

**J.B. Bridges**

**BELFAST MEDICAL STUDENTS**

*by*

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## ***INTRODUCTION***

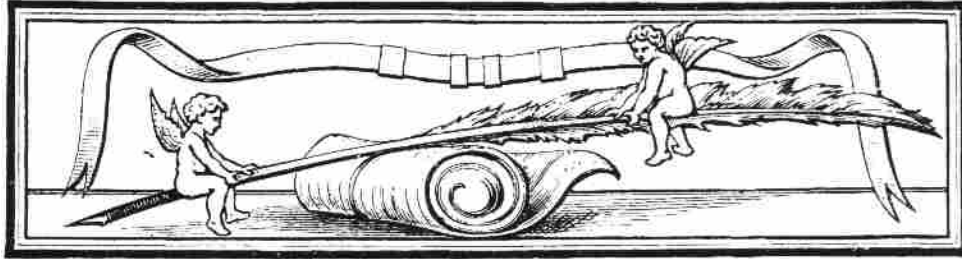
The Belfast Medical Students Association has provided many happy memories to those who attended its meetings over the years.

Some minutes are missing, others are humorous and many delightfully vague. The Association has always played a role in undergraduate medical and social education, at times more dominant than others but nevertheless a role. Let's hope it will continue to do so for at least another century.

Medicine in Ulster owes a huge debt to its historians. The series of books and articles listed in the reference section provide a carefully researched, recorded and assessed account of the practice and teaching of medicine in Belfast.

Many are still available, all are well worth reading.

The Medical Insurance Agency has given generous financial help towards the cost of this publication.



The Belfast Medical Students Association was formally constituted in the Logic class room of the Queen's College Belfast in May 1886. Its stated aim was, and is, 'to promote the interests of Belfast medical students as regards their medical training'.

Medical students however have been in Belfast for a much longer time.

## I



A medical student walking in the town of Belfast a century earlier was probably on vacation from Trinity College Dublin or Edinburgh University. One such was William Drennan. It was not an exhausting walk to go from one end of Belfast to the other. The Farsset river running along the line of High Street was being covered over, as pollution from traders turned it into an open sewer with decaying offal. Its mouth was lined by quays for sailing ships. To the south the town limit was the present site of the City Hall and as far as the grounds of Inst. Running from the main streets, the entries housed the traders receiving cargoes and getting goods ready for export. Around the city were large estates, each presided over by a large house. In High Street the new Exchange Building, dominating the many entries and small buildings around it and St. Anne's Parish Church in Donegall Street were visible examples of the rebuilding of the town under the patronage and active interest of the 5th Earl of Donegall.

Belfast was beginning to organise itself and the town centre took on by the 1780s an orderly look ready for its future great expansion.

William Drennan was born in 1754. He was the son of a Presbyterian minister. Of eleven siblings only three survived to adult life. He entered Glasgow University at the age of 15 and obtained a Master of Arts degree at the age of 17. Two years later he enrolled in the Medical Faculty of Edinburgh University. He was an avid letter writer and his letters, most to his sister Mrs. McTier, are still preserved in the Northern Ireland Public Record Office.

A medical student's life in Drennan's time was not without hazard, four of his fellow students contracted fever and one died. He routinely rose at 6.00 a.m., had a half hour walk around his lodgings before arriving for classes at 8.00 a.m. The Medical Faculty at Edinburgh had been constituted fifty years before (1726) under the initiative of Provost Drummond at which time the Professor of Anatomy in Edinburgh, John H. Monro (primus) returned from Leyden University to play a dominant role. James Drummond did likewise in Belfast, holding the same Chair in Inst. and playing a similar major role in setting up the Medical School in Belfast with his undergraduate experience in Edinburgh to encourage him. Monro (primus) was succeeded in the same Chair in Edinburgh by his son (secundus) and grandson (tertius).

Drennan was a prolific letter writer. His great grand-daughter, Miss Duffin, carefully catalogued over fourteen hundred letters in 1952. Some weeks he found the eight pence cost of postage too much for his tight budget. He wrote "breakfast was usually bread and milk but his treat on Saturday and Sunday was an epicurean breakfast of tea and toast". He wrote home to his sister "a student of medicine is a term of contempt, but an Irish student of medicine is the very highest complication of disgrace". His University fee in 1777 was £20 and his final examination fee was £25.

