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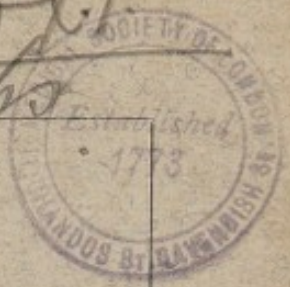

THE TREATMENT OF THE SICK IN NORWICH DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

BY

CHARLES WILLIAMS, F.R.C.S.E.

Senior Surgeon to the
Norfolk and Norwich Hospital.

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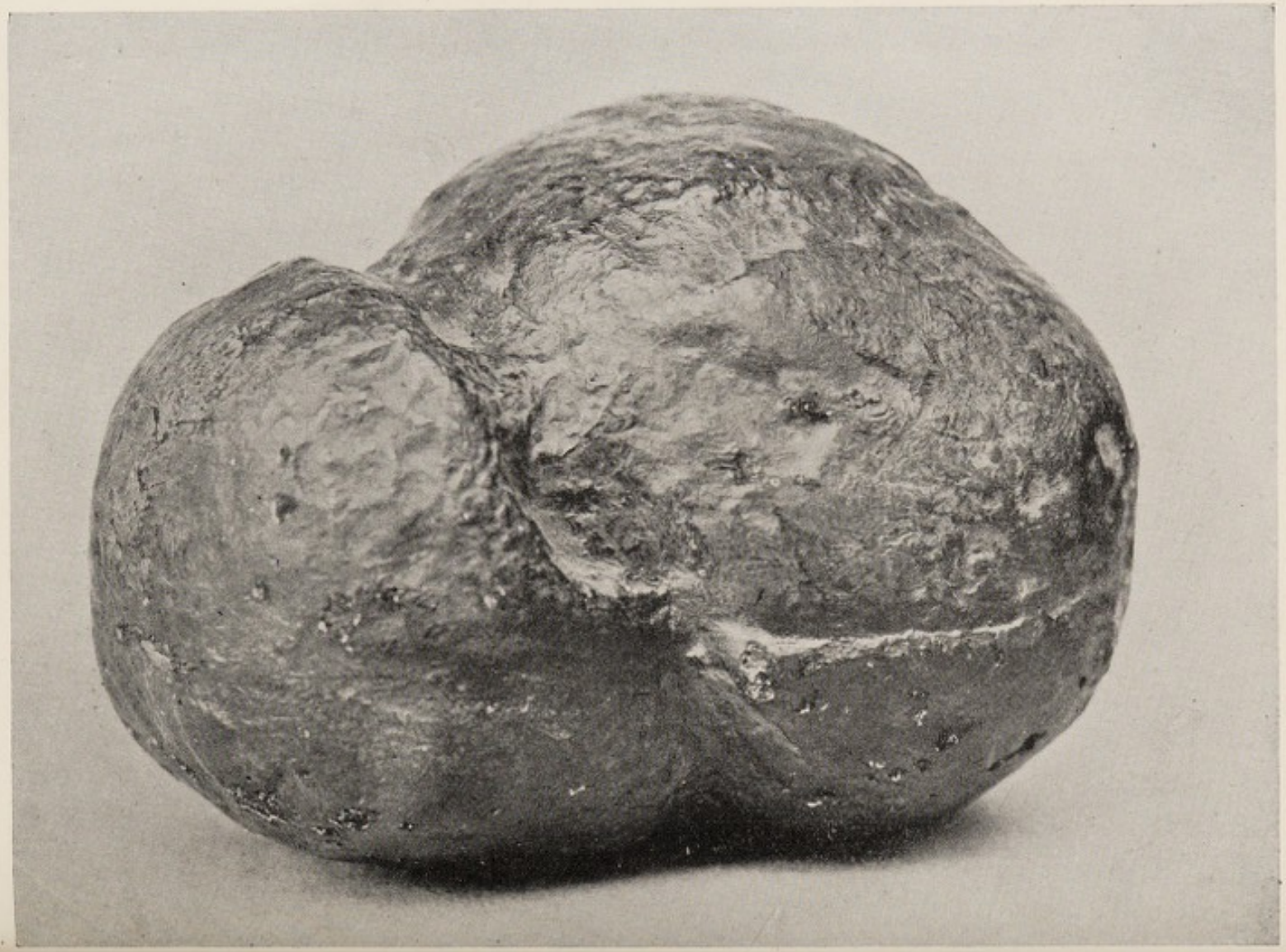

