

## **A retrospect of fifty years / Reading Pathological Society.**

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Reading Pathological Society.

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READING  
PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

A Retrospect of Fifty Years.

*"Labuntur anni."*

JUBILEE, 1891.



Reading:—  
BEECROFT AND SON, PRINTERS,

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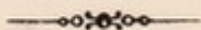
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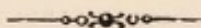
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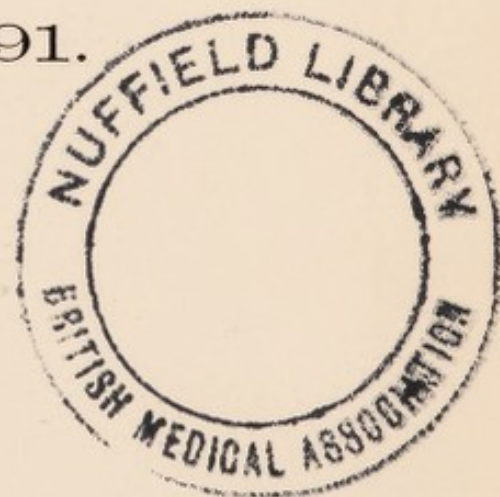
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BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION



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THE

## Reading Pathological Society

Has reached its Jubilee, a fitting occasion for retrospect and prospect. Its "life-history" has been one of continued growth and increasing vitality, and the auguries point to longevity.

Who will question the value of associations for the advancement of the art and science of medicine? Who can estimate the benefits (intellectual and social) conferred on the members of a Pathological Society during 50 years of uninterrupted activity? Even if no startling results in the form of epoch-making discoveries are apparent, our history affords ample proof that a high ideal of life and work has been encouraged, and that the welfare of the public as of the profession has been promoted.

"Functa est Societas vice cotis, acutum reddere quæ ferrum valet."

THE READING PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY was founded on July 13th, 1841, at a meeting held at the Royal Berkshire Hospital, two years after the opening of that Institution. In those days Medical Societies were rare, especially in provincial towns; and in this country only one Pathological Society, in the strict sense of the word, viz. the Dublin Society, can boast of an earlier origin. This circumstance would in itself justify the expectation that in those days Reading could boast of medical men of more than average worth, men desirous of keeping abreast with the advance of medical science, and appreciating the value of professional intercourse.

A perusal of the list of our original members confirms this expectation, for many of them have left their mark in connection either with medical literature or with philanthropic or social movements. Their names are worth recording:—Mr. E. BOULGER, Mr. FRANCIS A. BULLEY, F.R.C.S., Mr. JOHN BULLEY, M.R.C.S., Dr. CHARLES COWAN, Mr. COX, Mr. JAMES DUNN, M.R.C.S., Mr. ISAAC HARRINSON, F.R.C.S., Mr. THOMAS JAMES JESTON (Henley), Mr. GEORGE MAY, F.R.C.S., Mr. THELWALL B. MAURICE, F.R.C.S., Dr. R. PRITCHARD SMITH, Mr. SYLVESTER, Mr. JOHN TAYLOR, M.R.C.S. (Wargrave), Mr. THOMAS TAYLOR, M.R.C.S. (Wargrave), Mr. CHARLES VINES, M.R.C.S., Mr. HENRY WALDRON, M.R.C.S. (Theale), Mr. T. L. WALFORD, M.R.C.S., L.S.A., Mr. WALKER, and Dr. R. T. WOODHOUSE.

The object of the Society, as stated in the original

rules, was to be the "discussion of medical and surgical subjects, of cases, and of other matters connected with the profession." It is interesting also to note that "a descriptive catalogue of all the morbid preparations was to be kept by the Curator," shewing an appreciation of the value of morbid anatomy at a time when but little attention was paid to the subject. Indeed, the Minutes of our Proceedings shew how great an interest was taken in morbid Anatomy from the very first, no evening being allowed to pass without several specimens being exhibited. Nor were the papers read at the early meetings merely crude productions. On the contrary they reflected the best practice of the day, and evidence conscientious, painstaking research.

Now and again illustrations of the old-fashioned treatment of disease are met with in the Minutes. Thus, in one paper free bleeding was recommended before, and after, ligaturing of the innominate artery for aneurism, so as "to prevent the disturbance of the circulation, which follows on tying so large a vessel."