Drennan sat in the crowded anatomy lectures of Alexander Monro. His father had been driven from the Surgeons Hall in Edinburgh by a mob incensed by reports of his involvement in body snatching, to the relative sanctuary of Edinburgh University. Body snatching by medical students was not uncommon and Drennan may have been involved during his medical training. The popularity of the anatomical lectures, hundreds attended the classes, meant the supply of legally acquired bodies from judicial hangings was totally inadequate.

Throughout the 18th and early 19th century, part of the penalty paid by the convicted criminal was not only to forfeit his life but to have his remains dissected by members of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, in Ireland, or of Scotland. Unfortunates convicted of witchcraft were burned so that purification of their spirits could be effected by fire; this process may or may not have cleansed the spirit but it definitely rendered the mortal remains unsuitable for dissection.

The risk of retaliation by relatives was great, so much so that in 1830 the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland begged the government to be relieved of the necessity of judicial dissection of criminals.

Teachers of anatomy and would-be surgeons were in a cleft stick. Their quest for knowledge was thwarted not only by the short supply of legal cadavers but also by the indentures of surgeon apprentices which prohibited violation of graveyards on pain of suspension. So body snatching was a clandestine activity. The necessity for knowledge was the mother of unfortunate invention. Bodies were sent from as far as London and Dublin to Edinburgh; as many as twelve went in one batch from London without formalin or antiseptic and barrels of whiskey were sometimes used to preserve parts. Napoleon's remains however rated brandy!

The possibility of such rich pickings resulted in entrepreneurs entering the sad business. A retired Scottish naval officer, Wilson Rae, moved to Dublin to set up an export business and his success was such that the local anatomist, Dr. McCartney of Trinity, went short of his needs. Mrs. Rae acted as export manager and dispatched the macabre cases labelled pianos and books on the packet boat to Scotland. The success of Rae's export business caused local friction with the home traders and there were violent clashes in the Bully's acre burial ground close to the now beautifully restored Royal Hospital at Kilmainham in Dublin. The publicity encouraged the formation of a public society in Dublin to provide funds for guards at the graveyard.

Another group of Scots came to Belfast with true pioneering greed to try and emulate Rae's success in Dublin, and in 1823 a group was arrested in Carrickfergus. Public anger grew. There were brawls at gravesides and established teachers of anatomy had, on more than one occasion, to watch their step very carefully, even to the extent of hiding their body snatchers in the outbuildings around their own homes.

In Edinburgh around the turn of the 18th century Monro tertius was the University Professor of Anatomy. He read his grandfather's notes, by then a century old. He included references to his grandfather's student life at Leyden University. His classes dwindled to a mere 200, surprising really that anybody turned up at all, while the extra-mural teacher of anatomy, Robert Knox, was attracting audiences of over 500 at his lectures. In contrast to the University course, his lectures were "gripping".

He was loudly applauded by his students. He was caustic, spiteful and publically critical of his colleagues (never a good idea). He boasted he kept the best table in Edinburgh, his specimens were fresh, and his yearly handout to the body snatcher students, (with some little excuse) and the resurrectionists (with none other than greed) was around £800. The students paid £3 5s for the course, so his book keeping had to be kept up to scratch. Enter two Williams, Burke and Hare, both Irish, Burke from Orry, Co. Tyrone who had come to Scotland to dig (with others) a canal between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Rumours of financial reward for bodies led them to enquire if the body of an old man, who had died in Hare's 3d a night lodging house but owing £4 could be turned into cash. Dr. Knox willingly handed over £7 10s and asked for further supplies. This was a far better prospect than digging a canal so Burke and Hare then created their own supply by murder, delighted by such easy money. They were eventually arrested transporting a body to Knox. Hare dissolved the partnership by turning King's evidence. Burke was convicted on Christmas Day (1828) and a crowd of 25,000 turned out for his hanging. He was dissected by the third Monro, his brain was considered "soft" and his other parts were kept in a barrel of whiskey.

