

**Account of the Siamese twin brothers, from actual observations : For sale, only at the exhibition room, Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly.**

**Contributors**

Hale, James W.

**Publication/Creation**

[London] : Printed by W. Turner, [1829]

**Persistent URL**

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/guwdwrm7>

**License and attribution**

This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection  
183 Euston Road  
London NW1 2BE UK  
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722  
E [library@wellcomecollection.org](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

(P)

ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
**Siamese Twin Brothers,**  
FROM  
ACTUAL OBSERVATIONS.



---

FOR SALE, ONLY AT THE EXHIBITION ROOM,  
**Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly.**  
PRICE ONE SHILLING.

---

Entered at Stationer's Hall.

---

LONDON:

Printed by W. TURNER, City Printing-Office, 96, Cheapside.



52815/p

ACCOUNT

2nd issue [1830]

Cal'd for suppl

ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
**Siamese Twin Brothers,**  
FROM  
ACTUAL OBSERVATIONS.

---

FOR SALE, ONLY AT THE EXHIBITION ROOM,  
**Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly,**  
PRICE, ONE SHILLING.

---

ENTERED AT STATIONERS HALL.

---

Printed by W. TURNER, City Printing Office, 96, Cheapside.



WELLCOME

BY THE

# Siamese Twin Brothers

FROM

ACTUAL OBSERVATIONS

BY

THE BROS. OF THE LAMBERTS

(LONDON)



ENTERED AT STATIONERS HALL

Printed by W. Thomas, 21, Strand, London, W.C.

EGYPTIAN HALL, PICCADILLY, Nov. 24th. 1829.

**CHANG & ENG**,—Two Youths born in the Kingdom of Siam, whose bodies are, by a wonderful caprice of nature, united together as one, arrived in London on Thursday, Nov. 19th. and on Tuesday 24th. were submitted to the examination of the most eminent professors of Surgery and Medicine of the Metropolis, as well as some other gentlemen of scientific and literary pursuits in order that through their report, (if favourable) the public may be assured that the projected exhibition of these remarkable and interesting youths is in no respect deceptive; and further that there is nothing whatever, offensive to delicacy in the said exhibition.

These Youths have passed their eighteenth year; are in possession of full health and extraordinary bodily strength; display all the faculties of the mind in their fullest extent; and seem in fact in every respect to enjoy a state of perfect happiness and contentment.

\* \* The Youths having been thus introduced to the British Public, were visited on that day (among many others,) by the following distinguished persons, who testified their entire approbation of the Exhibition, and obligingly favoured the Proprietors with the sanction of their names.

(Signed by) **HON<sup>s</sup> LEIGH THOMAS**, President of the Royal College of Surgeons.

<b>ASTLEY COOPER</b>	<b>J. FROST</b>	<b>ANTH. CARLISLE</b>
<b>THOMAS COPELAND</b>	<b>WILLIAM BLIZARD</b>	<b>J. MACBRAIRE</b>
<b>R. C. HEADINGTON</b>	<b>JOSEPH H. GREEN</b>	<b>J. D. BROUGHTON</b>
<b>W. B. LYNN</b>	<b>GEORGE LANGSTAFF</b>	<b>J. HARRISON CURTIS</b>
<b>B. C. BRODIE</b>	<b>JAMES LUKE</b>	<b>WILLIAM CLIFT</b>
<b>B. TRAVERS</b>	<b>HENRY HALFORD</b>	<b>JOHN ASHBURNER</b>
<b>CHARLES LOCOCK</b>	<b>J. M. LATHAM</b>	<b>WILLIAM MANNING</b>
<b>FRANCIS HAWKINS</b>	<b>JOHN WEBSTER</b>	<b>EDWARD STANLEY</b>
<b>JAMES A. WILSON</b>	<b>WM. BABINGTON</b>	<b>E. H. PHILLIPS</b>
<b>E. C. THOMAS</b>	<b>J. A. PARIS</b>	<b>HENRY HUNT</b>
<b>W. REID CLANNY</b>	<b>GEORGE BIRKBECK</b>	<b>JOHN SCOTT &amp;c. &amp;c.</b>

Having seen and examined the two Siamese Youths, Chang and Eng, I have great pleasure in affirming they constitute a most extraordinary *Lusus Naturæ*; the first instance I have ever seen of a living double child; they being totally devoid of deception, afford a very interesting spectacle, and they are highly deserving of public patronage. (Signed) **JOSHUA BROOKS**.

The above are from a large number of testimonials which are open to the inspection of the visitors to the Exhibition, in a book kept there for the purpose.



