

Guide to the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum : 54, Wigmore Street, London, W.

Contributors

Wellcome Historical Medical Museum.

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THE WELLCOME
HISTORICAL MEDICAL MUSEUM



FOUNDED 1913

WELLCOME COLL MORE STREET, LONDON, W.
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GUIDE
TO THE
WELLCOME HISTORICAL MEDICAL
MUSEUM

THE WELLCOME
HISTORICAL MEDICAL MUSEUM

An International Collection illustrating
the History of Medicine and the
Allied Sciences

THIS GUIDE IS INTENDED TO
INDICATE IN A GENERAL WAY
THE CHIEF FEATURES AND
OBJECTS EXHIBITED IN THE
MUSEUM

The decorative headings are reduced facsimiles
of friezes specially designed and painted for
the Museum

GUIDE
TO THE
WELLCOME HISTORICAL MEDICAL
MUSEUM



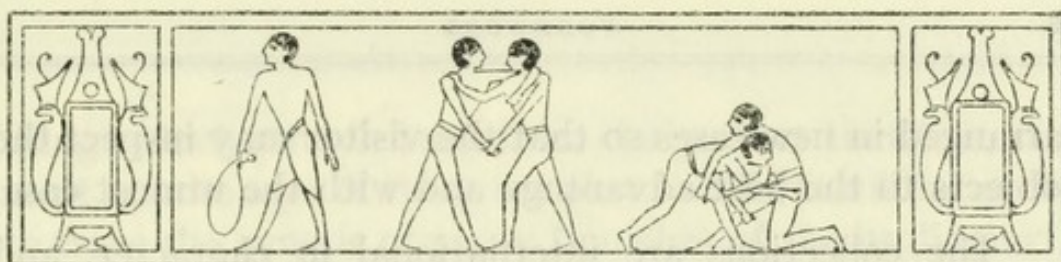
54A, WIGMORE STREET, LONDON, W.

GUIDE
TO THE
WELLCOME HISTORICAL MEDICAL
MUSEUM

WELLCOME
COLLECTION

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51A, WIGMORE STREET, LONDON, W.
The Museum



FOREWORD

THE Wellcome Historical Medical Museum was founded by Mr. Henry S. Wellcome in 1913. It is the result of collections made during many years in various parts of the world, and, at the request of the chief officials, was adopted as the Museum of the Section of History of Medicine, which formed part of the XVIIth International Congress of Medicine held in London in August of that year.

It was inaugurated by Sir Norman Moore, F.R.C.P., President of the Section, on Tuesday, June 24, 1913. The Museum was visited by large numbers of the delegates and members of the International Congress of Medicine, also by many medical practitioners and others interested, from all parts of the world, most of whom expressed their appreciation of its usefulness.

After closing for a few months for the purpose of re-arrangement, the Museum, with the addition of several new sections and many objects of historical interest, was re-opened as a permanent institution.

In 1926 the Museum has been re-organised, many important additions have been made to the collections, and the arrangement of the material in the various sections altered. Several of the sections have been developed, and new ones instituted. In particular the War, Lister and similar sections have been considerably enlarged. Throughout the Museum more effective lighting has been installed, and the material has been

arranged in new cases so that the visitor may inspect the objects to the best advantage and with the utmost ease.

The collections are international in character, and cover a wide field, including Medicine, Surgery, Chemistry, Pharmacy and the Allied Sciences. The Museum is designed to represent the history of these various branches of the art of healing throughout the world, and their practice is illustrated by objects, instruments and appliances of historical interest, and by plastic and pictorial art.

Medicine has a history which has touched every phase of life and art, and is, to a large extent, bound up with the records of human existence from the earliest times. By its study, fresh fields of medical research are suggested, and the interest in others, still undeveloped, is stimulated. Our views of progress, especially with regard to medical treatment, are often exaggerated, owing to our ignorance of the past; and careful research into ancient records has revealed the fact that modern methods are often mere repetitions of those practised in long past ages. Through the study of medical history, discoveries of great value, quite forgotten and buried in the records of the past, have been brought to light.

The importance of museums as an integral part of teaching is now fully recognised, and, by intelligent classification and systematic grouping of objects, it is our aim and purpose to make the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum of distinct educational value to research workers, students and others interested in the subjects with which it deals.

