

## VIII.—THE CHARITY FOR THE RELIEF OF POOR WOMEN LYING-IN AT THEIR OWN HOMES.

By ELIZABETH M. HALCROW.

In 1761 the charity for the relief of poor women lying-in at their own homes in Newcastle and Gateshead came into being. Its minute book has been preserved, beginning with the general plan and rules of the charity and ending the 30th March, 1859, following its amalgamation with the Lying-in Hospital on the 21st December, 1858, and from the entries recorded in it the history of the charity can be reconstructed in detail and in its entirety, whereas Brand's account in his *History and Antiquities of Newcastle upon Tyne* ends in 1783 and that of Mackenzie in *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Town and County of Newcastle upon Tyne* closes with the accounts and establishment for 1826.<sup>1</sup>

The general plan of the charity made provision for:

A president to be chosen annually.

A physician and surgeon, skilled in midwifery, having offered their services gratis and being approved of, to visit the women delivered every day if necessary and to give assistance in difficult cases.

A secretary to keep accounts of the charity and attend general and weekly meetings.

Twelve experienced midwives, having offered their services gratis and being approved by the physician and surgeon, who were to deliver the women by rotation weekly.

The rules can be summarized as follows:

1. Weekly meetings of the governors to be held Mondays at the Exchange Coffee House, or elsewhere, at 11 a.m. A majority of

<sup>1</sup> J. Brand, vol. 1, p. 135-6; E. Mackenzie, p. 521-2.

such governors present to transact business and enter in the books the names of women recommended and make temporary orders in particular emergencies. Reports of their proceedings to be laid before the general quarterly meetings.

2. A chairman to be elected for the day at each weekly meeting.

3. "Every poor marry'd woman or widow with child at her husband's death, in this town and liberties thereof or Gateshead bringing a recommendation from a governor at any of the weekly meetings shall be entered in the books, be deliver'd by an experienc'd midwife, attended if necessary by the physician and surgeon and supplied by the latter (*sic*) with medicines gratis; and as a further relief shall receive from the treasurer the sum of three shillings weekly during the first three weeks of her lying-in and one shilling and sixpence for the fourth week: the same to be paid to her and the midwife to direct the laying it out, but if the midwife represents to the committee that it has not been properly applied, then the charity to be withdrawn and made use of as a majority of the governors shall think fit."

4. Every woman receiving the charity was to return thanks to the first committee meeting after she was able to go out.

5. Recommended to such ladies as subscribed that they should visit the women during their lying-in to see that the charity was made right use of and their report would be most gratefully received by the committee.

6. A general meeting of the governors of the charity to be held every quarter and the sole power of making, altering and repealing laws and rules for the proper regulating and conducting the same to be vested in the said general meeting if twelve governors were present.

7. An anniversary meeting of all governors to be held the first Monday of every year when a true state of the said charity, the number of women delivered and an abstract of the accounts for the past year were to be laid before them and afterwards printed for the satisfaction of the public.

8. Every annual subscriber of half a guinea to be a governor and might recommend one woman yearly and larger subscriptions in proportion entitled the subscriber to additional letters of recommendation.

9. Every subscriber of 5 guineas or more to be a governor for life.

10. As the charity was intended solely for the relief of poor married women and widows with child at their husband's death the governors were desired, before they recommended any persons as proper objects, to enquire particularly into their character and circumstances to prevent any abuse or misapplication of the charity.

11. Every recommendation from a governor to be addressed to the weekly committee, except in cases which admitted of no delay, and then to be directed to the physician or surgeon who would give immediate orders for the attendance of a midwife.

12. All casual expenses, such as printing, advertisements, etc., to be paid out of the benefactions and the surplus to be applied to the relief of such objects as a majority of the governors at a quarterly meeting directed.

The first committee consisted of five members:

President: Gawen Aynsley esq.  
 Treasurer: Mr. Richd. Chambers.  
 Physician: Dr. Charles Brown.  
 Surgeon: Mr. William Smith.  
 Secretary: Mr. Timothy Phillipson, attorney.

The minutes also give the names of the first twelve midwives appointed:

Mrs. Storey, White Cross.	Mrs. Tanner, Silver Street.
Mrs. Lawrison, Fleshmarket.	Mrs. Taylor, Sidgate.
Mrs. Kell, Pilgrimstreet.	Mrs. Key, Gateshead.
Mrs. Cook, Low Fryer Chair.	Mrs. Bell, Denton Chair.
Mrs. Wilkinson, Foot of the Side.	Mrs. Somerville, Walknowles.
Mrs. Moor, Spicer Lane.	Mrs. Leighton, Close.