Co-existent with the PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, and like it aiming at the advancement of professional knowledge, must be mentioned the READING MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY, which was established in March, 1824, for the purpose of forming a medical library and diffusing medical literature. This library, of which a revised catalogue was issued in



1890, continues in a flourishing condition and now contains the best text-books and numerous works of reference. Access to so well-chosen and well-arranged a collection of medical literature must have materially raised the standard of practice in Reading by enabling the latest discoveries in medicine to be utilised at the bed-side, and facilitating post-graduate studies.

Up to the year 1883, the Meetings of the Pathological Society were held in a room in the Hospital which has since been converted into the Chapel, the room beneath it being fitted up as the Museum for Morbid Specimens. In 1883, however, was opened the handsome New Library, erected by the Governors of the Hospital, and the subsequent meetings of the Society were held in this room, to which the Medico-Chirurgical Library (~~then located in a room in the Dispensary~~) was also transferred. The Pathological Specimens were moved to the adjoining Museum, where they are now kept.

Even in the early years of the Society's history the practice prevailed of asking some member to deliver a Retrospective Address, giving an epitome of the year's work. These epitomes, too long for reproduction here, shew how thorough was the work laid before the Society. The first Retrospective Address was read by DR. CHARLES COWAN, and will be found *in extenso* in the *Provincial Medical and Surgical Journal* for 1842; indeed, for a number of years did the Annual Retrospective

Address of the Reading Pathological Society find a place in the columns of that Journal.<sup>1</sup>

The first Presidents of the Society were DR. R. P. SMITH and MR. JOHN BULLEY, these being elected (in accordance with a custom which lasted for many years) to represent the medical and surgical interests respectively.

DR. R. PRITCHARD SMITH was for many years the leading consulting Physician in Reading and its neighbourhood, and was highly esteemed by the profession as a high-minded and honourable practitioner. After retiring from practice, he lived for some years at Mortimer, and died in 1867. He has left one son, DR. GOLDWIN SMITH, M.A., LL.D., who, formerly Professor of Modern History at Oxford, now resides in Canada, and is the author of various works on historical, educational and political subjects.

MR. JOHN BULLEY, M.R.C.S., although a less well-known practitioner, was much respected in the town, and held the offices of Consulting Surgeon to the Reading Dispensary and Surgeon to the County Prison. He continued President of the Society until the year of his death, *i.e.*, 1851. "Few medical men could bear with so much Christian Philosophy, as Mr. Bulley, his desertion by a patient in favour of another."

Space will not permit even of a mention of the papers that have been read and discussed. Only a few landmarks in the Society's history can be here recorded.

In the year 1844 a Pathological Microscope (then a rare instrument) was purchased by the Society

<sup>1</sup> *cf.* Vols. for 1842-52 and 1854.

in order to facilitate histological investigations, £56 being subscribed for that purpose.

The great epidemic of cholera which attacked this country in 1848 and 1849 reached Reading, and several debates took place as to the pathology of the disease. It is interesting to read the views that were then held as to ætiology and treatment. Even the communicability of cholera by impure drinking-water was then a *quæstio vexata*.

On the death of MR. JOHN BULLEY in 1851, MR. GEORGE MAY, F.R.C.S., was elected Surgical President.

To MR. GEORGE MAY, F.R.C.S., in conjunction with MR. ISAAC HARRINSON, F.R.C.S., belongs the honour of having originated the Pathological Society. Succeeding MR. BULLEY as one of the Presidents, MR. MAY held office up to the time of his death in 1884. Soon after starting practice in Reading in 1822, he was appointed Surgeon to the Dispensary, and subsequently became Senior Surgeon and Consulting Surgeon to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. As an operator he was cool, judicious, fearless, and enjoyed a lucrative practice among the middle and upper classes, being held in great esteem both by the profession and by the public. "In all the relations of life, public, social, and private, he was truly respected, and he leaves behind him the precious heritage of an honoured name and a memory associated with all that is pure, true and of good report."

Two years later, *i.e.* in 1853, the Pathological Society resolved to hold a Dinner on the night of the Annual Meeting, the delivery of the Retrospec-

tive Address forming part of the proceedings. The first dinner took place at the "George" Hotel, on July 20, 1853, and originated a custom which has since been continued and has led to much agreeable social intercourse.

The same year necessitated another change in the Presidents, for, owing to the removal of Dr. R. P. SMITH (the Medical President) from Reading to Mortimer, it became desirable to have, in his place, one who could more efficiently fulfil the duties of the office. DR. SMITH was therefore made Hon. President, and DR. CHARLES COWAN, Medical President.