One of the central aims of this Museum is to connect the links in the chain of human experience and living

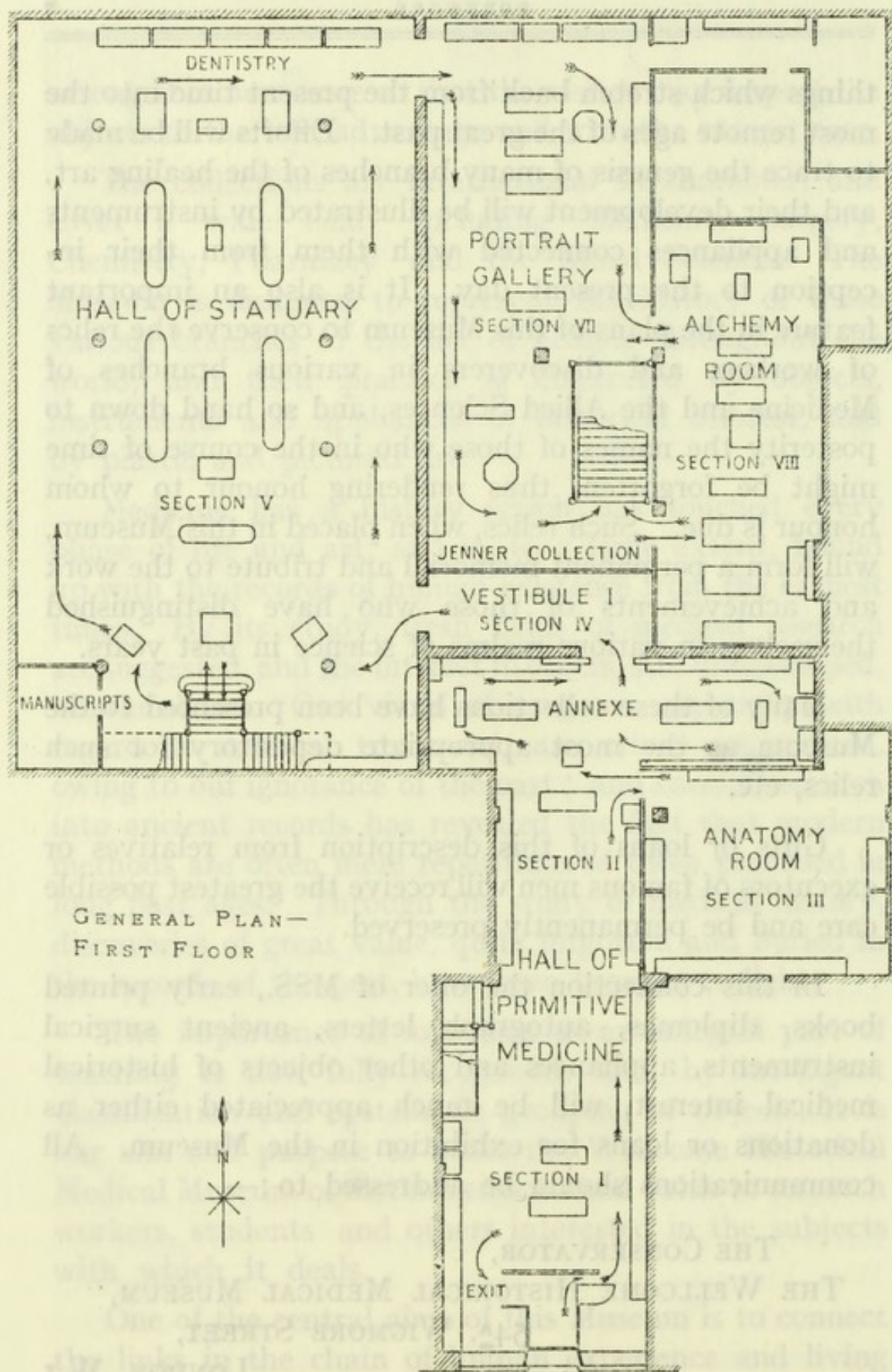
things which stretch back from the present time into the most remote ages of the great past. Efforts will be made to trace the genesis of many branches of the healing art, and their development will be illustrated by instruments and appliances connected with them from their inception to the present day. It is also an important feature in the plans of this Museum to conserve the relics of workers and discoverers in various branches of Medicine and the Allied Sciences, and so hand down to posterity the names of those who in the course of time might be forgotten, thus rendering honour to whom honour is due. Such relics, when placed in this Museum, will form a permanent memorial and tribute to the work and achievements of those who have distinguished themselves in various realms of science in past years.