The entries in the minute book relating to the first few committee meetings are brief and undated but from the 1st March, 1787, a more careful record is kept, though omissions can still be detected. For instance, the first reference in the minutes to an annual sermon preached for the benefit of the charity occurs the 20th May, 1789, but Brand mentions a sermon for this purpose on the 26th January, 1783.<sup>2</sup> Statistics, too, are quoted of income and expenditure and benefits dispensed for the first time in the minutes of the 20th May, 1789, though the *Newcastle Courant* gave details of the number of women recommended, delivered and remaining on the books from the foundation of the charity

<sup>2</sup> p. 136.

up to 1769 and subsequent years.<sup>3</sup> From 1789 onwards, however, statistics are given regularly in the minutes, which give a full and accurate record of proceedings from which a clear impression emerges of the work of the charity and of the difficulties and problems encountered.

In accordance with the rules, its administration was in the hands of a committee. The meetings were held regularly at Exchange Coffee House until 1790. From May 1791 they took place at Turner's Queen's Head in Pilgrim Street until 1792, when the committee transferred to the Shakespeare Tavern. Four years later it moved to the Crown and Thistle Tavern. In 1798 it was resolved that future committee meetings should be held at Charles Turner's house—the Queen's Head Inn in Pilgrim Street. In 1804 application was made for the use of the Dispensary committee room, which was used for the annual meeting until 1843, though the lady visitors, who met weekly, were using the Friends' Meeting House by 1825. In 1843 the annual meeting also took place at the Friends Meeting House, which was used until 1848, when the Friends gave notice that they could no longer make it available. During the remaining ten years of the charity's existence meetings of the committee and the annual meeting of subscribers took place at private residences. In 1848 Mrs. Kirton's house at 12 Northumberland Court was obtained for meetings and storing the linen for an annual rent of £10. In December 1851 the charity moved to 17 Eldon Street, in July 1852 to 2 Carliol Square, in March 1855 there was an anniversary meeting at Mr. Clayton's house and in June 1855 meetings were transferred to 12 Carliol Square. The meetings held in 1858 just prior to the amalgamation with the Lying-in Hospital were held at 18 Ridley Place.

The composition and procedure of the committee followed the provisions laid down in the rules until 1797 when, faced by pressing financial difficulties, the charity revised and improved its organization. At the September meeting

<sup>3</sup> See Brand 1, p. 136, note g, h.

that year a committee of management was elected, consisting of five members, subscribers to the charity, who met, together with the officers, every three months. Mr. Bowes Fenwick, surgeon, took over the treasurer's office in addition to his medical duties, and in future all recommendations were to be sent to him. A new committee was to be chosen and take up office every six months and the report of the situation of the charity, together with a suitable address, was to be prepared and published in the Newcastle papers prior to the annual sermon. A copy of the report was also to be sent direct to each subscriber. A further modification was introduced in 1800, when the committee was increased to seven subscribers acting in conjunction with the officers of the charity, and its term of office was extended to one year. As an incentive to encourage committee members to attend regularly it was resolved at the February general meeting in 1805 that members of committee should be entitled to a letter of recommendation each time they attended. These letters of recommendation, like those issued annually to subscribers according to the terms of the rules, were to be handed on to deserving and suitable applicants for the benefit of the charity, who then presented them to the committee, which confirmed or rejected each application.

One of the most important administrative changes recorded took place in 1801. A visiting committee of ladies connected with the charity was set up for the first time to see that proper attention was paid to recipients of the charity during their confinement, whereas the original rules of the charity, though recommending such visits, had placed them on a voluntary basis. It was further considered and resolved that it would be an important extension of the benefits of the charity if a stock of sheets and child bed linen were provided for loan to such objects of the charity as were recommended by the surgeons or midwives. Such linen was to be in the care of a person appointed by the committee, who was to see to its delivery and return. The meeting concluded with the

announcement that subscriptions in money or linen would be received by the treasurer at his house in Northumberland Street, or by the surgeons at their respective houses. A sub-committee was formed to arrange for the provision of linen for lending out to patients who were receiving the benefit of the charity, and took office in April 1802. By November of that year a stock of linen had been made ready, and it was arranged that the ladies friendly to the charity and the surgeons should discuss procedure for lending it out and the appointment of a salaried keeper to take charge of it. From that date onwards the visiting ladies were made responsible for seeing that the charity's linen was properly used and safely returned. For example, at the annual meeting in April 1830, "it having been reported that, in certain cases, the linen lent by the charity has been pledged by the patients, resolved that the lady visitors be requested, in their first visit after delivery to such patients as have been thus accommodated, to make a point of seeing that the linen is actually in use. A further resolution recommending the lady visitors to examine the state of the linen when visiting patients was passed in 1836, following complaints that the loan service was abused. In 1848 it was reported that an unsuitable applicant who had received linen on loan had moved away from the town with it, while in 1855 the lady visitors were warned not to make the last payment of benefit until any linen loaned to a patient had been returned.