Few of our local physicians attained a wider reputation than did DR. CHARLES COWAN. After taking degrees at Edinburgh, *summa cum laude*, and at Paris (where he was *interne* for several years, and where he made the acquaintance of LOUIS, whose work "*Traité de la Phthisie*" he translated), DR. COWAN settled at Bath and soon afterwards migrated to Reading, becoming Physician to the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Earnest of purpose, devoted to his profession, eloquent, conscientious, he acquired an extensive consulting practice in this neighbourhood, due in no small measure to his skill in physical diagnosis. On religious questions he, both in private and in public, was a strenuous advocate of the Evangelical doctrines, contributing frequently to the press in their defence.

For many years he took great interest in the PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL ASSOCIATION (now the BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION), before which he delivered the Retrospective Address<sup>1</sup> at the Northamp-

<sup>1</sup> Transactions of the Prov. Med. and S. Association, New Series, Vol. I, 1854.

ton Meeting in 1844. Indeed he greatly contributed to the success of that Association by inducing the publication of the Journal weekly instead of fortnightly.

DR. COWAN'S death took place in 1868, "a great loss to the town, for his kindness and generosity were unbounded."

In 1854 a valuable addition was made to the Pathological Museum by the presentation of 73 specimens by DR. BURNET. Since that date the collection has been regularly added to, and it now contains many preparations of considerable interest. Although Reading can hardly expect ever to possess a large professional Museum, yet a series of well-chosen, well-labelled specimens and models must promote the study of Morbid Anatomy.

More than once has the Society taken an interest in matters of philanthropy and sanitation. Thus in 1857 it called the attention of the Corporation and Local Board of Health to the desirability of providing drags and other apparatus for rescuing persons from drowning, to be kept at points where danger was likely to occur. Again, in 1867, when the question of a drainage scheme came prominently before the Borough, the Society devoted several evenings to a discussion of the subject, some members recommending the earth-closet, others the irrigation system.

In 1868, the desirability of extending the Contagious Diseases Act to Reading came up for consideration, the Society expressing its approval of such Acts.

The same year (*i.e.* 1868) brought a great loss to the Society in the death of its Medical President, DR. COWAN, the vacancy being filled by the election of DR. WOODHOUSE.

DR. RICHARD THOMAS WOODHOUSE was educated in Edinburgh and settled in Reading as Physician to the Royal Berkshire Hospital and to the Reading Dispensary. Industrious, devoted to the interests of the Pathological Society, he "was much beloved by all with whom he came in contact." He died in 1879 at the age of eighty, after residing for upwards of 40 years in the town.

Between the years 1870 and 1880 various questions of public interest were debated, among them being, the laxity of many coroners' inquests, the lunacy laws, the injury done to young shop-women by prolonged standing, the desirability of an infectious hospital being provided by the Borough, the value of alcohol in health, the best method of ventilating the town sewers, and the desirability of supplying sick nurses for the poor, steps being taken to bring the views of the Society under the notice of the proper Authorities.

In 1879 DR. WOODHOUSE died, DR. EDWARD WELLS being elected in his place as Medical President.

DR. EDWARD WELLS, M.A., M.D., Oxon, F.R.C.P., London, settled in Reading in 1845, as successor to DR. R. P. SMITH. As student of New College, Oxford, and of St. George's Hospital, London, he was greatly distinguished, gaining eventually a fellowship at his

College, and subsequently the Radcliffe Travelling Fellowship, which enabled him to study abroad for some years.

At Reading, Dr. WELLS became senior Physician to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, Consulting Physician to the Reading Dispensary, and acquired a very large consulting practice in the town and neighbourhood. He also for some years held a seat in the Corporation, and took great interest in the Government Schools of Science and Art, and in the Free Library and Museum.

Amongst his writings, which deal mainly with clinical subjects, the "Essays on Cretinism and Goitre" are perhaps the best known.

