'John Hunter leaves St. George's Hospital', October 16th, 1793 : an explanatory notice of the picture bearing this title, painted by A.D. McCormick, R.B.A.

(7)

"JOHN HUNTER LEAVES ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL." *October 16th, 1793.*

AN EXPLANATORY NOTICE OF THE PICTURE BEARING THIS TITLE, PAINTED BY A. D. McCORMICK, R.B.A.

Edmund

"John Hunter leaves St. George's Hospital, October 16th, 1793."

By A. D. McCORMICK, R.B.A.

Photogravure Reproductions of this picture are now ready, and can be seen at St. George's Hospital, and at the artist's studio, 58, Queen's Road, St. John's Wood, N.W., to which all communications should be addressed.

Vellum Proofs, specially printed by Mr. F. Goulding	*£5 5 0*
The number of these will be strictly limited to twenty-five and each will be signed by the printer as well as the artist.	
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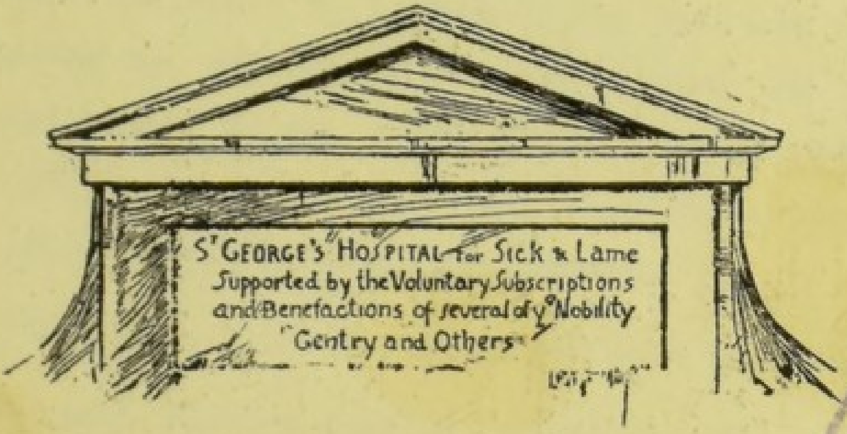
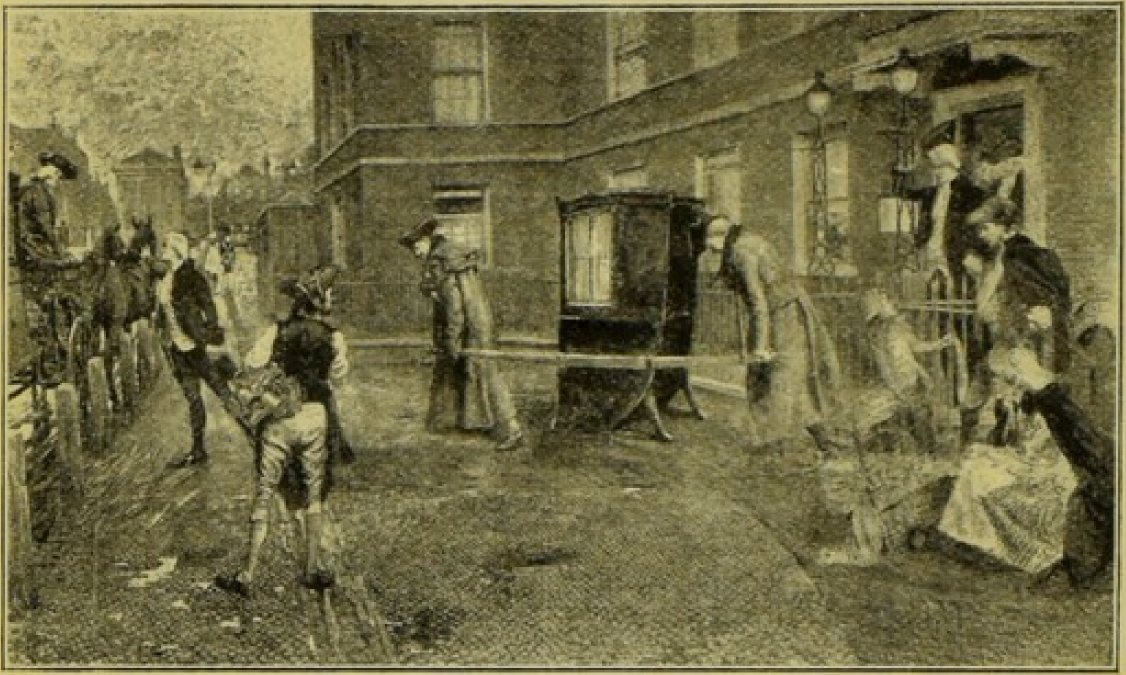
Oct., 1901.