In addition to their work in connection with loans of linen the visiting ladies carried out many other duties on behalf of the charity. In 1815 they were authorized to extend additional relief to persons benefiting under the charity if their circumstances made this necessary and the parish officers refused assistance. In 1817 they inaugurated a 1d. a week fund to raise money and made themselves responsible for collecting it from year to year. In 1832 the annual meeting ordered that the propositions of the lady visitors should be printed together with the annual report, though unfortunately no indication is given of the nature and

scope of these propositions and the printed report is no longer extant. The visitors holding office during the decade 1830-1840 must have found their duties particularly onerous, for at that time the minutes indicate that the number of visitors was inadequate and volunteers to assist in this work were urgently required. Any negligence on the part of these visiting ladies made it possible for applicants to misuse the benefits of the charity or obtain them on false pretences. This was emphasized at a special meeting in May 1850, when it was "unanimously resolved in consequence of several frauds having been discovered to have been practised on the charity by persons obtaining tickets of the charity under false pretences and obtaining money when no confinement had taken place, that the visiting ladies be admonished to be more vigilant and always visit the woman before her confinement to ascertain that she was a proper object and either to give the woman herself the money at the stated times or send it by a confidential person. Resolved that no ticket be registered after delivery of a patient except under very special circumstances. As a result, however, of the increasing responsibility for the efficient working of the charity assumed by women from the early nineteenth century onwards their influence on its conduct and management grew steadily. This is reflected, for instance, in the election of a woman for the first time—Miss F. S. Morton—to the office of secretary in 1842.

While the active, outdoor work in connection with the administration of the charity was carried out by the lady visitors, general instructions and resolutions on its conduct and management were framed at the annual or quarterly meetings and were the work of the committee of the charity. In 1810, for instance, as a complaint had been received from the midwives that persons were frequently admitted to the charity who were able to pay the usual fee, the meeting recommended that the visitors be empowered to make enquiry into the circumstances of the person recommended previous to the confinement and to report improper persons

to the committee so that information could be passed on to the subscriber recommending the case. Visitors were also instructed to discourage the practice of making feasts at christenings by the persons who received the benefit of the charity, while, at the next quarterly meeting, the committee was to adopt measures by which medicines might be dispensed to the patients of the charity whose cases required such aid. The committee had authority to settle the limits of the area in which applicants for benefit must reside. In 1813, for example, it was resolved that the limits of the charity were in future to be St. Peter's Quay and Mr. Winship's on the other side of the river to the east, Benwell High Cross to the west, Gateshead turnpike gate to the south and the town moor inclusive to the north. In 1819 it was "respectfully recommended to subscribers that they would not, unless in extraordinary cases, recommend persons who had fewer than two children, such persons being judged more properly objects of the lying-in hospital". In 1822 the subscribers were instructed to see that they gave their letters of recommendation only to applicants who were in all respects qualified by the rules relating to number of children and character. A year later a ruling was placed on record that all applicants who had not been resident in their parish for twelve months were to bring their marriage lines to the weekly committee when presenting their letter of recommendation. These weekly committee meetings were held by the lady visitors of the various districts to which the charity applied and had been held regularly since 1811. In 1827 it was ordered that the addresses of the lady visitors and midwives of the charity be printed in the annual report, and it was also resolved that letters of recommendation must be used within two years of their date of issue. At the anniversary meeting in 1851 the committee reconsidered the rule restricting the granting of benefits to persons having only one child and decided that such applicants might be accepted in future if otherwise suitable.

From time to time the committee was also called upon to



take disciplinary action. The character and conduct of midwives, for example, sometimes gave cause for complaint. In 1800 it was reported that one of them, Mrs. Laing, had applied to the Vestry of St. Nicholas for a gratuity of 5/- for delivering a child, contrary to the terms on which she had agreed to serve the charity. She was suspended until she had apologized and agreed to act in accordance with the rules. In 1848 it was reported that one of the midwives had charged a woman she attended 2/6 in addition to receiving her fee from the charity, while another had applied for a fee in respect of a case she had not attended. Mrs. Fulbeck was struck off the list of midwives for intemperance in 1850. At the quarterly committee meeting in September 1852, the secretary was instructed to send a circular to each of the midwives to the following effect: "Resolved that in future any midwife exacting more than the 2/6 allowed by the charity or attending the women in a state of intemperance, or requiring them to procure spirituous liquor for them such an one be struck off the list of midwives." In 1855 one of the lady visitors reported a midwife for neglect and it was decided to warn the offending midwife that if this was repeated she would be struck off the list. In the same way, the committee dealt with cases where unsuitable applicants obtained, or attempted to obtain, benefits and to defraud the charity. For example, it was reported in 1851 that a woman who had already successfully obtained benefits by fraud had again received an allowance from the charity by changing her name from Lucy to Mary Charlton.