# ACCOUNT

## OF THE

# SIAMESE TWIN BROTHERS.

---

SIAM, from whence these interesting youths were brought, is situated between the Burmese and Chinese Empires, and is tributary to the latter. Bangkok, the Capital, is in the latitude of 13° North, and longitude 101° East; on the river Minam, about forty miles from its mouth. The houses are chiefly built upon rafts, composed of bamboos which rise and fall with the tide, and are moored in situations to suit the convenience of the occupiers. The Kings palace however is on the shore, on the east side of the river, enclosed within walls, which are about two miles in circumference.

His Majesty leaves the precincts of the palace twice only during the year, excepting on the death of any of the Royal Family, after which he retires into privacy, and is never seen unless upon important occasions. His household within the walls of the palace consists of about three thousand individuals.

The government of Siam is probably one of the most despotic and cruel in the world. As an instance of the tyranny of the King, it may be mentioned that during the residence of Captain Coffin at Bangkok, in 1829, he was ordered by his Majesty to witness the punishment preparing for the Prince of Laos, who had revolted from his allegiance and was subsequently taken prisoner. When Captain Coffin saw him, he and thirteen of his family were confined in an iron cage, loaded with heavy chains. From thence he was to be taken to the place of execution and there hung by a hook to be inserted under his chin; he was afterwards to be seated on sharp



pikes five inches in length; then to be placed in boiling oil, and finally pounded to pumice in an immense mortar. All these cruelties would doubtless have been consummated had not the Prince escaped their horrible infliction, by poisoning himself the day before the sentence was to have been carried into execution.

CHANG and ENG\* the youths, now brought before the Public, are natives of a small village on the Sea coast of Siam called Maklong; about 60 miles from the Capital. They were born in May 1811 of Chinese parents, and are united to each other by a ligature or band about four inches in length, and eight in circumference, formed at the extremity of the breast bone of each; the upper part of the band appears of a cartilaginous substance, the lower part is soft and fleshy, and the umbilicus or navel (there being only ONE which is common to both bodies) is on the lower edge of the band, which if touched with a pin or other sharp instrument, will at the same time give equal pain to both. They can turn completely round, that is bring their outer shoulders to touch each other, but it is with some difficulty, not having been accustomed to it when young, that they can walk in any other position than that in which they are commonly seen. Their mother informed Captain Coffin that she suffered no greater inconvenience at their birth, than at those of her other children; that they were born with the head of one between the legs of the other, and as infants were rather small. She has had a number of children without any remarkable peculiarity, all of whom, excepting these twins, and a brother and sister, are since dead.

When about eight years of age, Chang & Eng had at the same time the small pox, from which they suffered severely, and at the same period, they lost a sister and two brothers by that disease. From that time until the present, they have

---

\*It will be observed that Chang is always to the left, Eng consequently to the right



never been affected with any serious illness. As their parents were of the poorer class, the boys, as soon as they were able obtained their livelihood by fishing, manufacturing cocoa-nut oil, and other arts, at which they were remarkably expert, and it was while occupied in these employments that they were discovered by Mr. Robert Hunter, a British Merchant resident in that country; who, with Captain Coffin, made the necessary arrangements for them to leave their native land. When the King first heard of their birth, he contemplated putting them to death, considering that their existence portended some ill to his kingdom, but afterwards learning their amiable disposition and capability of procuring their own subsistence, consented that they should remain unmolested.

They left Siam in April 1829, on board the American Ship *Sachem*, Captain Abel Coffin, after the consent of the King and their mother had been obtained. The mother was quite willing to part with them, as it was stipulated to be only for a limited time; provision was made for her during their absence, and she was well aware of the respectability of their protectors, and the ultimate advantage which would accrue to herself and children by their absence. The youths have never expressed any anxiety to return; on the contrary, they say they are so much better pleased with their present manner of life, that if their mother were with them, they should not have the least desire to revisit Siam. They often say she would be astonished to see how much like little kings they now live, and that if they return home they must have an English house to reside in.

The youths are as near as possible of the same height, about five feet two inches, well made and proportioned in every respect. They are remarkably muscular, have been known to carry a person a number of yards whose weight exceeded twenty stone; and there is no doubt in wrestling, they



could easily bring a moderate sized person to the ground in a few seconds. Their own weight is 180 pounds. They are remarkably agile, run with great swiftness, and are so quick in eluding pursuit, that during their hours of play and relaxation it is a matter of great difficulty to overtake them. This may readily be imagined by those who have seen their activity in running about the room, or who have witnessed them playing at battledore and shuttlecock, a game of which they are very fond, and in which they frequently indulge, as affording exercise combined with recreation. They continue to dress in their native costume, and their hair, which is about two and a half feet in length, is braided and arranged upon their heads in the Chinese style. In this, or in dressing themselves or in any other occupation, they require no assistance, each acting for himself with as much ease as would a single individual.