Many of these collections have been presented to the Museum as the most appropriate depository for such relics, etc.

Gifts or loans of this description from relatives or executors of famous men will receive the greatest possible care and be permanently preserved.

In this connection the offer of MSS., early printed books, diplomas, autograph letters, ancient surgical instruments, appliances and other objects of historical medical interest, will be much appreciated either as donations or loans for exhibition in the Museum. All communications should be addressed to :—

THE CONSERVATOR,
THE WELLCOME HISTORICAL MEDICAL MUSEUM,
54^A, WIGMORE STREET,
LONDON, W.1



GENERAL PLAN—
FIRST FLOOR

WIGMORE STREET



SECTION I

HALL OF PRIMITIVE MEDICINE

ROOM I

THE practice of the healing art may be traced in part from prehistoric days, and a reconstruction can be attempted by a study of primitive and folk-medicine. Light can also be thrown on many obscure practices by a study of those undeveloped and backward races of to-day, who lead a life somewhat similar to that of early man.

In this section, the craft of the layman who works by reason of a tried, if uncritical, experience, is illustrated. The higher, or metempirical branches of primitive medicine as controlled by the medicine-man and his assistants, are illustrated by a series of effigies in costume, together with the paraphernalia used in his practice.

The control of magical processes by means of material objects, effigies, etc., is demonstrated in Cases 1—7. Other subjects dealt with in this room are ancestor-cult, cult of the dead, skull-cult and totemism.

A series of objects from the excavations made by Mr. Henry S. Wellcome in a prehistoric station at Gebel Moya, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, is shown in Cases 20—23.

A reconstructed skull-hunter's hut from South East New Guinea is shown over the staircase.

SECTION II

HALL OF PRIMITIVE MEDICINE

ROOM II

THE place of magic and religion in the daily life and social conditions of mankind is difficult to define. The magical process implies an influence on animate life by material objects, and the religious process relies upon supernatural or spiritual influences.

Charms, talismans, amulets, mascots, etc., all have their place in the life of mankind, and the belief in their powers varies according to environment, etc.

In this section, the charms, amulets and talismans of various countries are arranged in geographical order. Of particular interest are the cases showing the Egyptian amulets, and the prophylactics for the Evil Eye; the ecclesiastical talismans, etc., and the collection of modern London charms, amulets and talismans.

In Case 51 is a series illustrating artificial deformity of the body; and in Case 52 a series of pathological and anatomical forms represented from the primitive viewpoint is shown.

SECTION III

ANATOMY ROOM

THE history of anatomy is illustrated by means of drawings, paintings and sculpture. From prehistoric days, man has evinced an interest in anatomy, and the earliest delineations of the human body were realistic. Interior anatomy was not known until comparatively late. Galen dissected animals, and until the XIIIth

Anatomy Room—*continued*

century the teaching of anatomy was based on his work. The earliest authorised dissections appear to date from 1302 (Varignana) and 1315 (Mundinus).

Prominent in this room are the anatomical mannikins in ivory, bone, etc., used in the XVIth and XVIIth centuries to teach anatomy and midwifery.

Anatomical models of interest are shown in the various cases. The work of Vesalius and Harvey is represented in Cases 62 and 63. A Collection illustrating the history of trephining is shown in Cases 66 and 67.

On the walls are numerous paintings, etc., of anatomical interest.