Gentle, pious, high-minded, unselfish, he was esteemed and beloved by a large circle of friends and acquaintances, the funeral on April 13, 1885, being attended by several thousands of his fellow-townsmen.  
*"Multis ille bonis flebilis occidit."*

It may not be generally known that the "Bradshawe" lectures were instituted in order to keep green the memory of DR. WILLIAM WOODE BRADSHAWE, M.A., D.C.L., F.R.C.S., a member of this Society, who, after practising for some years at Andover, retired to Reading, and devoted himself to the literary and scientific pursuits. His widow bequeathed to the Royal College of Surgeons and to the Royal College of Physicians £1,000 each, for the Endowment of a lecture to be delivered on the 18th of August (the anniversary of her husband's death), on some subject connected with medicine or surgery. The lectures endowed by this bequest have been a stimulus to scientific

medicine, the office of lecturer having already been held by SIR JAMES PAGET, F.R.S., MR. JONATHAN HUTCHINSON, F.R.S., SIR T. SPENCER WELLS, PROF. JOHN MARSHALL, F.R.S., MR. HENRY POWER, M.B., F.R.C.S., DR. GEORGE VIVIAN POORE, F.R.C.P., MR. THOMAS BRYANT, F.R.C.S., DR. NORMAN MOORE, M.A., F.R.C.P., DR. SAMUEL WEST, M.A., F.R.C.P., DR. GOODHART, F.R.C.P., *inter alios*.

The scientific basis of homoeopathy was discussed in 1881, together with the attitude which ordinary practitioners should maintain towards homoeopaths.

In October, 1885, MR. ISAAC HARRINSON, F.R.C.S., was elected President, in succession to DR. WELLS.<sup>1</sup>

MR. ISAAC HARRINSON settled at Reading in 1839 as partner to MR. GEORGE MAY, SEN., and by degrees acquired an extensive (especially midwifery) practice amongst the middle and upper classes. Quiet in manner, guarded in speech, self-reliant, he had the faculty of inspiring confidence in his patient, and enjoyed the respect of a large *clientèle*. In receipt of a good income, he was a generous contributor both towards religious and public movements. The READING PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY honours him as one of its founders and enthusiastic supporters, eventually calling him to the Presidential Chair.

A social and ethical club called the "Aston Key Club" was established by MR. HARRINSON with the object of promoting good fellowship and a high professional tone amongst the practitioners of Reading. He died from pneumonia in 1888, leaving many to mourn his loss.

<sup>1</sup> Since the death of MR MAY in 1884, only one President has held office at the same time.



The next President was MR. T. L. WALFORD, elected in 1886, the only original member of the Society to whom has been permitted the honour of celebrating its Jubilee. He was followed in 1887 by MR. GEORGE MAY, M.B., F.R.C.S., who in turn was succeeded in 1888 by DR. SHETTLE. During the Presidency of the latter (lasting two years), an important discussion took place on the question of the Reading Water Supply, the Society advising that the Kennet be relinquished in favour of the Chalk or Greensand as a source of supply, and resolutions embodying this view were forwarded to the Mayor and Corporation.

The year 1890 saw a debate take place on the "Registration of Midwives Bill," and on "Hypnotism." In October, 1890, MR. O. C. MAURICE was elected President and under his presidency the Jubilee will (D.V.) be celebrated.

In looking to the future, the Society has good reason for encouragement; in the past may be read the promise of further growth and expanding usefulness. An association of seventy practitioners of medicine, one and all cherishing a lofty ideal, must exercise an influence of no small weight. If our members, though differing on theological, political and social questions, are but united in the desire to advance the science of medicine, and to maintain a high standard of professional conduct, the READING PATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY must, and will, continue to flourish in plurimos annos!

# Reading Pathological Society.

## LIST OF MEMBERS.

1891.