"JOHN HUNTER LEAVES ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL." *October 16th, 1793.*



AN EXPLANATORY NOTICE OF THE PICTURE BEARING THIS TITLE, PAINTED BY A. D. McCORMICK, R.B.A.

written by T. Clinton Den
FRCS
Surgeon to St. Georges Hosp
1901



"John Hunter leaves St. George's Hospital, October 16, 1793."

JOHN HUNTER, as is well known, died suddenly in St. George's Hospital on October 16, 1793. Drewry Ottley thus describes the event :—

> "Hunter immediately ceased speaking, . . . hurried into the adjoining room, which he had scarcely reached when, with a deep groan, he fell lifeless. . . . Various attempts were made . . . to restore animation . . . but in vain . . . and all efforts proving useless, his body was placed in a sedan chair and conveyed to Leicester Square, followed by his now vacant carriage."

NOTE TO THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE frontispiece is from a little known portrait of John Hunter in the possession of the Royal Society. The painting is by Home. Although the work appears to be that of an amateur as evidenced by the crudeness of the drawing in many parts, the portrait is a highly interesting one and the likeness probably excellent. The actual picture stands much in need of cleaning. The strange-looking animal reposing its head on Hunter's knee is a cross between a Pomeranian bitch and a wolf. It was one of a litter of nine pups, and was presented to Hunter by a Mr. Brookes. Hunter founded a paper on this animal entitled, 'Observations tending to show that the wolf, jackal, and dog are all of the same species.' This paper was dated April, 1787, and published in the 'Philosophical Transactions' (vol. 77, p. 255) thus approximately fixing the date of the portrait.

The illustration on the Title is an exact replica of the inscription that was placed on the main north front of the old hospital.

The tailpiece is a drawing of the death mask in the Royal College of Surgeons.

For permission to make the drawings our best thanks are due to the authorities of the Royal Society and of the Royal College of Surgeons.

JOHN HUNTER LEAVES ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL, OCTOBER 16, 1793.

ALTHOUGH the descriptions of John Hunter's tragic death in St. George's Hospital on Oct. 16, 1793, are rather meagre they are fairly consistent. The minute book of the hospital furnishes no information as to the occurrence beyond the bald entry: "Resolved—That Mr. Hunter's letter to this Board relating to two of the surgeons' pupils, who were received this day, be preserved for future consideration." This was evidently equivalent to adjourning the matter "to this day six months," for it does not appear that the subject was ever mentioned again at the Board. Hunter really had no case and was perfectly aware that he was leading a forlorn hope. The actual letter, which would be of the highest interest, is not, so far as I know, extant. The minutes of the weekly Board held on 23 October, 1793, furnish equally scanty information. It is merely stated that "Dr. Robertson reported to the Board that Dr. Ford had signified his desire to resign his office of Physician to this Charity, and also the death of Mr. Hunter one of the surgeons it was resolved that Dr. Ford not having sent to the Board any letter as is the usual Mode the consideration of both businesses be postponed till Wednesday next." It must not be assumed, from the concise nature of these entries in the minute book that the business of the Board was invariably transacted with brevity and dispatch. Nor, again, that the scanty record of what happened implies any feeling of rancour towards the great man who had left the hospital for ever. Gunning, Walker, and Keate, the three surgeons with whom Hunter had been mainly concerned in the long-standing dispute, had no doubt seriously quarrelled with him, but differences of opinion and rivalry melt away in the presence of death. Hunter's old acquaintances & colleagues would have been foremost in acknowledging his transcendent abilities and services to the hospital.

The question at issue was a burning one and likely to lead to a large attendance. Yet only five names are mentioned in the minute book as attending the weekly Board on 16th October, 1793: Rev. Jas. Clarke in the chair, Dr. Robertson, Dr. Pearson, Wm. Walker, Esq., & Dr. Matthew. The list is obviously incomplete. Possibly the names only of those present at the preliminary formal business are included. Hunter's name is not mentioned. Gunning & Keate were almost certainly present, and we know from Drewry Ottley that Baillie was in the Board Room.