SIR THOMAS ADAMS' CALCULUS

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THE TREATMENT OF THE SICK IN NORWICH DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

THE Assembly Books of the Court of Aldermen of the City of Norwich from 1600 to 1700, and now preserved in the Muniment Room at the Castle, have been found to contain a large amount of interesting information relative to such poor people as were afflicted with various diseases, and more especially with that of stone. This complaint, at that time, appears to have been a well recognised and prevalent disorder, not only in Norfolk, but in the whole of East Anglia. It probably had been so for hundreds of years previously,* but no records are known to exist which would afford any satisfactory information on the subject. Certainly since the above date, the frequency of stone in Norfolk alone has attracted the attention of the medical profession of all countries. Curiously enough, no satisfactory reason has yet been given for its remarkable prevalence in that county.

In Norwich, it was the custom during the seventeenth century, for such persons as suffered from that complaint

* The site of a large Roman cemetery containing sepulchral urns and other funereal vessels was discovered, in 1828, at Litlington, Cambridgeshire. Within the bony pelvis of a skeleton was found a large oxalate of lime calculus, now in the museum at Cambridge; this is the earliest known instance of a human calculus.

to present themselves before the Mayor and Court of Aldermen with a view to solicit their help in procuring surgical assistance, as well as obtaining some pecuniary aid to support them in their convalescence. The information contained in the Assembly Books exists in the form of resolutions drawn up by order of that assembly; these resolutions point out the special course which was directed by the court to be carried out in all cases of stone or other disease that came before it, so that the afflicted person might have the benefit of surgical treatment.

During the period above named, the provinces possessed no general hospitals, into which those who suffered from any medical or surgical disease could be admitted, operated upon if necessary, and cared for, until either a cure or death should be the result.

The hospitals that were in existence in those days were devoted to the support and care of the indigent, the incurable, the aged, and the infirm—hence called infirmaries.

The Great Hospital in the parish of St. Helen, Norwich, and Doughty's Hospital in that of St. Saviour, are good examples of this kind, and similar instances are to be seen in many of the great towns of England. Besides these, there were hospitals situated outside the walls of nearly every city for the reception of cases of leprosy,* which was, at that time, a common disease, and considered to be very contagious—so much so, that lepers were not allowed to enter the city, much more dwell in it. On one occasion, when a leper was found within its walls, he was very quickly whipped out of it. Although there was no general hospital in Norwich, it is very evident that persons

* The number of hospitals, leper houses, God's houses, in the diocese of Norwich, at this date, amounted to seventy-four. Six leper hospitals were situated outside the gates of Norwich.

who were the subjects of disease were not allowed to die without having surgical relief, and the best then known, provided for them. The following resolutions, taken from the Assembly Books, will point out how that object was accomplished.

A certain routine was necessary to secure the services of an operator, and to ensure his being remunerated for his operation and the subsequent treatment of the case; the poor, in those times, were quite unable to pay the expenses incidental to a large operation, such as that which was necessary for the removal of stone.

The principal mode of procedure was for the parent of the afflicted child* or the patient himself, if he were an adult, to appear before the Mayor and Court of Aldermen, at the Guildhall,† and state the circumstances of the case to them. If the court was satisfied with the information it received, it was then resolved that the Aldermen of the Ward in which the sufferer lived ‡ should be directed to have an interview with the Lord Bishop, and place the facts of the case before him, and should then request him to direct the clergyman of the parish to which the sufferer belonged, to make a collection on "the next and following Lord's daies" for the benefit of the person. Sometimes the aldermen themselves were ordered to make the

* Children are very prone to acquire this complaint. Of 910 cases of stone admitted into the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, 383 were under fourteen years of age.

