inventory of his goods in the Birmingham Probate Office and the study of certain other original sources, have provided some new facts. In the belief that the will and inventory are of some interest, they are here printed at length.

Extracts from his works, which are of special value for their detailed case-histories, have been given in papers by Aveling,² Clark,³ Sykes⁴ and LeFanu,^{5, 6} and from them can be obtained a clear and racy account of the practice of a Civil War surgeon. As is well known, Cooke purchased the manuscripts of Dr. John Hall from his widow, Shakespeare's daughter Susannah, and published some of them in English translation in 1657. The original manuscripts in Latin, with records of more than a thousand cases, are in the British Museum (Egerton MSS. 2065).⁷ These were purchased in 1643 while Cooke was with the Parliament forces at Stratford on Avon. Early in 1643 the town was held for the King. Robert Greville, second Baron Brooke, to whose family Cooke had been surgeon from about 1638, was marching from Coventry with the intention of attacking the King's forces at Stratford. Lord Brooke was at Warwick on Friday, 24 February, and 'sent 20 Dragooners to give them an alarum that night by reason of the feare whereof, they were kept waking all the night, to the end that they should be lesse able to resist them the day following'.⁸ On the Saturday Lord Brooke marched to Stratford, and upon meeting the opposing forces 'let flie a drake against them, which ran through the midst them, and put them to great fright'.⁹ The King's forces then retired, leaving two dead, some wounded, and six prisoners who were sent to Warwick. After a short stay in Stratford, Lord Brooke marched to Lichfield and to his death at the hand of one Matthew Dyott ('Dummy Dyott'), who shot

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the Parliamentary commander in the left eye. Cooke describes how he embalmed the body and brought it home to Warwick 'in a strong tite barrel'.

James Cooke was pastor of the Baptist community in Warwick as appears from the will of Thomas Hurd, dated 3 March 1681/82. '. . . To the end the said Silver Tankeard and Silver Cupp may be used by the Congregation (to which I now belonge and of which Mr. James Cooke the elder is now paster).'¹⁰ Hurd was a tailor, whose house was reported as a Conventicle of Independents in 1669, but who left property to the Baptists in his will. The Warwick Baptists certainly worshipped in 1681 with the Independent Minister, James Cooke.¹¹ James Cooke is described as 'the elder' to distinguish him from his son of the same name. As can be observed from his writings, Cooke was surgeon to the greatest families in the area, and besides those actually mentioned he was probably surgeon to the Archer family of Umberslade since he witnessed the signature of Sir Simon Archer on the latter's will of 1661.¹² Anthony a Wood mentions Cooke in a slighting passage: 'One James Cooke of Warwick, Chirurgeon, and a pretender to Physick, hath published certain matters relating to Physick and Chirurgery, in the Reign of Oliver and after. . . .'¹³

All authorities state that Cooke died in 1688 and was buried in St. Mary's Church, Warwick. There is indeed an entry in the registers 'Mr. James Cooke was buried 15 December 1688', but since the will is dated 26 May 1691, with a codicil of 18 May 1693, it is certain that this entry cannot refer to the surgeon. The will mentions the two daughters of the surgeon and his three grandsons, and since James Cooke the grandson is under twenty-one at the date of the will, it can be assumed that the entry of 1688 refers to his father, i.e. the son of James Cooke the surgeon. It is obvious that the surgeon died between 18 May 1693 and 7 March 1693/94, the date of the inventory, but a search of the registers of St. Mary's and St. Nicholas in Warwick has revealed neither the precise date nor the place of burial.

THE WILL OF JAMES COOKE

In the name of God Amen this twenty sixth day of May in the year of our Lord One Thousand six hundred and ninety one I James Cooke of the Borough of Warwick Gentleman doe make and ordaine this my last Will and Testament in manner following First I commend my Soul to Almighty God my Creator and my body to the earth to be buryed accordingly to the discretion of my Executors hereafter named and really believe their reunion at the Resurrection and then hope through the grace and mercy of God in Christ Jesus my Lord I shall enjoy eternal life and happiness As for that Temporall estate which God of his free goodness hath given me undeservedly I dispose of as followeth First I bequeath to my Grand-son James Cooke the two Mesuage [*sic*] or Tenements wherein now I live and that in the hands of Goodman