Drewry Ottley, in his 'Life of John Hunter,'[*] writes: "Dr. Baillie had immediately followed him (Hunter) from the Board-room, and Mr. Home, who was in the house was also summoned to his assistance." Ottley, who published his work in 1835, had abundant opportunities of learning at first hand, from those who had been spectators of the scene, the details of all that occurred and there is no reason for questioning his accuracy on any point. Home furnishes a very brief description:[†] "He (Hunter) went into the next room, and turning round to Dr. Robertson, one of the physicians of the hospital, he gave a deep groan, and dropt down dead." Thereupon Home enters into pathological details which are not germane to our present purpose. Dr. Robertson, it may be here noted, was physician to St. George's Hospital from 1785 to 1800. He changed his name from Robertson to Barclay in October, 1799 (Munk) and under the latter name is included in the list of the physicians. It is on the authority then of Drewry Ottley alone that Baillie and Home are introduced into the picture but, as already explained, that authority appears perfectly sufficient.

[*] '*Life of John Hunter.*' *Prefixed to Palmer's edition of John Hunter's works.*

[†] '*Life of John Hunter,*' *by Everard Home, p. lxi.* (1794).

For the purposes of his picture Mr. McCormick has selected, wisely, a moment which allows scope for the imagination. He has endeavoured to portray the scene outside the old hospital at the moment of departure: to reconstruct the living picture as faithfully as study of the circumstances will allow, & to represent a scene too full in itself of dramatic interest to require any artificial or theatrical heightening. The tone of the picture is low throughout, for it is the afternoon, say three o'clock, of a dull, wet October day. The storm has passed & the rain clouds are rolling away eastwards, allowing a momentary gleam of light in the sky overhead which is reflected in the roadway and in the pools of water collected in the hollows of the worn grass-grown courtyard. There is little sign of life and stir for it must be remembered that the scene is laid beyond the barrier dividing town from country. Even about the building few spectators are gathered. Nowadays a larger crowd would collect in a minute or two to watch a man with a cut head walk up the hospital steps. Here the contrast is deliberately emphasised. Within the narrow doorway are assembled some of those who have followed the sedan chair from the room adjoining the Board-room to the threshold of the hospital.

Home, in the courtyard, is directing the coachman to follow the chair to Leicester Square, while Baillie standing on the steps gives the keynote of the composition by raising his hat as the makeshift hearse passes away. The absolute simplicity of the arrangements is full of pathos. The news of the event has got abroad in the hospital and one or two faces of nurses are seen at the corridor windows on the first floor. There are no spectators seen at the ward windows on the male side of the house. The work there must go on whatever happens.

Mr. Stephen Paget in his 'Life of John Hunter,' writes:* "The body of John Hunter was taken in a sedan-chair from the hospital to Leicester Square, followed by his colleagues." There are some grounds for questioning whether they actually did so. At first sight it seems improbable. Jessé Foot makes no mention of Hunter's colleagues following him to Leicester Square. He writes:† "On being told of the event (Hunter's death) on the same day, I recollected having seen the bay stone horses returning, through Piccadilly, home, without their master." On the other hand Mr. Holmes mentions,‡ incidentally, in

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* *'Masters of Medicine' series. 'John Hunter,' by Stephen Paget, p.* 235.

† *'Life of John Hunter,' by Jessé Foot, surgeon. London,* 1794. *See* p. 282.

‡ *'Masters of Medicine' series. 'Benjamin Brodie,' by Timothy Holmes, p.* 48.

his 'Life of Benjamin Brodie,' that he had heard from Mr. Gunning's* own lips that he had walked by the side of Hunter's coach as it carried home his body from St. George's Hospital. Mr. Gunning was an extremely old man when Mr. Holmes met him in Paris, and possibly his memory was a little uncertain on points of detail. It is quite certain that Hunter's body was not conveyed in his coach for reasons that will be explained later. The point is not worth pursuing further and is only mentioned because no suggestion has been made in the picture that Hunter's colleagues and friends are preparing to follow him. Seeing that there is uncertainty it seemed best to adopt a scheme of composition that, while it left the matter undecided, ran no risk of making a historical blunder.

Hunter, it may be noted, had lived in Leicester Square as his town house since 1783 when he moved thither from Jermyn Street. Previously, from 1763 to 1768, he had lived in Golden Square. His house at Earl's Court, partly a menagerie and partly a country residence, was purchased in 1764, and was pulled down a few years ago. The house in Leicester Square was No. 28, immediately south of the present Alhambra Theatre, and it was here that he kept his world-famous museum. In accordance with an ex-

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* *This was Mr. John Gunning, jun. He was surgeon to St. George's Hospital from* 1800 *to* 1823.

pressed wish his body after death was examined in this house.