† In those days, the Mayor and Aldermen formed one court, and the Common Council and its Speaker another and separate court, very closely resembling the Houses of Parliament. This condition of affairs existed until 1830, when the Municipal Act abolished the office of Speaker, and united the two "houses" into one court, which acquired the name of "The Town Council." London is the only city in which the two courts still exist as separate assemblies.

‡ Before 1830 every Ward was represented by two Aldermen; after that date, by one only.

collection, and occasionally the churchwardens and overseers were directed to make a house-to-house visitation. In some instances, several parishes combined to make up the required sum of money. Sometimes several Sundays were necessary to do so. On one occasion, the friends of the patient were permitted to make a collection; and, on another occasion, the parents of the child were granted that permission.

The money having been collected was then handed to the Mayor and Aldermen, in some instances by the sword-bearer, but more generally by the Aldermen in whose hands the matter had been placed by the court.* A resolution was then passed giving directions as to how the sum of money so collected was to be dealt with; how much the operator was to have, and how much the parents or friends of the patient were to be allowed.

This singular custom came to an end in 1711, in which year a Court of Guardians was incorporated by Act of Parliament; the principal objects of the Act were to order the erection of a workhouse in Norwich, and to regulate the maintenance and care of the poor, and make provision for the sick.

The complicated method of obtaining surgical help which had been in vogue for more than one hundred

* It formed one of the principal duties of the Aldermen, in those days, to look after, and minister to, the poor and sick living in the Ward which they represented. The following examples, taken from the Assembly Books, afford instances of the custom; the first is especially interesting, on account of its relation to Sir Thomas Browne. "David Brand's chylde of St. George Colegate is recommended to ye care of ye Aldermen of ye Warde of Colegate to cause a chirurgeon to view ye sores of ye chylde, and to discourse Sir Thomas Browne thereabouts and report his opinion as to ye cure of ye chylde of such sores as are upon it."—April 5, 1673.

"It is ordered that for the future no payment be made to any chyrurgeon for any cure or service, unless such poor person be sent to such chyrurgeon by the Aldermen of the Ward."—April 2, 1690.

years was, therefore, abandoned, and all cases of stone and other diseases amongst the poor were brought under the powers of the Poor Law Act, and were attended to by surgeons appointed for the purpose. Among these may be mentioned the names of John Harmer and Benjamin Gooch, who achieved fame as operators and lithotomists from the experience they acquired at the workhouse. The former surgeon is known to have lithotomized upwards of 170 persons; the latter speaks of his "experience of lithotomy as being very considerable."

In 1771 the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital was established, and soon became the most celebrated institution in the kingdom for the treatment of stone, a celebrity it has maintained to the present day.

The first entry in the Assembly Books relating to a case of stone is dated May 12, 1593, 35 Eliz.

1. This day, Betterys the wife of John Shreve of Tunstead, and Elizabeth Sheringham, were deposed and sworn that John Hubbard of Norwich, Surgeon* very artificially did take from her a very great stone, on Wednesday in Ester weke in anno 1593, without cutting, and that since that time she had not been troubled with any pain of the stone.

18 May, 1616.

2. "It is ordered that Mr. Mayhew shall have iiii$^{li.}$ (four pounds) for cutting of Clere's child, and of one John Collins of the disease of the stone, whereof 20s. for Clere's child is to be paid by the parish of St. Stephen, 20s. to be presently paid by the parish of St. Andrew, and the residue to be paid out of Hospitall (the great Hospital), upon perfecting the cure. 20s. more is appointed to be paid by the parish of St. Andrew, and it is ordered the same be equally paid and divided between two women who shall have the keeping of the said children.