The general impression given by the minutes, however, is that the officers and midwives of the charity performed their duties satisfactorily and that, in view of the high standard of their work, the committee was rarely called upon to investigate or consider complaints. In order to establish and maintain satisfactory standards the committee, moreover, exercised great care in making appointments. For example, to ensure that only persons of good character and with suitable qualifications were appointed as midwives,

applicants were required to produce references, and in addition it was a rule that the surgeons were required to certify whether they were suitable for admission to the roll of midwives of the charity. The entry in the minutes for April 1822, indicate the procedure followed and the type of midwife appointed. It reads—"Mrs. Jane Stonehouse, late of Morpeth, having produced certificates from Mr. Elliott, one of the surgeons to the charity, of having received from him a regular course of instructions on the theory and practice of midwifery, and also from John Robb alderman and Messrs. Shute, Clark and Haver of her having practised at Morpeth with great attention and success, resolved that her application be accepted and she be admitted to practise as a midwife as soon as she transmits to the treasurer a certificate of her moral character." The surgeons and physicians of the charity include six physicians who also obtained appointments as physicians to the Infirmary and one of its surgeons, Mr. Thomas Michael Greenhow, who became surgeon to the charity on the 15th January, 1818, was elected surgeon to the Infirmary in 1832. The appointments of medical officers were, like the appointments of midwives, carefully considered, and the charity was successful in obtaining the services of men of high reputation and ability. A list of physicians and surgeons to the charity and short biographical notices of each of them are given in an appendix to this article.

From time to time instructions regarding the medical work of the charity and attendance on patients are recorded in the minutes. For instance, it was not until 1804 that a resolution was passed permitting the surgeons to introduce to the labour cases of the charity, along with the midwife, any woman to whom either of them was giving instruction in midwifery. In 1818 the surgeons were instructed to attend each patient themselves in future and each surgeon, in the event of professional engagements interfering with his attendance, was to ask his coadjutor to give assistance. The surgeons were on no account to permit the attendance

of apprentices or any other person other than those to whom they entrusted their private practice. In 1811 it was agreed that the surgeons should be allowed to recommend applicants, not exceeding four a year, for the benefit of the charity, but in general their expenses were subject to stringent control in the interests of economy. Thus, it was decided in 1814 that the surgeon attending a patient should be allowed to make a charge for such medicines as were thought necessary for the objects of the institution under the direction and consent of the lady visitor, but in 1845 it was considered that the surgeons' bills were very large and that their attendance extended over too long a period, and it was therefore resolved that the treasurer and auditor should meet the surgeons to come to an agreement whereby the medical expenses of the charity would be reduced. At the same time the lady visitors were asked to notify on the ticket presented to the committee when applying for benefits when the patient had received surgical aid, and finally, in 1847 it was resolved that the extra grant hitherto allowed for medicines should be discontinued, as the funds of the charity were inadequate to meet this demand in addition to the allowance paid to the objects of the charity. In the same way, the fees paid to midwives were on a low scale. The fee in force when the charity was founded is not known, but the midwives were successful in having this raised to 2/6 in 1804. In 1817 they again asked that fees be reviewed, but it was not until 1822 that it was agreed that the midwife should receive a double fee in the case of twins. The fee was increased to 3/- in 1854 but it was resolved that in the case of twins 5/- only should be paid.

In 1853 there is a reference to the cholera epidemic in a resolution to the effect that the linen which had not been allowed out while the disease was prevalent should now be issued again. This is included in the minutes of the October meeting. It was also reported at that meeting that one of the midwives and two of the lady visitors were among those who had died of cholera.

Finally, the minutes for the period 1789-1806 include a clear statement of the financial position of the charity and statistics of women recommended and accepted as suitable cases for assistance under its terms. From 1806 onwards information regarding income is not regularly given. The practice of ordering the accounts to be printed encouraged a tendency to refer to finances only in cases where it was necessary to raise money, curtail expenditure, or report that funds were available to extend the work of the charity. From 1849 onwards the minutes of the quarterly meeting usually state how many letters of recommendation were accepted—150 in 1853, for instance, but statistics are not usually given in the period of 1806-1848. The extracts printed below are typical of the entries between 1789 and 1806.