The presentment of Baillie is founded on the portrait in the board room of the hospital. This picture is a copy of Hoppner's portrait now in the College of Physicians. Baillie was a nephew of John Hunter and at the time of the latter's death was 32 years of age. Hoppner died in 1810 so that Baillie cannot have been more than 49 when he was painted. The date of the portrait is not known but the face suggests a man fully 45 years old. In comparing the two portraits, therefore, it must be borne in mind that in the picture Baillie is shown as some thirteen years younger than he was when Hoppner painted him, and also that the wig alters the appearance of a face amazingly.* Baillie was physician to the hospital from 1787 to 1800. Home, John Hunter's brother-in-law, was 37 years old when Hunter died. Here again the presentment is founded on the portrait in the board room, the date of which is uncertain, but it was evidently painted when Home, who died at the age of 76, was advanced in years. Home was appointed assistant surgeon to Hunter (not assistant surgeon to the hospital as we should phrase it now) in 1787. "In July, 1787, he (John

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**Cf. Mr. Warrington Haward's article on the portraits in the Board-room. 'St. George's Hospital Gazette,' vol. viii., p.* 158.

Hunter) applied to the Governors of St. George's Hospital to be allowed, on account of his health, an assistant surgeon, which they very readily granted, and I was appointed to that office."* Home, who in 1792 had been an unsuccessful candidate for the post of surgeon to the hospital, was elected to that office in November, 1793, filling the vacancy caused by John Hunter's death.

The remaining figures, at the windows and in the doorway, are not portraits. No portrait could be discovered of Dr. Robertson nor of Walker, both of whom were certainly present.

The figure of the potman, in the foreground, is not put in merely to give the requisite balance to the composition but is introduced advisedly. No one was more likely to have been hanging about the hospital, and indeed these functionaries were frequently on duty within the walls. An edict of the Weekly Board, dated March, 1782, orders "That the Nurses to prevent the People belonging to the Public Houses going into the wards do receive their allowance of Beer in the Hall and when they have done with the pots do place them in the Hall in order to be fetched away." There were several noted taverns and ale-houses close by in Piccadilly, and the supplies were probably drawn from one of these. Such

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* *Home's 'Life of Hunter,' p. xxxiv. Cf. also 'Life of Sir B. C. Brodie,' by Timothy Holmes, p.* 47.

were the 'Hercules' Pillars,' near Hyde Park Corner, the 'Triumphant Chariot,' a few doors further east, and the 'Half Moon' ale-house which stood at the corner of what is now known as Half Moon Street.

The 'Hercules' Pillars' tavern did not stand, as is sometimes supposed, on the site of Apsley House, but was situated a little west of Hamilton Place. Apsley House was built on a site granted to Baron Apsley, Earl of Bathurst, in 1784, and the 'Hercules' Pillars' was in existence * long after Lord Bathurst died in 1794. The 'Hercules' Pillars' tavern was the first inn met by the traveller coming into London from the west by Knightsbridge. It was here that Squire Western put up when in pursuit of Tom Jones (Fielding's 'Tom Jones'). The principal posting houses in the district were the Gloucester Coffee House, now the Berkeley Hotel, and the 'White Horse Cellar,' and it was from these that the Western Mails started. The 'Triumphant Chariot' was largely patronised by soldiers, and was a watering place for hackney coaches. It is marked on a map dated 1766.

An interesting account of many of the taverns in the district is given in Clinch's 'Mayfair and Belgravia.' One of the illustrations is a copy of an old engraving

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* *Cunningham's 'Handbook of London,' article "Piccadilly."*

showing the Gloucester Coffee House and the mail coaches. Some of the taverns about Hyde Park Corner remained as late as 1805.*

The figure of the flower-girl with her basket of fruit and flowers, supplies a note of colour that was needed for the composition, but her presence is perfectly natural. Then, as now, there was a ready sale for cheap flowers in the streets and the door of a hospital was always an excellent 'pitch.' To the west, about Fulham and the low-lying grounds near the river, market gardens of fruit & vegetables were abundant. The devastating efforts of the builder have done away with most of these, but some still survive. Much of the produce was carried up to town in baskets on the heads of the street vendors. As they worked their way towards Covent Garden they were sure to stop at the hospital. In front of the 'Triumphant Chariot' was a high shelf on which the porters were accustomed to deposit their loads while they 'rested' at the ale-house. Opposite No. 125 Piccadilly, on the 'shilling side' of the road, one of these porter's rests is still to be seen, but runs a risk of being swept away if the scheme for widening Piccadilly ever passes from the contentious to the practical stage. A tablet affixed to it records that the rest was erected by the Vestry of St. George, Hanover Square, in 1861, as 'a relic of a past period of

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* *Cunningham's 'Handbook of London,' article "Hyde Park Corner."*

London's history.' In the old days the landlords of the taverns were probably quite prepared to bear the expense of putting up these rests which were indeed usually found in front of their premises. Walking funerals were then common, & it is said that the bearers were accustomed to deposit their burden on the rests while they gathered strength. The scene would have been a congenial one for the pencil of Rowlandson or Gillray.