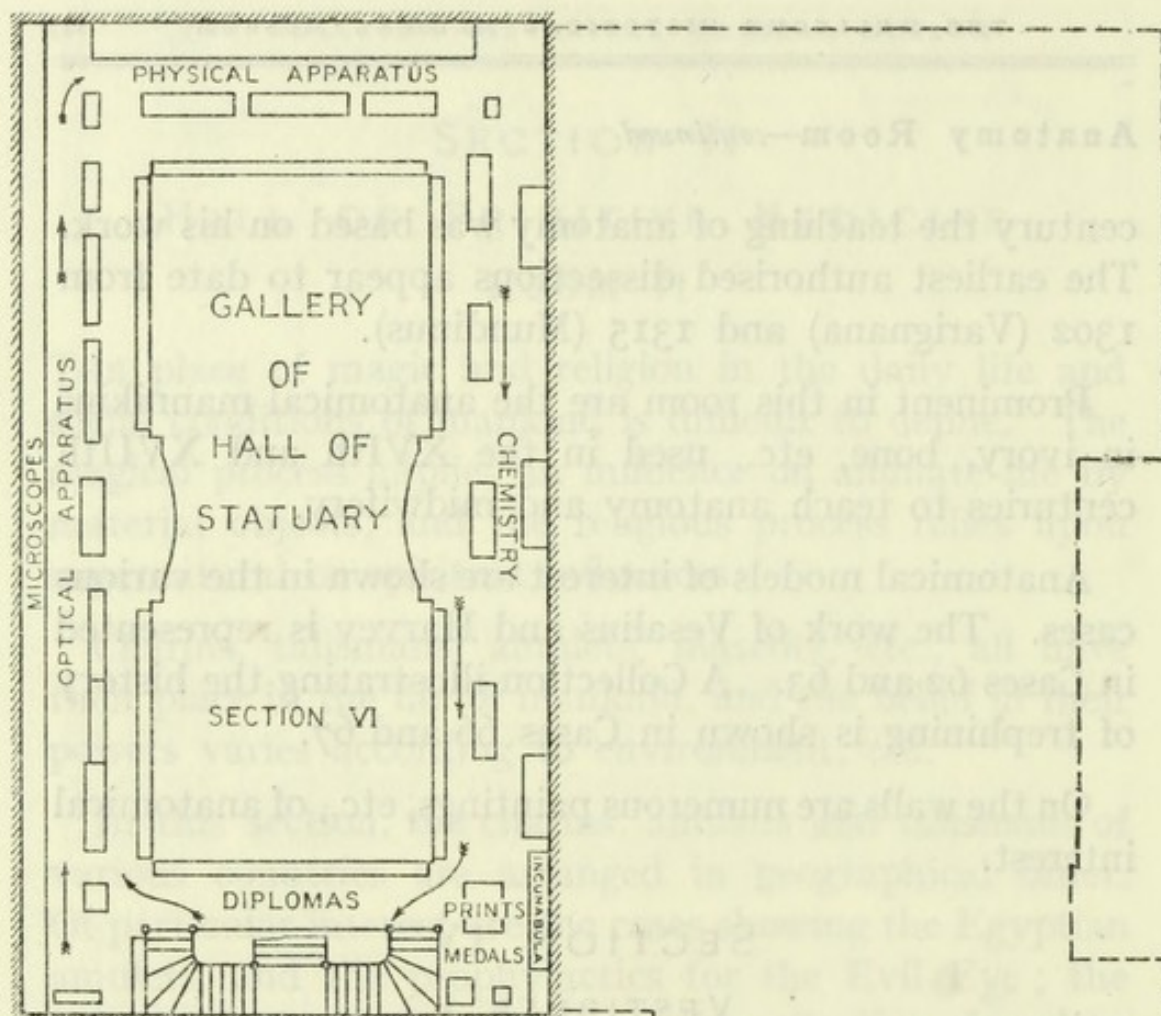
SECTION IV

VESTIBULE I

IN this section, leading from primitive to classical practice, are numerous pictures of medical and surgical interest.

The influence of the saints in medicine is represented by oil paintings, etc., of Saints Cosmas and Damian, the patron saints of medicine and pharmacy, XVth century.

In Case 71 is a plaque of "St. Cosmas operating on a man's head," *ca.* 1550, by Leonard Limousin of Limoges ; a reliquary containing the fragments of the bones of Saints Cosmas and Damian, Italian, XVIIth century ; a Gothic amulet with a representation of the head of St. Eric, *ca.* 1165 ; and relics of Henry II and Richard Coeur de Lion, from their burial place at Fontevrault (Maine et Loire), France.