* Master of the Guild of Barber-Surgeons from 1612 to 1621.

16 May, 1618.

3. Thomas, son of Thomas Mawson is ordered to be cut of the stone by Miles Mayhew and he to have for the same £3— viz. 30s. in hand and 30s. when he shall be perfectly cured, if it so long live.

21 October, 1618.

4. John Ebden, a child of the age of six years, son of Richard Ebden is to be cut and cured of the disease of the stone by Miles Mayhew, and he consenteth to take for the same such recompense as this court shall think fit to give him.

23 September, 1640.

5. Ordered that £3 10s. be paid for cutting of John Terry, a poor child of St. George's parish, of the stone and the doctor hath undertaken to do the cure for £3. 30s. to be paid in hand and 30s. more to be paid him when the child is cured and 10s. to be given to the poor child's mother to be laid out in necessaries for him.

27 February, 1655.

6. The overseers of the parish of St. Margaret laid out £3 4s. for the charges of conveying of Garwood's boy to Bury and cutting him of the stone which is still owing to them. Ordered that it be paid them again at or before Easter.

16 June, 1655.

7. Daniel Ganard's child in St. Margarets to be cut for the stone, and St. Peter Mancroft to make collection therefor.

July 9, 1670.

8. There was six pounds paid to Mr. Alderman Colkey for the cutting of Carr's boy in St. Margarets, and nine shillings and ten pence three farthings to Mr. Alderman Herne for one Samon of Pockthorpe.

11 February, 1670.

9. It is ordered that papers be sent to the ministers of St. Peter of Mancroft, St. Andrew, St. Laurence, St. George of Tombland, and St. Stephen to exhort them and their

parishioners to contribute towards the charge of cutting the son of W^m^ Carr of the stone and also towards the charge of the cure of Robert Horsfield of the same disease, which collection is to be made upon Sunday sen'-night, and the money to be brought to the court.

The Aldermen of the Ward of West Wymer are desired to treat with Mr. Gutteridge the chyrurgeon about the cutting of William Carr his son.

3 August, 1670.

10. Mr. Swordbearer brought into the Court what money was collected for the cutting of the two boys of the stone—viz. in the parish of St. Laurence 25s. 5d. St. Stephen 22s. 1½d. St. Peter Mancroft 52s. 11d. St George Tombland 23s. 8d. St. Andrew 35s. 9¼d.—in all seven pounds 19 shillings and ten pence three farthings.

3 Sep. 1670.

11. It is ordered (if the Lord Bishop of Norwich shall assent thereto) that a collection be made for Thomas Trull, the son of Law Trull of St. Edmund, in all the parishes in the Wards beyond the Water towards the charge of cutting him of the stone.

24 Sep. 1670.

12. 50s. to be paid to Law Trull for the cutting his son Thomas of the stone.

26 August, 1671.

13. It is desired that the Aldermen of West Wymer Ward do wait upon the Bishop to desire his Lordship to recommend the afflicted condition of a child of Martin Baxter in St. Margaret's who is troubled with the stone, to the ministers of St. Laurence, St. Peter Mancroft, St. Gregory, St. Andrew, and St. George Tombland, to invite their parishioners to a voluntary contribution to the cutting him of the stone.

16 Sep. 1671.

14. Mr. William Rayby paid 24s. 10d. collected in St. Andrewes for cutting a boy of the stone. Mr. Manninge paid 23s. 9d. collected in St. Gregories upon that account, which two sums were paid to the Swordbearer.

Mem.—There was formerly paid to the Swordbearer 50s. of St. George Tombland and 20s. of St. Peter Mancroft and of Laurence 13s.

3 Dec. 1671.

15. That Charles Brook have leave to collect the charity of such persons as will contribute towards the charge of cutting his child of the stone.