The flowers shown in the basket, it may be noted, are such as were common and cheap at the date, and also such as bloom in October. The choice was rather restricted owing to the time of year. Everblooming roses are shown, spiked asters and Michaelmas daisies. The authority for the flowers that were fashionable at the time is 'Curtis's Botanical Magazine' of which there is a fine copy in the library of the British Museum. The distant figures of the sergeant & the countryman may suggest that the locality is on the borders of town and country. Hunter had seen active service as a staff-surgeon in the Peninsula, & had taken part in 1761 in the expedition to Belleisle. At the time of his death he held the posts of inspector-general and surgeon-general to his majesty's army, appointments which mightily displeased Jessé Foot, a writer* who was ever eager to snarl at the subject of his biographical memoir.

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* *See Foot's 'Life of John Hunter,' p.* 279.

The costumes are as correct as research could make them. There is, however, a little uncertainty, for just at the period of the picture costume was in a transition stage; wigs and three-cornered hats were generally worn by men, but the 'Tom and Jerry' style of dress was beginning to be the fashion. There seems little doubt that the artist is right in portraying Baillie, Home and the others standing about the doorway in wigs. Medical men probably clung to these emblems of respectability after they had been discarded by those who led the fashion in dress. Hunter never adopted a wig but wore his hair curled behind (Foot). The high-collared coats made familiar by Reynolds's portrait were also beginning to go out of fashion. The coat that Baillie wears is painted from one that is known to have belonged to a physician of the period. Embroidered waistcoats were still in vogue. Home wears a shot silk coat and knee-breeches. The public roads and footpaths were ill kept in those days and it is not very likely that persons thus arrayed would walk the considerable distance from Hyde Park Corner to Leicester Square. Indeed all who could afford the expense took sedan chairs for the smallest excursion. Fashionable folk were usually carried across the footway from their house to their carriage, and the house of every well-to-do inhabitant had a chair in the hall. Foot says that Hunter was borne away in a 'close-chair' belonging to the hospital. Sedan chairs were always on hire in the streets and it was as easy to call a chair then as it is to get a cab now. The bearers of private sedan chairs usually wore more or less elaborate liveries, and the costumes of the bearers in the picture are designedly diverse and plain. It was no easy matter to discover a common sedan chair of the period (sedan chairs had been in use in England since Elizabethan times) suitable for the picture. The Sedan chairs to be found in museums & large private houses are only such as have been preserved on account of their elaborate decoration, painted panels, or carving. What was wanted was a common chair such as would have stood for hire. The one shown was obtained through the courtesy of Mr. Litchfield of the Sinclair Galleries, who very kindly allowed a sketch to be made of it.

The flower girl's dress, while accurate, is fortunately much more picturesque than the costume of the present day. The girls frequently wore only the hood of the cloak thrown over the head. The 'Dolly Varden' hat was then in vogue, and would have been as appropriate for the child as the cap she has on. The dress of the nurses at the windows is such as was ordinarily worn by women at this period. Nurses dressed as they pleased in those days. Uniforms were only introduced into the hospital in 1869. The potboy's dress is from a print by Hogarth, and the sergeant is in the uniform of the 1st Grenadier Guards. The coachman's livery is trimmed in the fashion that seems to have been universal among coachmen at the time. A faint resemblance to John Hunter's profile has been purposely given to the coachman's features. The best profile portraits of Hunter are the pencil drawing by Sir Nathaniel Holland (reproduced by lithography) and the relief by Tweed after Holland (see illustration in Mather's 'Two great Scotsmen,' p. 122). It may be noted that the first Hunterian operation for aneurism was performed on a coachman. Mr. J. A. Lomax, an artist who is a great authority on the dress of this period, very kindly lent some of the costumes.

The construction of private carriages of the period differed in some particulars from that of the ordinary coaches. Through the courtesy of the Coachmaker's Company, who kindly allowed a sketch to be made from an original design for a coach of that period (about 1790) an accurate representation is given of a carriage such as would have been used by a medical man. The wheels are remarkably large & the front and hind wheels very far apart, the interval sometimes being 15ft. or more. It can have been no easy matter to turn these unwieldy vehicles in the narrow streets of old London. The body of the coach was suspended by four stout straps which allowed it to sway about a good deal; a device that diminished the jolting inevitable on the old London roads, but had other drawbacks. As a set-off to the dignity of riding in one's own carriage coach-sickness had to be taken into account. The floor of the carriage was so high above the ground (some 4ft.) that a small flight of steps was necessary to enable the occupant to gain his seat. The steps sometimes folded into the carriage and sometimes were stowed away beneath the floor. The coach would only seat two persons. Indeed the carriages of the period appeared to provide the minimum of accommodation with the maximum of discomfort. The door was narrow and hinged in front, that is, at the weakest point. It would obviously have been a very difficult and unseemly proceeding to have hoisted the body of a dead man into such a vehicle, and there can be no doubt that after John Hunter had been placed in the sedan chair he was conveyed in it to his house. The box seat appears to be a rather insecure perch and was not placed so as to give the coachman very great control over his horses. Sometimes the box seats were of very graceful character and had quite a classical form of design. The coat of arms on the side panel is that of John Hunter.* We know from Jessé Foot that Hunter drove bay horses. The harness of those days was almost exactly the same as that still used. Bearing-reins were not employed.