GALLERY PLAN



SECTION V

HALL OF STATUARY

PROMINENT in this Hall are statues, casts and reproductions of the deities associated with the healing art in ancient and classical times.

At the north end are grouped those of early civilisations, including the gods of the Sumerians, Babylonians and Assyrians. Prominent among these is Ea, one of the earliest known deities connected with medicine, who, according to tradition, instructed the protohistoric peoples of the Euphrates valley in science and learning about 5000 B.C.

On the left are Egyptian deities associated with healing, and, on the right, representations of the fathers of medicine of India and China, together with the Aztec medical genius, Ixtlilton.

At the south end are the deities of the early and classic periods of Hellenic culture.

In front of the gallery balustrade on the north side, in the centre, is a replica of the banner of the Company of Barber-Surgeons of London, which was incorporated in 1461, and on either side are barge flags of the Company, formerly used in State processions on the Thames.

In front of the south end of the gallery, in the centre, is a replica of the banner of the Society of Apothecaries

Hall of Statuary—*continued*

of London, which was incorporated in 1617, and on either side are two of the barge streamers formerly used in State pageants on the river.

In the Egyptian alcove on the left are reproductions in facsimile of the earliest records of medicine, dating from *ca.* 2700 B.C., including the medical papyri of Kahun, Ebers, Hearst and those of London and Berlin. Close by, in Case 98, are also early representations of deities, together with alabaster unguentaria and stone mortars used for medical purposes in ancient Egypt.

Facing these, on the right, in the Oriental alcove, will be found figures of deities, associated with healing, from the Far East, and, on the adjacent walls, representations of the practice of medicine in ancient Greece and Rome.

The cases under the gallery and in the centre of the Hall contain a representative collection of instruments employed in surgery and dentistry from the earliest times.

As far as possible, the scheme is evolutionary, and the series are so arranged that the history of each instrument may be studied separately. The evolution of some of the more important instruments is shown in the various cases.

On the staircase leading to the gallery are paintings of medical interest.

SECTION VI

GALLERY OF THE HALL OF STATUARY

ON the walls of the west side, the development of the microscope is shown in Cases 104—138. The smaller types are illustrated in Case 139.

The centre cases show the development of the spy-glass, lorgnette, folding hand spectacles, etc., oriental spectacles, goggles, etc.; ophthalmic instruments; ophthalmoscopes, optometers, etc.; artificial eyes; Roman oculists' stamps; eye-baths, etc.

On the balustrade the evolution of the spectacle is shown in Cases 148—154.

At the north end of the wall is a collection of objects relating to Physics, including the original apparatus used by Galvani in the discovery of animal magnetism in 1792.

Prints and autographs are shown in cases in the south-western corner, and in the balustrade cases at the south end of the gallery are representative diplomas, etc.

In the east gallery, the history of Chemistry is illustrated by means of apparatus, paintings, books, manuscripts, etc., etc.

In the south-east corner are incunabula, medical medals, prints, etc., etc.

Original apparatus by Lord Kelvin and Lord Rayleigh are shown in Cases 157 and 167.

On the walls are pictures, etc., relating to the various subjects represented.

SECTION VII

PORTRAIT GALLERY

AN important section is being developed in this gallery to illustrate the life work of eminent physicians and surgeons. Portraits of men renowned for their work in various branches of the healing art are hung in association with personal relics, instruments which they invented, etc. It is hoped that this section will develop into an organised series showing the changes and progress of medicine and surgery in recent times. As the years pass by, the work of the men shown will thus acquire its true historical perspective.

The work of Edward Jenner is illustrated in Cases 193—195 and by statues, paintings, diplomas, etc., at the south end of the wall.

Other departments represented in this gallery are pomanders, unguents, etc.; toilet requisites; the evolution of oral and nasal instruments, syringes, thermometers, stethoscopes, urology, pessaries, etc.; anæsthetics and circumcision.

In Cases 207—214 are talismanic and healing rings; stones of healing; coins and documents relating to healing by the royal touch; incunabula; manuscripts; medals and plaquettes; miniatures, etc., etc.