<i>Dec. 1760—May 1790</i>	<i>Dec. 1760—May 1790</i>
2892 women recommended.	Receipts £1541 16s. 5d.
2851 delivered.	Disbursements £1541 6s. 6d.
41 on books.	Balance 9s. 11d.
<i>Dec. 1760—May 1791</i>	<i>Dec. 1760—May 1791</i>
3038 women recommended.	Receipts £1645 16s. 7d.
2998 delivered.	Disbursements £1625 12s. 6d.
40 remain on books.	Balance £20 4s. 1d.
<i>Dec. 1760—Apr. 1792</i>	<i>Dec. 1760—Apr. 1792</i>
3217 women recommended.	Receipts £1738 7s. 1d.
3181 delivered.	Disbursements £1731 1s. 8d.
36 remain on books.	Balance £7 5s. 7d.
<i>12th Jan. 1798—1st Jan. 1799</i>	<i>12th Jan. 1798—1st Jan. 1799</i>
146 women delivered.	Receipts £146 2s. 0½d.
9 remain on books.	Disbursements £92 2s. 6d.
	Balance £53 19s. 7½d.
	(sic)
<i>1st Jan. 1799—25th Apr. 1799</i>	<i>1st Jan. 1799—25th Apr. 1799</i>
33 women delivered.	Receipts £67 12s. 7½d.
9 remain on books.	Disbursements £17 6s. 6d.
	Balance £50 6s. 1½d.
<i>25th Apr. 1799—8th Nov. 1799</i>	<i>25th Apr. 1799—8th Nov. 1799</i>
91 women recommended.	Receipts £93 10s. 1½d.
21 remain on books.	Disbursements £51 3s. 6d.
	Balance £42 6s. 7½d.

## 122 THE CHARITY FOR THE RELIEF OF POOR WOMEN

<i>8th Nov. 1799—8th Jan. 1800</i>	<i>8th Nov. 1799—8th Jan. 1800</i>
27 women recommended.	Receipts £50 14s. 1½d.
17 remain on books.	Disbursements £14 3s. 6d.
	Balance £36 11s. 1½d.
	(sic)
<i>8th Jan. 1800—16th May 1800</i>	<i>8th Jan. 1800—16th May 1800</i>
59 women recommended.	Receipts £62 16s. 1½d.
-8 remain on books.	Disbursements £33 12s.
	Balance £29 4s. 1½d.

In 1802 a new form of presenting statistics and accounts was adopted:

<i>1st Oct. 1801—1st Apr. 1802</i>	<i>1st Oct. 1801—1st Apr. 1802</i>
74 women received benefit.	Receipts £15 15s. 8
12 remain on books.	Disbursements £7 17s. 6d.
74 children born (38 M., 36 F., 3 dead).	Old balance £53 4s. 6½d.
	Total balance £61 2s. 0½d.
<i>1st Jan. 1803-1804</i>	<i>1st Jan. 1804</i>
142 women received benefit.	Balance £25 4s. 5½d.
146 children born (79 M., 67 F., 6 dead).	Linen account £39 17s. 5d.
<i>Dec. 1760—1st Jan. 1806</i>	<i>1st Jan. 1806</i>
5883 women received benefit.	Balance £22 8s. 4½d.
143 women delivered 1805-6.	
149 children born 1805-6.	

The income of the charity came from a number of sources. The greater part of it represented the annual subscriptions of a guinea or more each year from persons who supported the charity regularly. In the early period of the history of the charity an annual sermon was arranged at which a collection was taken towards its funds. The Bishop of Peterborough was among those invited to preach on its behalf as it became known that he would be in residence at Durham in October or November of 1791. In 1847, however, it was decided that no further efforts for a sermon be made as the funds of the charity were likely to be sufficient for the demands on it. Arrangements were made for a ball

in aid of the charity in 1798, which was held in Charles Turner's Long Room, as the Assembly Rooms could not be obtained. The 1d. a week fund inaugurated in 1817 by the lady visitors has already been mentioned. This formed a most valuable source of revenue and remained in force for the rest of the period covered by the minutes. In 1846 it was reported at the annual meeting that the ladies had introduced collecting cards for payments to the charity and that this was proving a very efficient means of increasing the funds. There are also a number of legacies to the charity mentioned. Mrs. Scurfield bequeathed £50, which was paid over in 1820; while in 1850 Miss Hall, of Ridley Place, bequeathed £50 and in 1856 Miss Archbold's executors paid over £93 1s. 8d. and those of Miss Cramlington £50. The minutes indicate that at times the funds of the charity were fully adequate to the demands on it. For example, in 1824 it was reported that 236 women had received relief during the preceding year and receipts had been £303 10s. 9d., as compared with expenses amounting to £171 11s. 3d. There was a balance of £110 6s. in hand and £200 placed in the Savings Bank. Again, in 1850 the secretary suggested that in view of the improved state of the funds it might be possible to return to the practice of issuing a limited number of benefaction tickets in addition to the ordinary letters of recommendation. On the other hand, in 1842 it was reported that 220 persons had been assisted during the past year, being 10 more than in the preceding year, the average cost to the charity for each patient being 14s. 5d., and that the expenditure for the year had exceeded income by about £50. Taking the whole of the period covered by the minutes into consideration, it is clear that income was only sufficient to cover the objects of the charity laid down in the rules, and that but for the efforts of a nucleus of regular supporters, particularly the ladies interested in the work of the charity, it would not have been able to function effectively owing to lack of money.