The utmost trouble has been taken to secure accur-

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* *See* '*Two Great Scotsmen,*' *by George Mather, M.D.* (*Glasgow,* 1893), *for illustration and description, pp.* 140, 239.

acy in the representation of the old hospital, Hyde Park Corner, and the western end of Piccadilly. Contemporary prints, drawings and engravings enabled the form to be secured, but the colour was a matter of considerable difficulty. Lanesborough House, built at the end of the seventeenth century or early in the eighteenth, which was selected by the original founders of St. George's Hospital "on account of the strength of the building and the airiness of the situation" is shown on old maps as having the form of a capital H. Very soon after the opening of the hospital in 1734, the accommodation for patients was increased by the purchase of two adjoining houses, but the shape of the front was not altered. The main entrance, shown in the picture, was on the north aspect, facing Knightsbridge and Hyde Park, and was situated close to where the drinking fountain is now placed. The tollgates formed the boundary line of 'town' so that the hospital stood just outside London, and Lord Lanesborough was perhaps justified in inscribing on the front of his house the halting rhyme:

"It is my delight to be
Both in the town and country."

Lord Lanesborough, who appears to have been chiefly celebrated for his dancing proclivities, died here in 1724. St. George's Hospital was entirely rebuilt in 1825-34, and the completed work was opened exactly one hundred years after the original foundation in Lanesborough House. The time occupied in the rebuilding may seem long even to those who are connected with St. George's & are therefore tolerably familiar with the deliberate methods of the builder, but it must be noted that during these nine years the work of the hospital was constantly carried on. The old hospital was a red brick building like Apsley House* with two stone courses. The view of the hospital from Hyde Park, by Richard Wilson, now in the Foundling Hospital, a copy of which hangs in the Board room, represents a cream-coloured building, but a study of contemporary brick buildings renders it probable that the tone of colour adopted in Mr. McCormick's picture is more accurate. The chief authority for the colour is a watercolour drawing in the Guildhall library, dated 1802, showing the north-east corner of the hospital and Hyde Park Corner. Thackeray ('Vanity Fair,' chap. 22) describes how when the nineteenth century was "in its teens," "Apsley House and St. George's Hospital wore red jackets still."

Much of the brickwork of those days was particularly good. A few specimens only now are to be found, for example, in the south-west corner of Hanover Square. Some of the old houses have been faced

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* *Apsley House was faced with Bath stone in* 1823.

with stone; more, unfortunately, have been defaced with stucco.

Further information about the details of the building were gleaned from the engraving of the architect's elevation of the main north front,* and an engraved view of Hyde Park Corner and St. George's Hospital dated 1797.† The latter engraving is of special value for it shows that the hospital was a brick building. Certain other features of Hyde Park Corner which could not be introduced into Mr. McCormick's picture are well seen in this engraving. For instance the Weighing House which stood opposite the hospital on the north side of Knightsbridge is shown: also Apsley House, the north Toll House & the elaborate lamp stand with seven lights that illuminated Hyde Park Corner. The wall that then enclosed Hyde Park is also seen in the engraving. This wall was built in the reign of Charles II., & the first iron railing was put up in the time of George IV. The present railing, a great improvement on the old one, was erected after the destruction of the Park railings in 1866 by the mob who were infuriated by

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* *A copy of this hangs in the Secretary's office. There is not much detail, but it shows that there were three steps leading up to the front door.*

† *A reduced copy of this engraving forms an illustration to Clinch's 'Mayfair and Belgravia.'*

the refusal of the Home Secretary (Mr. S. H. Walpole) to hold a great Reform meeting in the Park. Mr. Edmund Beales, who gained much notoriety at the time of these riots, was rewarded for the share he took in improving the appearance of Hyde Park, by appointment to a county court judgeship. The late Sir Walter Besant suggested that the most authoritative guides to the reproduction of Hyde Park Corner would probably be found among the Crace engravings in the British Museum, and indeed this superb collection proved to be an invaluable mine of information.* Among other treasures was found a highly interesting plan which rendered it possible to reproduce the details of the courtyard and road in front of the hospital with the utmost fidelity. There is a copy also in the Guildhall Library. This plan was made for the Turnpike Commissioners in 1820. The row of posts that marked off the hospital property did not extend straight up eastwards as