Their intellectual powers are very acute, and in this respect it has not been discovered that one possesses the slightest superiority over the other. The bounty of Providence is herein strongly manifested; for did any superiority exist, it would necessarily lead to contentions and struggles for pre-eminence, which happily is so far from being the case, that to those who have them constantly under their observation, it almost appears as if one mind only, directed the two bodies. Whilst at sea they learned to play the game of draughts, which they do with considerable skill; they also amuse themselves occasionally with chess, and in these and other games they have a great disinclination to play against each other, always preferring another person as an opponent.

They are not as yet disposed for the study of books, but have however already acquired such a knowledge of the English language as enables them to understand all that is said; they can speak it a little, although their natural bashfulness prevents their doing so to any extent with



strangers; it is however intended to give them such advantages of education as will be ultimately beneficial to them.

A volume might be filled by enumerating their shrewdness and keenness of remark—as an instance of this and of their playfulness of manner, on noticing on one occasion a visitor who had but one eye, they asked the attendant, in Siamese, what he had paid for admission, and on being told it had been the same as others, they observed, that half of it should be returned, as the gentleman had not the same advantages as other people. On seeing a cripple, who had lost both arms and feet, they told him how sincerely they pitied him, and that as they had four hands and he none, it was their duty to assist him, and immediately made him a present of a crown, and some cigars.

About a fortnight after the Duke of Wellington had honored them with a visit, a caricature print of his Grace united to Mr. Peel was put into their hands, and they were asked if they had seen either of those persons, when they immediately pointed to the Duke—yes, replied Chang, this; but “not like,” passing at the same time, his fingers from the nose to the chin, which were evidently the caricatured features of the face in the print. Indeed, there are few who visit them who escape their observation, and they generally amuse themselves for an hour or two on their return home, by repeating any remarks they have heard at the exhibition room, and in observations upon those whom they have seen during the day.

Their feelings are warm and affectionate, their manners docile, and their conduct amiable and well regulated. For Captain Coffin and his Lady, they have a paternal regard, calling them very frequently father and mother, and they are also quite fond of Mr. Hale, who came with them from America. Indeed, they are very susceptible, and an act of kindness, or affectionate treatment of any description is never forgotten; while an injury offered to the one, is equally resented by his brother.



They seldom converse with each other, because having always the same objects before their eyes, and being as already observed, possessed of the same quantum of intellect, they have not that to communicate which two beings, ordinarily would have, under the common circumstances of distinct observation: however, when any thing very remarkable presents itself, they do speak to each other, although not in any lengthened discourse. It has also been occasionally observed that when playing at draughts, they sometimes confer slightly on the feasibility of a move, this however, is rarely the case; at other times, they never disagree in the least on any point whatever; if one wishes to amuse himself in any way the other always assents, and as no words pass on these occasions, it is curious to imagine how such assent is conveyed.

The youths arrived in the United States from their native country in August 1829, and remained there six weeks, during which time they excited the most intense interest among the scientific and curious, and were daily visited by vast numbers of Ladies and Gentlemen who were eager to witness the extraordinary phenomena. They embarked for England in October, and arrived in London on the evening of Thursday, November 19th.

Having for a long time been anxiously expected here, all classes of the community were on the watch for their arrival, and as soon as it was announced, many distinguished visitors called upon them at their Hotel. On the 24th. November, there was a meeting, by invitation from Captain Coffin, of several hundreds of the faculty and gentlemen of science; among whom were Sirs, Astley Cooper; William Blizard; Anthony Carlisle; Henry Halford; Drs. Babington; Latham; Locock; Clanny; Brooks; Paris; Haslam; Bowring; Brodie; Curtis; Lawrence; Thomas; Green; Abernethy; Guthrie; Copeland; Keate; Pettigrew; and numerous other highly distinguished individuals, who universally expressed their



astonishment at beholding this most wonderful *Lusus naturæ*.

Since the opening of the Exhibition, they have received daily, the visits of vast numbers of the nobility and gentry, both males and females, all of whom appear highly gratified at the extraordinary sight, and with the intelligence, pleasing manners, and contented appearance of the youths.

It is remarkable that, during six months on shipboard, on their voyages to America, and from thence to England, they never for a moment experienced sea sickness; on the contrary, when others who had often been at sea, were obliged to remain below in their cabins, these boys were constantly upon deck, from morning till night, and would frequently go aloft for their own amusement, even in rough weather, without experiencing the least inconvenience.