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Mellowes now liveth in and rents and after the said James Cooke the younger to his heires male lawfully begotten yet not to possess it till the age of twenty one years if he live soe long and I dye before then after my decease to be let or set for the residue to be used and improved for his bring-up but if he dye before then and leave noe heires male lawfully begotten then the said Messuages I give to my daughter Woodward now Hurleston to be divided equally between her two sons Robert and Grivill Woodward and to their Heires Item I give to said Daughter Woodward etc aforesaid and to her 2 sons Robert and Grivile Woodward the sum of eight pounds to each to be improved for them till they come out of their times of prentiship and then to receive it Item I give to my Daughter besides what she owes me for Dyet the sume of three pounds and to her son Perigrin the like sume of three pounds As for the plate I had with my first wife I give to be equally devided between my Daughter Woodward now Hurleston and my Grandson James Cooke unless he dye before the former age of twenty one and then if so wholly to come to my said Daughter and her two Sons Robert and Grevile Woodward For the bookes I leave after my Decease all the Latine Bookes both Physick and Chyrurgery I give as followeth to Grivile Woodward as also all the Medicins left save those which my Daughter Woodward etc have a mind to keep to her self For the English Bookes of Physick and Chyrurgery I give to her children unless my foresaid Grandson James Cooke live to the foresaid Age and then to be his and his heires male Saving those that I shall dispose of a Shedule inclosed in my will As to the English Bookes of Divinity I dispose of as followeth First I give to my Daughter Woodward now Hurleston the workes of Carile[?] on Job as all his other workes undisposed of as also all the workes of Dr. John Owen Item I give to my Daughter Gastrell the works of Mr Greenhill on Ezekiel and to Perigrin her son all the workes of Mr Manton Save that upon the hundred and nineteen psalm which I give to Robert Woodward Item to Grevile Woodward Dr Norton exposition of the Eight of the Romans and also that of the 4th : 42 : 51 and sixty 3d psalms All the rest undisposed of I give to my Grand-son James Cooke if he live to the foresaid age and to his Heires male lawfully begotten Item I give to the parish wherein I live the sum of three pounds and to the lower parish two pounds to be disposed of to poor householders and those of Sober conversations in each parish and noe others by the Ministers Churchwardens and one or more of my Overseers aftermentioned The rest of my estate which remains I give to the foresaid Grandson James Cooke if he live to the aforesaid age and his Heires lawfully begotten If not then to my Daughter Hurleston and her Children after my Debts and Funeral expenses are discharged who I will she shall live in my house as long as she pleaseth and have the goods therein rent free without repairing of it as also all provisions I leave at my Death as fennell meat and drink giveing Dyet and takeing care of my said Grand-son James Cooke as for apparrell I leave my executors to take care of whom I beg Mr Joseph Blisset and Mr John Smith at the Cross to be Also as Overseers I pray my good Friends Francis Parker Esq Mr John Bird Mr Thomas Search to perform this my last Will and Testament to which I set my hand and Seal revoaking all other Wills formerly made giveing to my Executors and Overseers aforesaid twenty shillings each to buy them Rings James Cooke signed sealed and publiquely Declared to be my last Will and Testament of me the said James Cooke the elder in the presence of us who have subscribed

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our names in the presence of the Testator after the word (as long she pleaseth) which words are interlined Thomas Edes John Round Margaret Bird *WHEREAS* as I did in this my last Will bearing date the twenty sixth of May one Thousand Six hundred and Ninety one give my Daughter Gastrill now Walker and to her Son Perigrin Gastrill to each of them the sume of three pounds as also some bookes therein named I do now resolve and declare that they shall not have any of the bookes nor Sumes of money onely I give to her the sume of Twenty shillings to buy her a Ring and to her son Perigrin Gastrill the sume of Thirty shillings which is all I designe they shall have James Cooke Senior dated and given under my hand this eighteenth of May in the year one Thousand six hundred ninety and three William Savage Anne Norris.

A SCHEDULE inclosed in my last Will and Testament Item I give to old William Whitehead one pound Item to Nicholas Whitehead my old Friend two pounds Item to John Fawkes of Henly Fox [?] on the Romans Stock on Malachi Bain on the Ephesians Hutchinson on the Gospel of John Roberts Key of the Bible and Twenty shillings item to Goody Hurd formerly Elizabeth Hands 10s Item to Elizabeth Lewis the sume of ten shillings Item to my Servant that liveth with me at my death besides her years wages ten shillings Item to Prisella Cole ten shillings James Cooke Thomas Edes John Round Margaret Bird.

Examinata

A true and perfect Inventory Indented of all and singular the goods Chattells debts and Creditts of James Cooke the elder late of the Borough of Warwick in the County of Warwick Gent decd taken and appraised the Seaventh day of March in the year of our Lord One Thousand Six Hundred Ninety three by George Webb John Bird.