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* *The Crace collection includes a document of much interest to all connected with St. George's Hospital, namely, a printed account of the proceedings of the Governors of St. George's Hospital near Hyde Park Corner, from the first institution* Oct. 19, 1733 *to the* 29 *Dec.*, 1742. *It contains an engraving of the hospital, a list of the Governors, an abstract of the accounts, etc., and some curious information about the early hospital.*

shown in the engraving last referred to, but curved round and ended near the small building* at the north-east corner of the hospital. The position of every lamp, some of which were affixed to the posts, is shown in this elaborately minute plan. The courtyard itself is paved with cobble stones which extend up to the roadway. A red brick walk leads from the road and two curved arms also of brick meet it at the front door so that the whole arrangement has the shape of an anchor. Apparently the original intention was to provide a way for coaches to drive up to the door. The arrangement brought a much needed note of colour into the courtyard but occasioned no slight difficulty in the perspective. The rain water gutter marks the present limit of the pavement. When the hospital was rebuilt the line of frontage was probably unaltered, but the old courtyard was extensively excavated, & the picturesque but highly inconvenient cobbles disappeared for ever. The old doorway was strangely narrow for a large building. It may seem very small in the picture but, as a matter of fact, is represented as slightly wider than it actually was. The windows are large for buildings of the period. Some of the lower sashes of the corri-

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* *This did not apparently belong to the hospital. It was afterwards pulled down, but the small west wall was left standing for a considerable time.*

dor windows are raised but the upper sash only of the ward window in the east wing is open. This represents an actual fact. The minute book for Nov., 1789, contains the following entry:

> "It having been represented to the Board that a practice obtains of conveying in Beer from the street into the lower wards by the window.
> 'Ordered that in order to prevent the like in future the lower sashes of both wards be fastened down.'"

The building, generally, has, it must be confessed, little merit other than that of extreme simplicity. But in the case of a hospital money is better spent in the inside than the exterior. The chief feature of interest was the inscription on the roof, reproduced on the Title of this notice. This is well seen in the engraving reproduced in Clinch's work (facing p. 157) which also gives a good view of the east wing of the hospital and of the road that now forms Grosvenor Place. In the picture a distant carriage is seen driving up this road. Looking east down Piccadilly, the square plain building of the south Toll House is seen. The place rather suggests a fort but it does not appear that any part of it was in use as a lock-up or guard house. There were barracks near at hand. The centre of the roadway was occupied by the lampstand. On either side of this were the gates. The line of the picture at this point runs just south of the middle of the roadway, so that the south gate only is seen. South of the Toll House was the footway. The turnpike was moved in 1721 to the site shown. It had previously been situated opposite Berkeley Street. The toll houses together with the Weighing House were finally cleared away in 1825, the year that the rebuilding of the hospital commenced. The levels of Knightsbridge and the western end of Piccadilly were altered greatly some sixty years ago,* and the roadway where the Toll House formerly stood was much lowered. In 1793 the hill up Knightsbridge was a formidable ascent for a heavily laden waggon. The gradient has been further improved within the last thirty years. On the right of the Toll House and just within the Green Park, enclosed by a wall, is seen the lodge of the Ranger's house. The Ranger, in those days, was a very high and mighty official & was particularly well lodged. The details of this part of the picture were gathered chiefly from the Crace collection and from drawings and prints in the magnificent collection of the Guildhall Library.

The first house seen on the north side of Piccadilly is the one still standing at the west corner of Hamilton Place. This mansion was built after the three houses next to Apsley House, probably between

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* *Wheatley*, '*Round about London*,' 1870.

1780 and 1790. Up to that date Piccadilly preserved the primitive appearance it had had for many years. The next house seen is at the east corner of Hamilton Place and is now the Bachelors' Club. In 1805 the west corner house was occupied by Lord Montgomerie, and that on the east side by the Hon. W. Garden. The latter mansion was afterwards bought by Lord Chancellor Eldon, and the former, at the same time, by the Marchioness of Conyngham. There appears to be a story connected with the simultaneous purchase of the two houses which the curious in such matters may follow up. It will be observed that the frontage of the buildings on the west side of Hamilton Place is set back so that these houses have now a private roadway. This space was formerly occupied by a kind of low terrace, just indicated in the picture. The only trace of this terrace now remaining is immediately to the east of Apsley House. Hamilton Place is said to have been named after James Hamilton who was Ranger of Hyde Park in the reign of Charles II. The long needed improvement of opening up Hamilton Place into Park Lane was only made in 1871. The congestion of traffic at the narrow southern end of Park Lane was one of the crying evils which Londoners complained of and endured for an astonishing number of years. The traffic was not regulated by the police in the sixties, and it was quite a common occurrence for cabs or carriages to be blocked for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour at the opening into Piccadilly.