In Cases 202 and 203 historical relics are shown, including the medical outfits used by Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington.

SECTION VIII

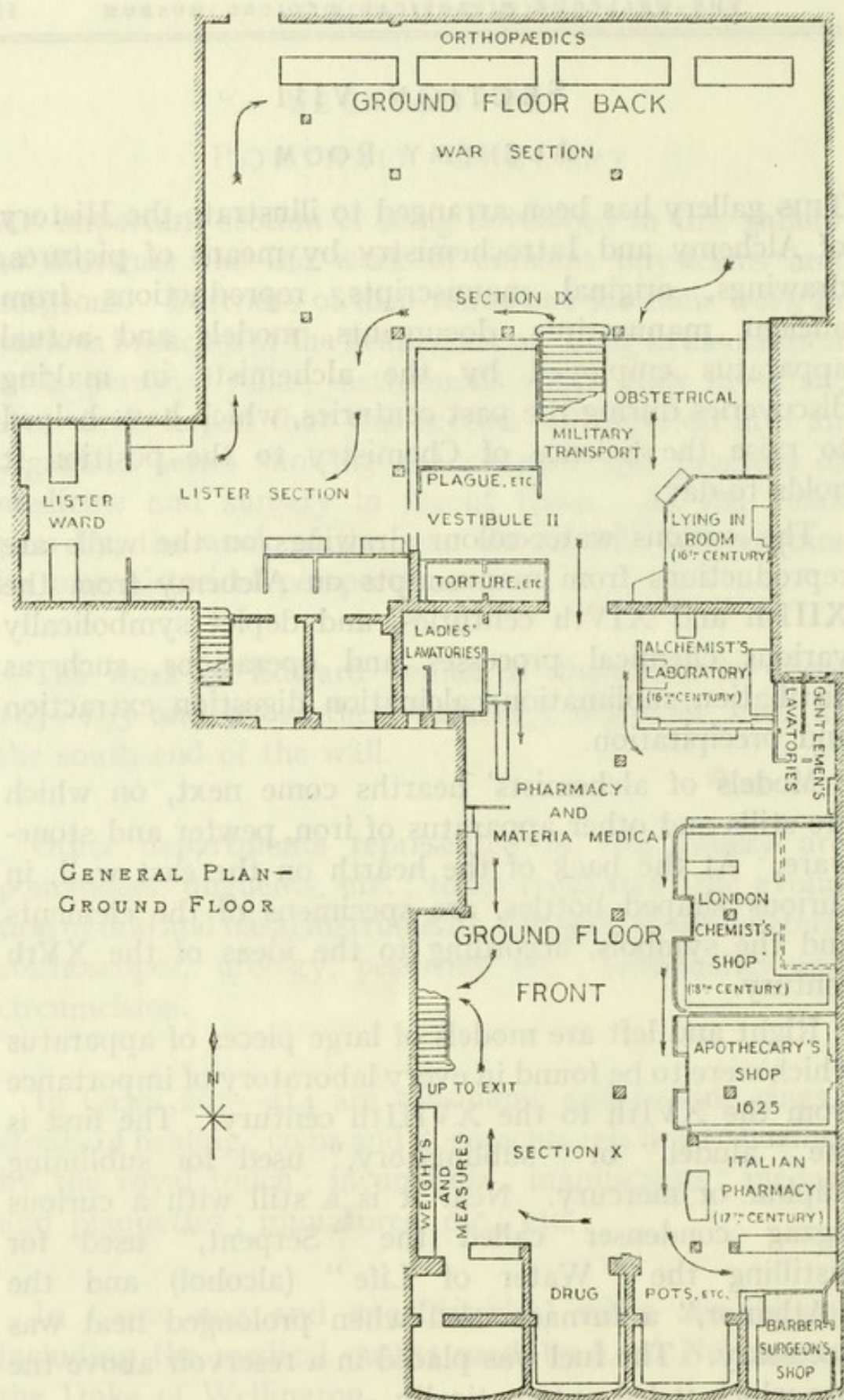
ALCHEMY ROOM

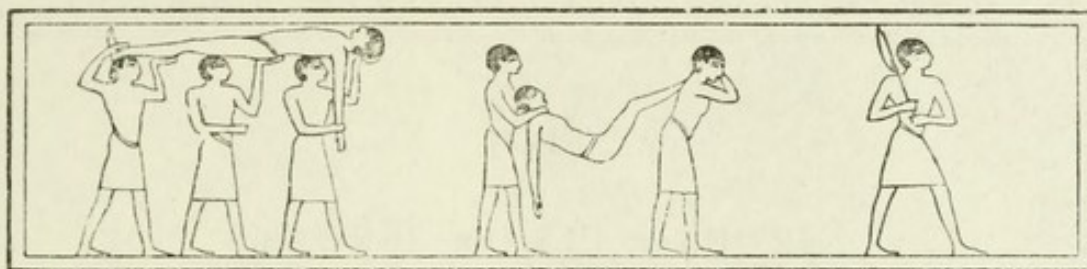
THIS gallery has been arranged to illustrate the History of Alchemy and Iatrochemistry by means of pictures, drawings, original manuscripts, reproductions from ancient manuscripts, documents, models and actual apparatus employed by the alchemists in making discoveries during the past centuries, which have helped to raise the Science of Chemistry to the position it holds to-day.

The curious water-colour drawings on the walls are reproductions from manuscripts on Alchemy from the XIIIth and XIVth centuries, and depict symbolically various chemical processes and operations, such as distillation, sublimation, calcination, digestion, extraction and precipitation.

Models of alchemists' hearths come next, on which are stills and other apparatus of iron, pewter and stoneware. At the back of the hearth on the east wall, in curious shaped bottles, are specimens of the elements and the symbols, according to the ideas of the XVth century.

Right and left are models of large pieces of apparatus which were to be found in every laboratory of importance from the XVIth to the XVIIIth century. The first is the "aludel" or "sublimatory," used for subliming sulphur or mercury. Near it is a still with a curious zigzag condenser called the "Serpent," used for distilling the "Water of Life" (alcohol) and the "Athanor," a furnace used when prolonged heat was necessary. The fuel was placed in a reservoir above the fire which it fed automatically.





SECTION IX

GROUND FLOOR—BACK

THE main part of this section is devoted to the history of war surgery and medicine. Prominent are the naval and military collections of material and pictures relating to the Great War (1914-1918).