In the Parlour next the Cross Chaires Table Fire Irons & Window Curtains	1 5 0
In the Hall Tables Chaires Fire Irons and other odd things	1 0 0
In the little Parlour an old Bedstead Bed Bolster pillows Curtain Mauket and Coverlet Fire Irons Table and Chaires	1 15 0
In the Study a Table Books and Box of Instruments and other odd things	15 0 0
In the Buttery old odd things to the value of	5 0
In the Kitchin Brass and pewter and other materialls	5 0 0
In the Washhouse a little Furnace and Tubbs and some odd things	1 15 0
In the Kitchin-Buttery and the Cellar Barrells and Bottles and two Stone Morters	12 0
In the roome over the Kitchin two tables and old Beding	1 0 0
In the roome over the Parlour that is next the Cross Kittermaster Hangings a Bedstead Curtain and vallans the [<i>sic</i>] same of the hangings a Bed bolster and Bedclothes Stooles Table and looking glass and fire-Irons	4 0 0

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In the Chamber over the Hall one Truckle Bed, Bedstead bolster pillows Blanket and rug a little Trunk three boxes	2 0 0
In the Chamber over the little parlour one Bedstead Bed bolster pillows and Blankets and one Sett of old Curtains a little pair of Androns	4 0 0
In the Closet three Trunks of Linnen and one trunke of the Testators wearing Clothes	4 2 6
Item one hundred and ten ounces of plate at Five shillings p ounce	27 10 0
Item in moneys and debts	300 0 0
	369 2 6

(Apr. 28, 1694, John Chetle in the name of the executors.

Executors—Joseph Blissett & John Smith.

Administration granted, March 13, 1693/4)

Probate dated 21st March 1693/4 of will of James Cooke lately of the Borough of Warwick granted to Joseph Blisset and John Smith executors.

[Worcester]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the help and encouragement given by Philip Styles who not only discovered the probate copy of the will in the Shire Hall, Warwick, and generously allowed the author to use his discovery, but located and transcribed the inventory from the original in the Birmingham Probate Office.

He also wishes to thank Anthony Wood and W. R. LeFanu for expert and willing help in their special fields.