22 May, 1672.

16. The Mayor paid out of the hamper* 5s. to Mr. Alderman Herne towards the cure of William Anger's child of the stone, and that the person that undertake the cure shall have 10s. paid out of the hamper when the cure is done.

4 Feb. 1673.

17. It is agreed that Mr. Guttridge shall have £5 paid him upon the cutting of Wm. Angus's child of the stone, if the stone be produced in the court notwithstanding the child shall die by reason of the cutting.

15 April, 1674.

18. It is agreed that application be made by Alderman Richard Wenman and Alderman Crow to the Lord Bishop for his licence to have a collection in the parishes of St. Gyles, St. Peter of Mancroft, and St. Stephen towards the charge of cutting the son of —— Brook of St. Gyles of the stone.

2 May, 1674.

19. This day Mr. Mayor paid 20s. to Wm. Angus's wife of St. James towards the cutting of his child of the stone and providing of linen and other things.

9 May, 1674.

20. The Churchwardens and Overseers of all the parishes in the great Ward beyond the water desired to go from house to house to receive the charity of such as will contribute to the charge of cutting the son of Wm. Angus of St. James of the stone.

* Usually called hanaper, so named from the practice of keeping writs in a hamper or basket. The Hanaper office was a department of the Chancery Court, and was abolished in 1842.

20 May, 1674.

21. It is ordered that Robert Wigg a poor boy in the boy's hospital of the nomination of the town of Saxthorpe and of the benefaction of Mr. Vaughan, being very much afflicted with the stone in his bladder be (as is desired by the inhabitants of Saxthorpe mentioned in a letter from Jo. Raye, Eq) cut of the stone by Mr. Guteridge, the charge whereof and of a keeper, is to be defrayed at the public charge and that collection be made to the purpose.

30 May, 1674.

22. It is agreed that Mr. Alderman Wrench shall be reimbursed £5 which he shall disburse for the cutting of the stone of Thomas Sharpin of St. Paul, out of the monies which shall be collected in the several parishes in the city for the cutting of the several poor children of the stone.

11 July, 1674.

23. Henry Herne, Esq. and Mr. Alderman Wrench are desired by this court to attend the Lord Bishop of Norwich and pray his allowance for the several ministers of this city to excite their congregations to a free and charitable contribution towards the several persons whose charge hath been great for to be cut of the stone, which contribution is to be gathered by the officers of the respective parishes by going from house to house to receive the said charity, and not to be collected in the churches.

24 August, 1674.

24. It is ordered that Mr. Swordbearer do pay unto Henrie Herne Esq. £5 (out of the money in his hands collected for cutting persons of the stone) for so much by him disbursed for cutting Angus's boy of the stone.

25 Feb. 1675.

25. It is agreed that young Mr. Gutridge shall have 40s. for the extraction of a stone out of John Johnson of St. John Sepulcher.

2 Oct. 1675.

26. It is agreed that there be a collection (if the Lord Bishop shall assent thereto) made toward the charge of cutting the son of John Sullman of the parish of St. Stephen of the stone, in the parishes of St. Stephen, St. Peter Mancroft, St. James, St. Michael Coslany, and St. George Tombland: and which money be collected, to be brought up to the court.

9 January, 1677.

27. Collections to be made for cutting of the stone of two poor bodies of St. Martin Palace and St. Michael-at-Thorn.

4 Sep. 1678.

28. The son of Samuel Joy of St. George Colegate 4 years and a half old, and much afflicted with the stone, is recommended to the charity of this court and others to have the charge of cutting him defrayed, and Mr. Guttridge was discoursed about it and contracted with for £4 to be raised by contribution.

18 August, 1680.

29. Application to be made to the Lord Bishop of Norwich for license to collect the charity of good Christians toward the charge of cutting of Jo Wharton and also of Philip Thurton.