In their motions the most perfect unanimity is observed, the one always concurring with the other so exactly, that they appear actuated by one common mind, and it is impossible by the strictest scrutiny, when they arise of their own accord, to discover with which the impulse originated. In the necessary employments of life, or in their amusements, they never have been known to pass an angry word; and whenever either wishes to pursue a particular course, he immediately follows the bent of his inclinations, without the least intimation by word or motion to the other, who nevertheless, always readily coincides, and, without the slightest hesitation, moves wherever the will of the former may direct.

Having passed much of their life on the water, they seem more fond of that element than of the land; when in their own country they were frequently accustomed to row a boat a number of miles, and they can also swim with great rapidity. When on board ship, they would often observe that



they hoped at some future time to command a vessel of their own, and when any necessary orders were given, would frequently repeat them over in the order, and in the tone of voice in which they had heard them delivered.

Their appetites are remarkably good, and they have now become quite accustomed to, and fond of the style of living in this country ; with the exception of highly seasoned food and pastries of which they never eat. Their beverage is coffee, tea or water: spirits they do not drink ; and although the experiment has been often tried, yet one cannot be made to touch food which is unpleasant to the other. Whatever is gratifying to the palate of one, pleases that of his brother.

In their fancies and dislikes for persons and things, the same remark will invariably apply. One has never been known to be pleased with any person or thing which was displeasing to the other ; the quantity of food taken by each is the same. Chang has never yet felt hunger without Eng likewise wishing to eat, and vice versa. Both feel the desire for sleep at the same moment, and they awaken simultaneously. In the course of several months observation, one has never yet been discovered to sleep while his brother was awake ; but instances have occurred, where each dreamed at the same time upon entirely different subjects. While coming to England, Eng was severely troubled with an ague which prevented his sleeping for forty-eight hours ; during which time Chang, though he felt no actual pain, yet, from sympathy for his brother as it is supposed, did not close his eyes.

While sleeping they are not confined to any particular position, but rest on either side, as may best suit their convenience, generally however with their faces toward each other. They usually sleep from nine to eleven hours each night, and quite soundly. When they feel restless and desire to change their posture, the one must roll entirely over the other, and



they have frequently been observed to do this without either waking or being apparently disturbed by the change

Upon the impracticability of separating them by surgical means, some difference appears in the opinions of scientific men ; all however concur in believing that it would be an operation of such risk, as not to be warranted unless in the event of the death of one of them ; in which case the most practicable mode has been suggested ; or, else on its being their equal wish to run all hazard of the danger of separation, whilst yet in a state of perfect health. Of this however there is no probability as they are so decidedly averse to any thing of the kind, that the slightest mention of it is distressing to them in the highest degree, not merely from the pain which the operation might occasion, but from the idea that they should be ever separated from each other, united as they seem to be in mind as well as body.

Since their arrival in England they have had the professional advice of Mr. Bolton, who has visited them daily and has been remarkably attentive to the charge which has devolved upon him. The humidity of this climate did not at first agree with them, the weather on their arrival being unceasingly damp and foggy ; both were consequently severely affected with coughs and colds ; these they suffered in equal degrees ; both however yielded at the same time, and to the same remedies. During the dark and foggy days, they would sometimes take a coal from the fire with the tongs, and holding it up, call it a London Sun ; and the day after their arrival, it being necessary to have lighted candles at noon in the drawing room, they went off to bed, insisting that it was not possible it could be day-time.

Snow they had not seen till they came to England, and on first viewing of it they were much astonished, enquiring whether the ground was strewed with Sugar or Salt. A House



and spacious garden is engaged for them in the vicinity of the Regents Park, and a Carriage having been purchased exclusively for their use, they have all the advantages of air and exercise, without being unnecessarily exposed.

Having in order to gratify public curiosity, thus hastily put together a few prominent facts regarding this extraordinary variety in the works of the Almighty Power, it need hardly be observed, that the most fastidious female will find nothing in the exhibition, which is calculated to wound her delicate feelings. Ladies of the first rank in the kingdom visit them daily, and of all who honor them with their company, none appear more gratified, than the female sex.

Visitors may be assured that any farther information respecting the youths, will be freely given by those who have them in charge, and all questions relating to them answered most cheerfully.

To gratify the numerous professional and scientific gentlemen who continually visit the exhibition; the following medical account is subjoined.—Dr. Anderson, was the pupil of Sir Astley Cooper, and enjoys high reputation in America. Dr. Mitchill is also well known throughout the whole civilized world as a philosopher of the most profound research

Various remarks have appeared also in the London Journals by professional men, among others there has been an interesting paper by Sir Anthony Carlisle.