Other sections refer to surgery in general, the history of the syringe, gas mask, splints, bandages, tourniquets, orthopædic appliances, etc., etc. Mediæval appliances for the reduction of dislocations, etc., are represented by actual examples, also by models. Pictures dealing with plague, leprosy, obstetrics, torture, etc., etc., are also represented.

In the south-west corner, the Lister Section is shown. Here is a section of the actual ward in which Lister practised his antiseptic system of surgery. The furniture and fittings are from the ward when it was demolished in 1924. In the adjacent cases will be found material used by Lister, including the collection loaned by the Glasgow Lister Memorial Committee.

In the south-eastern corner is a reconstruction of a lying-in room of the XVIth century.

Leading from the Ground Floor Back to the Pharmaceutical Section is a collection of pictures illustrating doctors' robes from early times to the present day.

SECTION X

GROUND FLOOR—FRONT

PHARMACEUTICAL SECTION

THE visitor is invited to inspect first the shops arranged round the sides of this Room in the following order:—

1. Alchemist's Laboratory. XVIth century.
2. London Chemist's Shop. XVIIIth century.
3. London Apothecary's Shop. XVIIth century.
4. Italian Pharmacy. XVIIth century.
5. Barber-Surgeon's Shop.
6. Chinese Drug Shop (Model).
7. Turkish Drug Shop.

The cases in the centre of the room illustrate early, rare, and Oriental materia medica, etc.; mandrakes; narcotics and stimulants; medicine chests; pill-making apparatus; hygiene; measures of time and weight, etc.

At the south end, the collection of drug pots, etc., is arranged geographically. In Case 335 are weights and measures from all parts of the world. The collection of mortars is on the east side, between the Alchemist's Laboratory and the London Chemist's Shop. In the remaining cases are objects showing various phases of the druggist's craft. Suspended from the ceiling are apothecaries' signs, etc.