On December 21st, 1858, the charity for poor women

lying-in at their own homes was united with the lying-in hospital and ceased to exist as an independent organization. A sub-committee was formed to revise the regulations of the charity and to propose any new rules which might be considered necessary. The last entries in the minutes consist of the minutes of the house committee of the lying-in hospital from January 12th to March 30th, 1859. These entries give the weekly accounts, which show that the matron of the lying-in hospital spent little more than £1 a week and that between those dates there were never more than two patients in her care at one time. From its inauguration in 1760 the charity had functioned for a period of 98 years, over which it had given assistance to poor widows, a section of the community for whom adequate relief was not available from public funds. Moreover, it had not confined its benefits to financial aid, but had also provided for competent medical attendance to be given by persons whose qualifications and character had been fully investigated and found satisfactory.

#### APPENDIX OF MEDICAL BIOGRAPHIES.

DR. CHARLES BROWN(e), son of Alexander Brown(e) of Branton Eastside, and Ann, daughter of Charles Stoddert, vicar of Eglingham, was baptized 7th January, 1733/4, at Eglingham Church. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Alexander Goldie of The Mains, Southwick, Co. Galloway, in May 1768. She died and was buried at St. Nicholas churchyard, Newcastle, on 22nd November, 1769.

Dr. Brown(e) received his medical education in Edinburgh, where he took his degree of doctor of medicine in 1755 (D.M.I. *de Morbillis*)<sup>1</sup> in 1755. He was admitted an extra licentiate of the College of Physicians on 11th September, 1761. He was elected physician to the Newcastle Infirmary in 1760 in succession to William Cooper, who had died on 6th May, 1759, and was also physician to the Dispensary from its institution in 1777. He was very successful in practice, having succeeded to much of the extensive practice of Adam Askew, who died in 1773. In the minutes of the Infirmary for 1782 it is stated that Dr. Brown(e),

<sup>1</sup> Munk's Roll.

senior physician to the Infirmary, recommended ass's milk in the treatment of Mrs. Margaret Jackson, Matron of the Infirmary (1765-1798). For this purpose the House Committee ordered that an ass and foal should be grazed in the Infirmary grounds. He is also referred to in the sixth item of the minutes of the first meeting of the Philosophical and Medical Society on 1st November, 1786, which stated "That Dr. Brown, having sent a letter to this Society (which letter was unanimously ordered to be burnt) resolved that He in future shall never be admitted a member of this Society in any line whatever."

He retired from the Infirmary in 1787 and died in 1788 at his house in Westgate Street, aged 51. An advertisement relating to the disposal of his effects appeared in the *Newcastle Courant*, 26th April, 1788.

To be sold by auction on Monday and Tuesday next.

The Household Furniture of the late Dr. Brown, at his house in Westgate Street, Newcastle. The sale to begin each day at ten o'clock.

To be Sold also, a pair of brown Chaise Horses, and a Saddle Horse, with Saddles, and for which apply at the house, or to Dr. Pemberton and Mr. Ingham, of Newcastle, his Executors.

His Books also to be sold, for which apply to Mr. Richard Fisher, of Newcastle.

N.B.—The Creditors of the late Doctor Brown are desired to send an account of their demands to the said Executors, who will also receive the Debts and Arrears of Fees that were due to him.<sup>2</sup>

JOHN MURDOCH LOGAN, M.D. Physician to the Dispensary 1785.<sup>3</sup> Buried St. John's churchyard, Newcastle, on the 5th January, 1787.

DR. HENRY MOORHOUSE, son of Mr. Moorhouse of Skipton, Yorks, married Ann, daughter of William Clayton, Merchant Adventurer and Alderman, at St. Andrew's Church, Newcastle, on 13th February, 1789. A stone in All Saints churchyard records the death of his son, William Henry Moorhouse, aged 4½, a daughter who died on 27th December, 1794, and his wife. He was vice-

<sup>2</sup> For the information contained in this and subsequent notes, except where otherwise stated, I am indebted to Sir William E. Hume, C.M.G., M.A., M.B., M.D., F.R.C.P.