4 June, 1681.

30. That Robert Bendish Esq. Alderman and Mr. Town Clerk do address the Lord Bishop of Norwich, for his license to make a collection in the several parishes of St. Peter Mancroft, St. Giles, St. George Timberhill, St. Andrew, and St. Clement for Jo Fitts to be cut of the stone.

5 July, 1682.

31. A Petition read from Nich Stocking of St. Peter Mancroft that one of his six children is grievously afflicted with the stone, and the said Stocking is poor and unable to bear the charge of his cutting and cure, Alderman Gardiner and Mr. Town Clerk to attend the Right Reverend Anthony, Lord Bishop of Norwich to ask leave for a collection "at the next and following Lord's daies."

26 July, 1682.

32. It is ordered that what money remains of the money collected for the cutting of the son of Nich Stocking of the stone (Mr. Gutteridge being paid), and the child being dead since cutting, be paid by the Swordbearer to the parents.

In addition to the above, the following entries occur in the register of St. Peter Mancroft, under the date 1703: "Received by a collection for a person cut of the stone 01. 04. 05."—and "paid the Swordbearer the money for cutting the person of the stone." These extracts are interesting, as they prove that collections were made in the parish up to the year 1703, but not beyond 1711.

The preceding extracts afford no information as to the particular kind of operation performed. The one in general use was that known as the Marian, so called from Marianus, who published an account of it in 1524; this operation was extremely painful in its performance, and very fatal in its consequences. Nevertheless, it was considered to be more simple than the one then in practice, which was the Celsian or Lateral, so named from its originator, Celsus, a celebrated surgeon in the days of the Roman empire. Marianus re-named it the Apparatus Minor, because it required for its performance only two instruments, as well as to distinguish it from his own, which required several instruments, and to which he gave the name of Apparatus Major, but better known by his own name. This was, without doubt, the operation usually performed in Norwich during the seventeenth century; the mortality from it remains unknown.

In spite of its fatality, the Marian, or Apparatus Major, was quickly adopted, and for nearly two hundred years was practised by the best surgeons of Europe. In 1697, the Celsian or Lateral was re-introduced with modifications,

as a new operation, by Frere Jacques; this was greatly improved in 1726, by Cheselden, and soon superseded all others.*

Mr. Gutteridge, or Goodrick, to whom allusion has been frequently made in the preceding resolutions, was a well-known lithotomist, residing at Bury, and to whom, in 1655, a boy suffering from stone was sent for operation by the Norwich Court of Aldermen; this circumstance would tend to prove that no operating surgeon was then residing in the city—hence the necessity of sending a patient to so great a distance. There is no doubt that cases of a similar nature were sent to Mr. Gutteridge for treatment, especially as this gentleman had the reputation of being an expert and skilled operator. At this period, Norwich appears to have been destitute of surgical skill, a fact borne out by what Sir Thomas Browne says in a letter to his son, Dr. Edward: "The ignorance of chirurgeons as to chirurgical operations creates so many mountebanks and stage quacksalvers. Heere hath been a mountebank these two months, who cutts for wrye necks, coucheth cataracts, cures hare lipps &c. wherein no chirurgeon of this place being versed, he hath had a great deal of employment to the shame of our chirurgeons."—May 28, 1679 (*Wilkin's edition*, vol. i., p. 245).

After 1667 Mr. Gutteridge left Bury, and became a resident in Norwich. Some of the extracts for 1670-73-74-75 show that sufferers from stone were placed by the Court under his care for operation and treatment. In 1682, mention is made of "young Mr. Gutteridge" as a lithotomist, who was probably a son of the above, and who became, in 1717, one of the Wardens of the Guild of Barber-Surgeons. After this date, nothing whatever can

* There was a revival of the Marian method, under the name of "Median," in England a few years ago. It was quickly abandoned.

MRS. RAISIN'S CALCULUS.

be traced of either father or son; the name is to be met with in the city at the present day.

