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

EDWARD JENNER, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S.

BORN MAY 17, 1749. DIED JANUARY 26, 1823.

Edward Jenner, the discoverer of vaccination, was born at the old vicarage at Berkeley, Gloucestershire, of which place his father was the vicar. At the age of thirteen he decided to follow the profession of medicine, and served a term of six years apprenticeship at Sodbury, Bristol.

On attaining the age of twenty-one he came to London, and entered as house-pupil with the famous surgeon, John Hunter, with whose family he resided for two years. Leaving London, he returned to Berkeley and started practice. Shortly after he took up the study of cowpox, and investigated the tradition, which had existed in pastoral districts from time immemorial, that milkers who had suffered from cowpox were immune from smallpox.

Deeply interested in the subject, Jenner began his first investigations with experiments on swinepox, which he believed to be of similar origin to common variolus.

In 1790 he inoculated his son Edward, then about 18 months old, with swinepox matter, and a few months later re-inoculated him, and noticed that the child showed no signs of indisposition afterwards. This result led him to make his historic experiment, and on May 14th, 1796, he took some matter from a pustule on a dairymaid's hand, who was suffering from cowpox, and inoculated James Phipps, a healthy boy eight years of age. On July 1st he inoculated him with variolus lymph from a case of small-pox, and found that the boy did not contract the disease.

Thus Jenner made his great discovery, and communicated the results in a paper which he had printed in June, 1798, entitled: "Enquiry into the Causes and Effects of the Variola Vaccine, a disease discovered in some of the western counties in England, particularly in Gloucestershire, and known by the name of The Cowpox."

The MS. of this pamphlet will be found in case No. 186.

In 1802 Parliament granted him £10,000, and a second grant of £20,000 was made to him in 1806.

The recognition and value of Jenner's discovery, which spread throughout the world, and been the means of saving innumerable lives, is enshrined in history.

On January 25, 1823, Jenner was seized with an attack of apoplexy and paralysis of the right side while sitting in his favourite chair, and passed away on the following morning, January 26, 1823.

His name, like that of Pasteur and Lister, will ever be remembered as the founder of an epoch in preventive medicine which has proved of the greatest benefit to mankind.