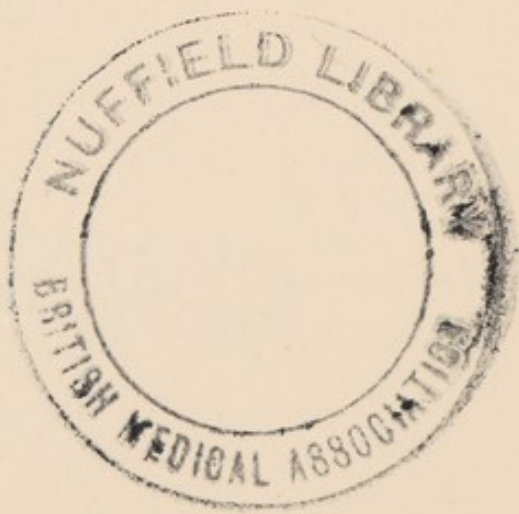
- ALLDEN, GEORGE HENRY, M.B., C.M. ... .. "Longlands," Henley-on-Thames.
- ARMSTRONG, HENRY GEORGE, M.R.C.S.,  
L.S.A. ... .. Crowthorne.
- ASHBY, ALFRED, M.B., F.R.C.S. ... .. "Ashdene," Reading.
- BAINES, EGERTON CHARLES AUGUSTUS,  
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.E. ... .. Henley-on-Thames.
- BANHAM<sup>3</sup>, HENRY FRENCH, M.D., L.S.A. ... .. "Ashton Hall," Saffron Walden.
- BARFORD,<sup>2</sup> JAMES GALE, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. Wokingham.
- BATEMAN, FRANCIS, M.B., M.R.C.S. ... .. Whitchurch.
- BROOKS, BRANSBY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. ... .. Sonning.
- CHRISTIAN, JOHN GRIFFITH, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. 78, Castle Street, Reading.
- CLOWES, NORTON BURROUGHS, M.R.C.S.,  
L.R.C.P. ... .. Royal Berkshire Hospital,  
Reading.
- COCKRAN, CHRISTOPHER HENRY, L.R.C.P.E., "Caversham Lodge,"  
L.R.C.S.I. ... .. Caversham.
- COMBER, ARTHUR WANDESFORD, M.R.C.S.,  
L.R.C.P. ... .. "Hill House," Heckfield.
- COX, RICHARD, M.D., M.R.C.S. ... .. Theale.
- DAVIS, GEORGE HENRY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.E. Mortimer.
- DICKSON, JOHN DUNBAR, M.D., L.R.C.S.I. ... Great Marlow.
- DOUTY, JOEL HARRINGTON, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. Moulsoford.
- DOYNE, ROBERT WALTER, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. Oxford.
- EVANS, HERBERT LAVINGTON, M.B., C.M. ... .. "Oriol," Goring.
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- GILFORD, HASTINGS, F.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. .. "Norwood House," Reading.
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- GUILDING, LANSLOWNE MURRAY, M.B.,  
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L.S.A. ... .. "Aubrey House," Reading.
- ISAAC, JOHN BALDWIN, M.D., L.R.C.S.E. ... Broadmoor, Wokingham.
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- MASON, DAVID JAMES, M.D., L.R.C.S.E. ... "Rosemont," Maidenhead.
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Winchfield.
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- MAURICE, WILLIAM JAMES, M.C.R.S., L.R.C.P. 11, Friar St., Reading.
- MAY,<sup>2</sup> GEORGE, M.B., F.R.C.S. ... .. "The Warren," Caversham.
- MILLER, LEWIS CARR, L.R.C.P.E., L.R.C.S.E. "Kensington Villa," Reading.
- MONTGOMERY, EDWIN CUTHBERT, L.R.C.S.I.,  
L.S.A. ... .. "Claremont," Maidenhead.
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- NICOLSON, DAVID, M.D., M.R.C.P.E. ... Broadmoor, Wokingham.
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- PLAYNE,<sup>2</sup> ALFRED, M.B., M.R.C.S. ... .. Maidenhead.
- POUND, GEORGE, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. ... .. Odiham.
- PRICE, JOHN ALFRED PARRY, M.D., M.R.C.S. 41, Castle Street, Reading.
- RICHARDSON, WILLIAM, M.D., F.R.C.S.E. ... "Bath Lodge," Reading.
- RIGGE, JOHN ARTHUR, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.... Henley-on-Thames.
- ROBERTS, ARTHUR, F.R.C.S.E., L.S.A. ... 76, London St., Reading.
- ROYDS, WILLIAM ALEXANDER SLATER,  
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. ... .. 32, London Road, Reading.
- RUSSELL, JAMES, M.D., M.R.C.S. ... .. Sandhurst.
- SANSOM, CHARLES LANE, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. .. Aldermaston.
- SEON, GREVILLE EWING, M.R.C.S., L.S.A. ... 3, Victoria Square, Reading.
- SHETTL,<sup>2</sup> RICHARD CHARLES, M.D., M.R.C.S. 73, London St., Reading.

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WATSON, CHARLES EDWARD, L.R.C.P.E., L.R.C.S.E.	...	"Ashtree House," Wargrave.
WEBB, CHARLES FRERE, M.D., F.R.C.S.E.	...	"New St. House," Basingstoke.
WOODFORDE, WILLIAM THOMAS GARRETT, M.D., L.S.A.	...	"Oakbank," Spencer's Row, Reading.
WORKMAN, <sup>2</sup> JOHN WOODROFFE, M.R.C.S., L.S.A.	...	34, Russell St., Reading.

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3 1/2