<sup>3</sup> D. Embleton, "The Newcastle Medical Society 100 Years Ago"—*Report of the Proceedings of the Northumberland and Durham Medical Society 1891*, p. 182.



president of the Philosophical and Medical Society in 1788 and 1791 and president in 1790, physician to the Infirmary in 1791 and to the Dispensary in 1787.<sup>4</sup> He died 17th February, 1794.

DR. JAMES WOOD, son of Mr. James Wood, surgeon of Berwick, baptized there 6th October, 1764. He became M.D. of Edinburgh in 1791 and his thesis was entitled 'De Scrofula'. He married Eleanor Blair, daughter of John Burnett of Edinburgh. He was vice-president of the Philosophical and Medical Society in 1792 and 1797 and president in 1794, physician to the Infirmary 1793-1813 and to the Dispensary from 1792.<sup>5</sup> The local papers refer to the births or deaths of three sons and two daughters and the death of his wife on 29th January, 1820. He was the author of a *Treatise on Typhus*, *Plain Remarks on Fever*, *Conclusions on Hydrophobia*, and *Papers on Contagion*. His interest in fevers enabled him to answer queries raised by Dr. Clark when the propriety of adding a fever ward to the Infirmary was suggested in 1801. He died at Newcastle on 30th January, 1822, aged 56, and was buried in St. Andrew's churchyard.

The following notice appeared in the *Newcastle Courant* on 22nd February, 1822.—"On the 30th ult., greatly respected, James Wood, M.D., of this town. He supported during life a succession of afflictions with Christian fortitude. Though retired in his habits he was well known to the lovers of medical science by his ingenious and critical literary productions."

DR. GEORGE GRIEVE, M.D., physician to the Dispensary, died 1800. He was a gentleman of great and varied attainments and particularly excelled in music. He commenced life as a Presbyterian minister but, on embracing the tenets of the Baptists, resigned his pastoral charge and entered upon the study of medicine.<sup>6</sup>

DR. THOMAS WILSON McWHIRTER, born Dumfries 5th March, 1777, educated Ayr. At 17 he served with the British army in Holland, attached to general hospitals at Ghent, Antwerp, Rhenen, Dordt and Helvoetsluys, sometimes in the purveyor's and sometimes in the medical department. On his return he was appointed assistant surgeon and lieutenant in the West Lowland Fencibles. In 1799 the Medical Board appointed him assistant in the hospital of the depot at Chatham. He volunteered for service in the expedition to Helder and was twice taken prisoner.

On his return from Helder he graduated at Edinburgh on 24th

<sup>4</sup> D. Embleton, "The Newcastle Medical Society 100 Years Ago"—*Report of the Proceedings of the Northumberland and Durham Medical Society 1891*, p. 190.

<sup>5</sup> D. Embleton, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

<sup>6</sup> E. Mackenzie, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of Newcastle and Gateshead* (1827), p. 516 (note); D. Embleton, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

June, 1800 (D.M.I. *de Pneumonia*)<sup>7</sup> and was immediately appointed to the hospital at Chatham. He returned to Maidstone but retired on account of his health and took up private practice in Newcastle upon Tyne. He returned to the army with the temporary rank of physician to the forces and became a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians on 22nd December, 1809.<sup>8</sup> He joined the army in Spain and later served in Brussels. He married Miss Lilius Brown in Edinburgh in 1817 and settled in Newcastle again, where he was elected an officer of the Infirmary in 1823. He contributed articles to both medical journals and general periodicals. He died at Kilmeor, near Greenock, on 26th May, 1836, aged 59 years.<sup>9</sup>

CHARLES WIGHTMAN, M.D., a native of Scotland and a doctor of medicine of Edinburgh of 24th June, 1808 (D.M.I. *de Consensu*), was admitted a licentiate of the College of Physicians 22nd December, 1812. He practised successively at Alnwick and Sunderland and then removed to Newcastle upon Tyne, where he died 19th August, 1857. He was the author of *A Treatise on the sympathetic relation between the stomach and brain*. 8vo. 1840.<sup>10</sup>

DR. JOHN CARGILL, physician to the Infirmary from 1841-1853. M.D. of Edinburgh (1834) and wrote his thesis on Peripneumonia. Died on 22nd June, 1878, at 15 Lovaine Place, according to the *Newcastle Courant* of 28th June, 1878.

DR. THOMAS HUMBLE, qualified M.D. St. Andrews in 1848. According to Embleton, he became M.R.C.S. and L.S.A. and later M.D. of Durham University, *honoris causa*, in 1853.<sup>11</sup> He lectured at the Medical School on *Materia Medica* and *Therapeutics* and was also treasurer of that body. He was for several years Resident Medical Officer of the Newcastle Dispensary and had charge of the Fever House. He retired from that post and practised as a physician at 4 Eldon Square up to his death in 1877.<sup>12</sup> He was consulting physician to the South Shields and Westoe Dispensary, the Lying-in Hospital and the Dispensary and Fever Hospital of Newcastle. Dr. W. D. Arnison supplied the following note: "I once saw Dr. Humble when he came up to Allendale Town to see a case with my father. Mrs. Humble came with him and gave me a small book,

<sup>7</sup> Subject of thesis given Munk's Roll.