REFERENCES

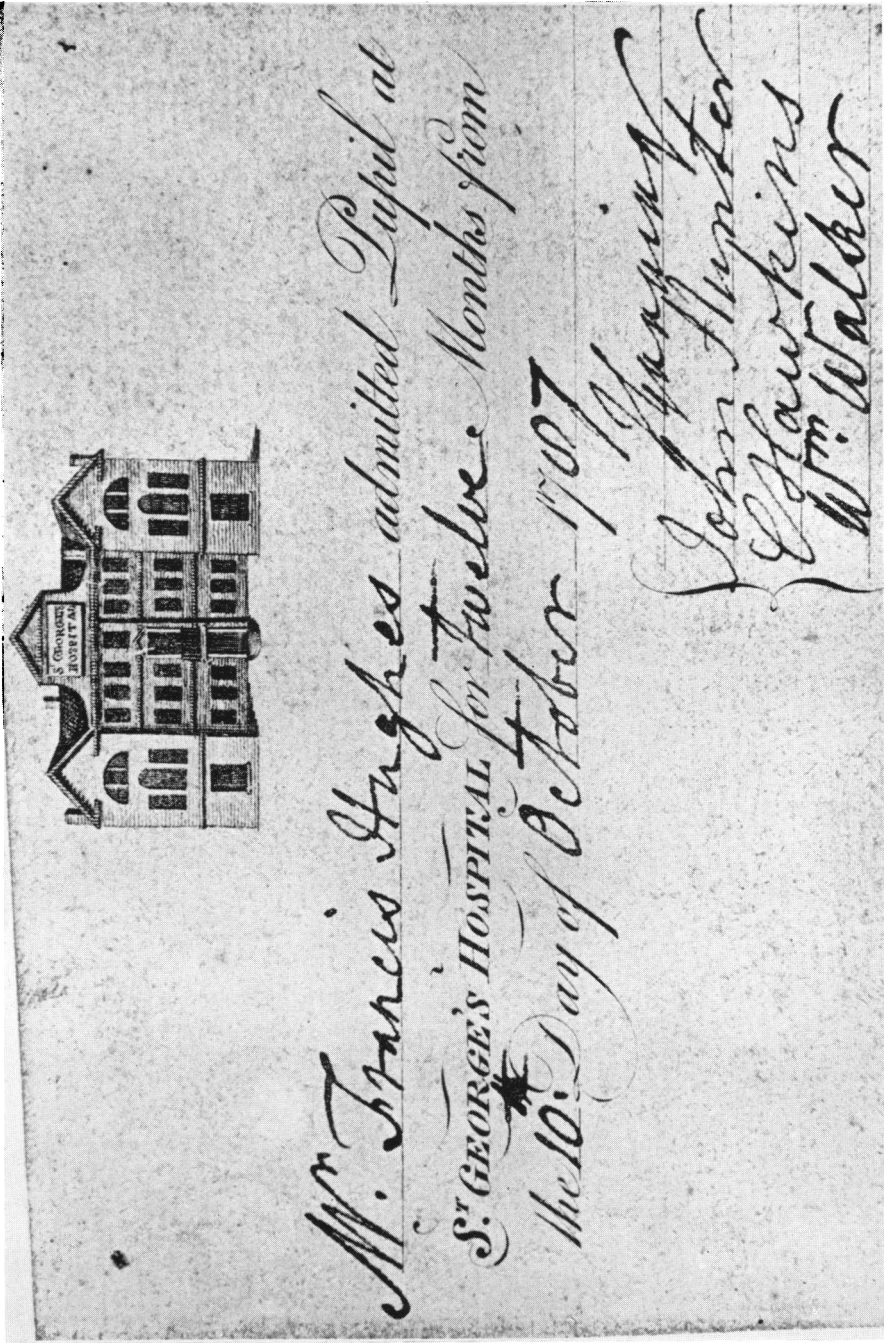
1. *Mellificium chirurgiae, or the marrow of many good authors, wherein is handled the Art of Chirurgery*. London, Samuel Cartwright, 1648.
— Enlarged. London, T. R. for John Sherley, 1662.
- Mellificium chirurgiae, or the marrow of chirurgery*. London, J. D. for Benjamin Shirley, 1676. With portrait of Cooke, aged 64.
— Fourth edition. London, T. Hodgkin for William Marshall, 1685.
— Fourth [*sic*] edition, revised by Thomas Gibson. London, for W. M. and Joshua Philips, 1693. With portrait of Cooke aged seventy-one.
— The fourth edition [*sic*] enlarged. . . . Revised . . . by Tho. Gibson, M.D. London, Joshua Phillips, 1700.
— Sixth edition, revised by Thomas Gibson. London, John Marshall, 1717.
- Supplementum chirurgiae or the supplement to the Marrow of chyrurgerie*. London, John Sherley, 1655.



R White fecit

Vera Effigies Jacobi Cooke Medici, ac
Chirurgi peritissimi; Qui, quæ indefesso studio et
multorum annorum Experientia comperit usui fore,
ad presentem sanitatem tuendam, amissamque
recuperandam, non invidet humano generi
Etatis suæ 64.

JAMES COOKE
(Frontispiece to his *Marrow of Chirurgery*, 1676.)



Eighteenth-century hospital pupil's Admission Card.
Now in the Library of the Reading Pathological Society.

(Size of original, 8 cm. by 12 cm.)

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- Select observations on English bodies, first written in Latin by John Hall, now put into English by James Cooke.* London, John Sherley, 1657.
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— Third edition. London, H. H. for Samuel Eddowes, 1683.
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 12. STYLES, PHILIP. 'Sir Simon Archer 1581-1662.' *Dugdale Society Occasional Papers No. 6*, Oxford, 1946, p. 51, footnote 4.
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A ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL STUDENT'S CARD OF 1787*

By K. BRYN THOMAS, F.F.A., R.C.S.

Hon. Librarian, Reading Pathological Society

STUDENT admission cards of eighteenth-century date are uncommon medical curiosities, and the St. George's Hospital card shown is thought to be one of the earliest survivors of its kind. An identical card, that of Robert Keate, dated 11 April 1793, is preserved in the Library of the Hospital Medical School. It carries three of the signatures of the present card, but has Thomas Keate's in place of that of Charles Hawkins.

The student named on this card, Francis Hughes (Fig. 1), is not otherwise known, except that his name appears in James's Student's Register¹ under the date 10 October 1787. This is the same date as that on the card, but there is no other note. The comprehensive nature of James's Register makes it certain that no more information was available, and the name appears neither in the College of Surgeons Examination Books nor in the

* Shown to the Osler Club of London, 11 October 1956.