The scheme of the picture precluded the possibility of introducing any presentment of John Hunter. The artist has purposely left the spectator to fill in for himself in imagination the contents of the sedan chair. It is no part of the writer's business either to praise or criticise the work but this much may be said: that the scheme of the picture and the method adopted for telling the story breathe alike the true spirit of good art. If any want to know what manner of man John Hunter was they have but to turn to two other works of art of superlative merit, namely, Sir Joshua Reynolds' portrait* and Alfred Gilbert's bronze statue.† The presentments may seem to differ widely but in reality they supplement each other.

**See Mr. Warrington Haward's remarks about the authorship of the copy in the Board-room. 'St. George's Hospital Gazette,' vol. viii., p. 152.*

† The features in this statue are founded on the death mask—a very perfect one and clearly made soon after death—in the possession of the College of Surgeons. The small figure in the left hand is the well known 'Écorché,' usually attributed to Michelangelo, but in reality as Sir Martin Conway, Slade Professor in Cambridge University, informs the writer, by one of his pupils. The

John Hunter was a many-sided man and no single portrait can present more than a few facets of character. Both works emphasise the force of mind, the self-reliant intellect, the power of concentration. The points of difference between the statue and the painting are but due to the expression of different moods of the subject. Sir James Paget in the finest* of all the many admirable orations with which he has enriched our literature and enlarged our minds spoke thus: "In that masterpiece of portraiture,† which teaches like a chapter of biography, Hunter . . . . . is at rest & looking out, but as one who is looking far beyond and away from things visible into a world of truth & law which can be only intellectually discerned." This is the Hunter that Reynolds painted. And again, in the same oration, "a rough and simple-mannered man, abrupt and plain in speech,

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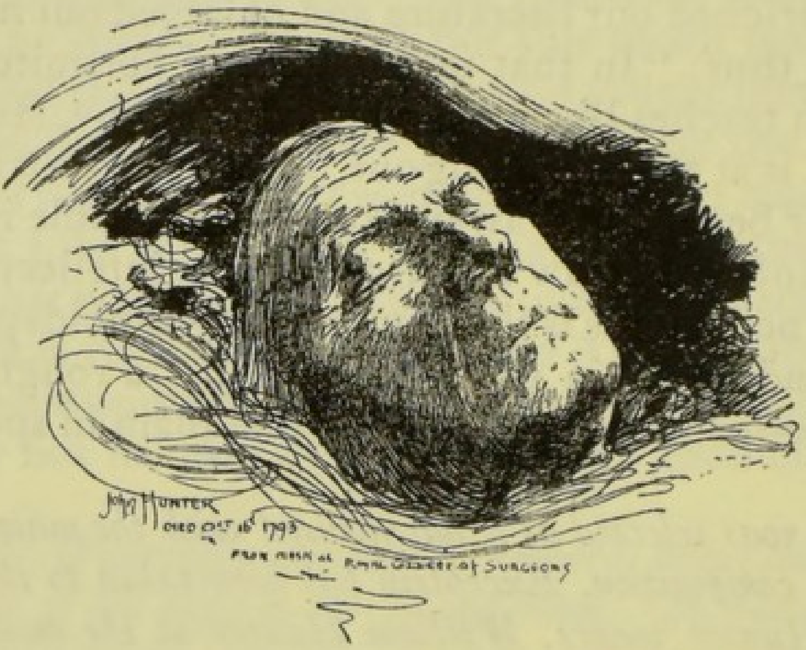
figure was selected as it harmonised with the main lines of the composition. Exception has been taken to the cap that Hunter wears. William Hunter in the medal by Burch is represented as wearing a head-dress, and there seems no reason why John Hunter should not be similarly attired.

* *The 'Hunterian Oration.'*

† *On the occasion of the 'Hunterian Oration,' Reynolds' portrait is placed in the Lecture Theatre of the Royal College of Surgeons.*

warm-hearted and sometimes rashly generous, emotional and impetuous, quickly moved to tears of sympathy, quickly ablaze with anger and fierce words." And this, surely, is the John Hunter that Gilbert modelled.



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