<sup>8</sup> Date of licentiate of Royal College of Physicians stated *ibid*.

<sup>9</sup> This note is based on the obituary in the *Newcastle Chronicle* of 25th June, 1836.

<sup>10</sup> Munk's Roll. Annotations, supplied by the Harveian Librarian, add that Dr. C. Wightman was in Carlisle Street, Soho, in 1813, in Alnwick in 1814, in 1820 he was without address and in 1826 he was at Newcastle upon Tyne.

<sup>11</sup> D. Embleton, *Collegium Medicum Novocastrense: The History of the Medical School 1832-72* (1890), pp. 9-10.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*.

*The History of Sandford and Merton.* He was very kind to my uncle, W. C. Arnison, when he started practice in the Town."<sup>13</sup> From 1874-1876 he was professor of medicine in the College of Medicine. He was buried on 13th December, 1877, in Jesmond Old Cemetery, according to the *Newcastle Courant* of 14th December, dying in his 63rd year after a most painful illness.

WILLIAM SMITH was living in a house at the head of the Side according to Whitehead's *Directory of Newcastle*, 1778.

SAMUEL POWELL was to have read a paper at the Northumberland and Durham Medical Society on 1st March, 1791, but this was cancelled because of a fire in his house in Bigg Market.<sup>14</sup>

BOWES FENWICK was elected to the Northumberland and Durham Medical Society in 1793. He lived in Westgate Street, opposite St. John's Church, and married Miss Hornby, probably a daughter of Alderman Hornby. He had three daughters, who died in infancy. He was a younger brother of Percival Fenwick, esq., solicitor. He died 11th February, 1811, and was buried at St. Andrew's.<sup>15</sup>

NATHAN SURGEON lived at Cross House, Westgate.<sup>16</sup>

THOMAS ELLIOT, surgeon and eminent accoucheur, was born at Haydon Bridge in 1759. He was descended from John Elliot, of Brough, second son of Sir Gilbert Elliot, of Stobs Castle, Roxburghshire. He went to London at the age of 15, received a lieutenant's commission in the Marines from his uncle and went to sea after recruiting service. He was severely wounded in the eighth year of his service and retired as first lieutenant on half pay, settling at Wolsingham, where he married Miss Curry, daughter of a local magistrate. He came to Newcastle in 1797 and his practice became very extensive after the death of Dr. Fogo in 1813 and his reputation rose steadily until his death in 1824. His two sons, George and Gilbert, died in infancy. He was the originator of Elliot's fund for building premises for the Hospital for Poor Women Lying-in.

THOMAS MICHAEL GREENHOW—see R. Welford, *Men of Mark 'Twixt Tyne and Tweed* (1895), and W. E. Hume, *The Infirmary Newcastle upon Tyne 1751-1951* (1951).

MR. NESHAM. William Nesham was admitted to the freedom of the Company of Barber Surgeons of Newcastle on the 10th April,

<sup>13</sup> Supplied by Sir W. E. Hume.

<sup>14</sup> D. Embleton, "The Newcastle Medical Society 100 Years Ago"—*Report of the Proceedings of the Northumberland and Durham Medical Society 1891*, p. 185.

<sup>15</sup> D. Embleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-3.

<sup>16</sup> D. Embleton, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

1822, by servitude.<sup>17</sup> T. C. Nesham joined Dr. Murrey in the office of Medical Tutor and Demonstrator at the College of Medicine for the session 1862-3.<sup>18</sup> In 1886 he was in charge of the Lying-in Hospital in New Bridge Street.<sup>19</sup> It was probably William Nesham who acted for the Charity for Poor Women Lying-in at their own homes from 1848 onwards, though his initials are never given.

S. M. FROST, M.R.C.S., was one of the lecturers on Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children at the College of Medicine from 1851 until 1862, when he resigned in October. For about forty years he was famed for his skill in obstetrics in this town and neighbourhood and was most in request in the most difficult and dangerous cases. He was the inventor of a peculiarly formed forceps, long well known and employed as "Frost's forceps".<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *A List of Brethren of the Barber Surgeons' Company on the 30th May, 1831* (Local Tracts, Public Library).

<sup>18</sup> D. Embleton, *The History of the Medical School 1832-72*, p. 79.

<sup>19</sup> Information supplied by Sir W. E. Hume.

<sup>20</sup> D. Embleton, *The History of the Medical School 1832-72*, p. 46.