---



*To Monsieur Nacquart, M. D. P. Ex President, and Secretary  
General of the Medical Society of Paris, Department of the  
Seine &c. &c.*

SIR,

In consequence of a communication in one of the public prints directed to you from Dr. Felix Pascalis, signing himself the special correspondent of your Society; we are led to address you upon the subject of the preternatural connexion that exists between the two Siamese boys, the subject of his paper. We have taken this liberty in order to respond to that communication, which insinuates that the opinion we deduced from very plain facts, is incorrect, and having no doubt that our remarks, which have found their way into the prints, have been forwarded to you.

As these Boys leave this country tomorrow for England, you will soon have an opportunity of examining them yourself in Paris, when we have no doubt you and your colleagues will acquiesce with what has met the decided sanction of the most prominent medical men of our city.

These boys, about eighteen years of age, are in good health, and well formed in every particular, except the instance of the lusus, the anatomical structure of which, as far as living opportunity has afforded, we have undertaken to describe in the following manner.

The ensiform cartilage at the end of each sternum, is united to its fellow, and has been in part ossified, forming a hard, elastic upper edge to the band which connects these boys. This is convex upward, and concave below, becoming the upper boundary of a canal which is in the band, that communicates with the abdominal cavities of both the youths, from which fact, the canal is necessarily lined by a continuation of the natural peritoneal membrane of the cavities, and the whole of this is covered by common integuments. Thus the connecting link is constituted. It is at the upper part about four inches in length, at the under part six inches, from three to four



inches in depth, and varying from one to two in thickness ; at about midway in the under edge of the band, is exhibited the cicatrix of an umbilicus, showing wherein the single cord, but no doubt containing two sets of vessels, entered, for the nourishment of these two children before birth.

Into the canal of this almost cylindrical band, there is a protrusion of the viscus from the abdomen of its respective boy, upon every effort of coughing or other exercise, and these protrusions, from their particular hardness and size more at some times than others, we might suppose to be made up of any of the abdominal viscera, as intestine, liver, stomach, or spleen, as each should happen, in the various positions of their bodies, to be presented to the openings, since we believe that parts of every abdominal and pelvic viscus, except the kidneys, have been found from time to time to enter into the composition of hernial tumours.

The sense of feeling in the skin of this band, is connected with each boy as far as the middle of its length from his body, as we have frequently tested by experiments with pointed instruments. Their arterial pulses are not always simultaneous, but under our observation have varied in time and frequency. They are certainly two distinct persons in regard to bodily function and mental operation ; but, from being twins and so closely allied, they must be expected to be Synchronous in action, and almost in feeling ; since man is social the creature of habit, and an imitative animal.

A question has arisen which has been discussed with much warmth in this city, whether they ought or could be separated with safety, and whether they could survive any surgical operation instituted for that purpose. Your corresponding secretary has undertaken to answer this in the affirmative, upon the ground that our description of the Siamese boys is correct. For this correctness we assume responsibility, and while we forbear to impugn the authors, he has quoted, we would barely refer to the experience of Scarpa and Sir Astley Cooper, with whom might be included a host of others, quite familiar to the well read surgeon, for a decision upon the



ill success of the operation for exomphalos. Dionis, you know, says in relation to the operation for umbilical hernia, "that those who "have the misfortune to be afflicted with an exomphalos, should rather dispense with a shirt, than a well adapted truss;" and Acister says much about the same thing. Sir Astley Cooper has said in the hearing of one of the subscribers, in his public lectures more than twenty years ago, "Gentlemen, I have operated for umbilical hernia "once, and shall never do it again;" hinting at the general fatal issue of the operation then in practice, since he had cut into the peritoneal cavity at the umbilicus. Professor Scarpa, the acknowledged distinguished anatomist and surgeon, speaks of the great fatality of the usual operation for exomphalos; and recommends the one when necessary, that has of late been in practice by Sir Astley Cooper; which consists in dividing the stricture, and performing the whole operation without cutting into any part of the hernial sac, or peritoneal membrane, under which circumstances, the operation, with Sir A. C. has been twice successful. Now if such an operation could be practicable for the liberation of these boys, then it might be deemed advisable, other permissions co-operating; but since any cutting accomplishing their separation, (if our description of their connection be correct) would expose the peritoneal cavity, and in that situation then it would be attended with the most dangerous consequences.

We would not Sir, have taken upon us to trouble you with this paper, if it was not our desire you should have a correct information of the impression this most extraordinary *lusus naturæ* has made upon the profession in this country, where it was first exhibited.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servants,

(Signed)

Samuel L. Mitchill.

William Anderson.

New York, 15th. Oct. 1829.