Mr. Gutteridge is well known in connection with the case of an old lady from whom, after her death in 1662, he removed a large calculus. Dr. Heberden, in the forty-sixth volume of the *Philosophical Transactions*, 1750, informs us that "she attempted a journey on horseback, was suddenly seized with pain and ultimately died. She was the wife of a locksmith at Bury, and it was extracted by Mr. Gutteridge in the reign of Charles 2nd, who being then at Newmarket desired the stone to be brought to him, some part of which was chipped off from one of its ends to show the king that it consisted of various coats formed one over the other, as animal substances usually are."

"Its weight originally was $33\frac{1}{2}$ ounces; at the present time its weight is 32 ounces 7 drachms. An analysis shows it to be composed of a central nucleus of uric acid, around which is a considerable amount of oxalate of lime, this being coated by an excessive thickness of uric acid arranged in concentric layers and over the whole is a thin coating of fusible material."

The stone is of clinical interest, forasmuch as we learn that the woman had felt much less pain than might have been expected from so large a stone, and might probably have lived much longer with it had she not thought herself well enough to attempt a journey on horseback, for while she was riding she was suddenly seized with violent pain which obliged her to be taken off the horse immediately, and she continued in great agony until her death.

The calculus is, without exception, the largest taken from the human subject in England, and certainly the largest of uric acid formation, nine-tenths being formed of that material. It is nearly spherical in shape and

measured fifteen inches in circumference, and is preserved in the Pathological Museum at Cambridge.

Its great density indicates its slow formation, which continued probably to form during many years in the bladder. This organ gradually became accustomed to it and did not resent its presence, or object to its weight, hence the comparatively little suffering and the long duration of life.

The following extract is taken from the Register of the parish of St. Mary, Bury St. Edmund's: "July 28, 1662. Ann the wife of Thomas Raisin, who had a stone taken from her when she was dead, that did weigh 2 pounds and three quarters. She was buried the above date."

Mention is also made of Mr. Gutteridge, under the name of Goodrick, in the *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. ii., 1667, by Dr. Nathaniel Fairfax, who observes: "Mr. Goodrick, a chirurgeon of Bury St. Edmunds, affirmed to me himself, cutting a lad of the stone, for which he has a great name, took out thence at one time 96 small stones all of them of unlike shape, size, corners, and sides, some of which were so bestowed as to slide upon others, and had thereby worn their flats to a wonderful slickness. He assured me also that in the same place, another, when dead, had a stone taken from her almost as big as a new-born child's head, and much of that shape." This observation unquestionably has reference to the case of Mrs. Raisin.

Another instance of a large calculus occurred about the same date as that of Mrs. Raisin. It was removed, after death, from Sir Thomas Adams, Bart., of Sprowston Hall, Norwich, and weighed 25 ounces, a circumstance duly recorded on his monument in Sprowston church. The calculus is wholly composed of uric acid regularly laminated, and is preserved in the Museum of St. Thomas's Hospital,

to which institution he acted as President for many years. He was Lord Mayor of London, M.P. for the City, and a friend of Charles II., to whom he was generous enough to give large sums of money during the time of his exile, and for which loyalty the king, on "coming to his own again," rewarded him with a baronetcy.

Sir Thomas Adams was a native of Wem, educated at Cambridge, in which university he founded a professorship of Arabic. He was also at the expense of having the Gospels printed in Persian, and sent them to the East, that he might (as he quaintly expressed it) "throw a stone at the forehead of Mahomet."

The calculus caused him little pain or inflammation, or disturbance of the general health, and finally appears to have proved fatal in consequence of a fall which the worthy baronet had, at the age of eighty-one, in descending from his carriage. A drawing of the calculus, with other particulars respecting it, and Sir Thomas Adams, is given in vol. 21 of the *Transactions of the Pathological Society.*

The individuals who were the subjects of these remarkable examples of large calculi lived at the same period; both lived to old age, and apparently died of no actual disease. The calculi were, no doubt, the growth of a lifetime; they died within five years of each other, and the death of both was hastened by accident.