A century and a half later Richard Gordon "encountered his scrotum at a delightful dinner at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh" whether as a snuff container or within his main course is left to the imagination. Further inquiry revealed the skin is retained as the cover of a small pocket book. This is reminiscent of the "miracle of Guildford" in 1726. Mrs Mary Toft of Godalming was delivered of sixteen and a half rabbits. St. Andre, surgeon and anatomist to George I was convinced and was all set to publish! Mrs. Toft was brought to London to St. Andre's private clinic and more rabbits emerged. The King's physician smelt a rat, Mrs. Toft could only produce a hog's bladder for him. In the end Mrs. Toft senior, the mother-in-law, failed to make the money she hoped for but an enterprising publisher produced an account of the rabbit-woman bound in rabbit skin and had a brisk trade. The Burke and Hare scandal ruined Knox. He had few friends amongst his colleagues, his caustic tongue had seen them off and he was forced to move to Glasgow, and ultimately London, to live without the affluence he enjoyed in Edinburgh.

Bodies of giants and dwarfs were much sought after. The Professor of Anatomy in Trinity hearing of the death of a 7' 2½" giant named Macgrath in 1759 advised his students not to rob the grave. He further advised them not to take clothing, perchance they disregarded his advice, so that the danger of prosecution (for theft of clothing) would be avoided. Four medical students took the hint and the naked body. They attended the wake and drugged the whiskey with laudanum. When the mourners were semi-comatose they made off with the corpse to Trinity. The mourners, when they recovered the next morning, demanded justice from the Provost of Trinity. The anatomist claimed the body had been dissected, so compensation was paid and apparently accepted by the mourners.

John Hunter assiduously and callously pursued another Irish giant in London. He offered the giant, Charles Byrne, a large sum of money for his body. The unhappy man had the additional spectre of dissection after his death to torture him during his terminal illness. He arranged for ten Irish friends to sink his specially made lead-lined coffin in the mouth of the Thames. Hunter's medical students further increased

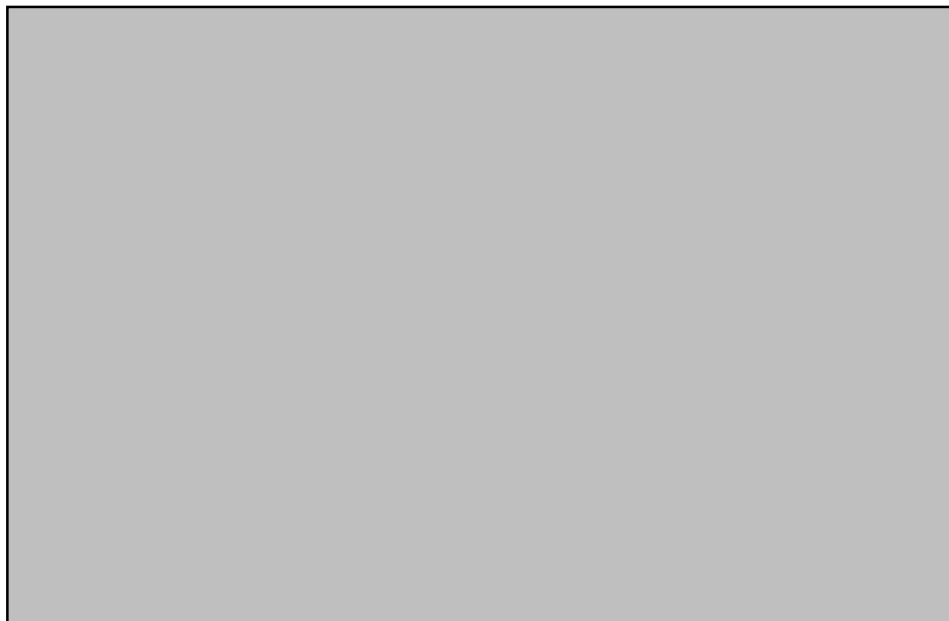


Byrne's agony by claiming they had designed a diving bell to recover the coffin from the bed of the sea. Hunter paid an agent to shadow Byrne and after he died in 1783 aged 22 years, the agent obtained the body by bribing Byrne's so-called friends with £500. This is the highest sum ever involved in such a macabre transaction. The body was removed to Hunter's home.

The townland of Littlebridge in County Londonderry is credited as the birth place of several Irish giants. The then widely held local belief was their height was due to their individual conceptions on the tops of haystacks.

Today the three skeletons remain in Anatomical Museums; Burke in Edinburgh, Byrne in London and Macgrath in Dublin. They do little to advance the cause or the ethos of medical education.

Belfast did not escape. In January 1824 the Belfast Charitable Institution offered £60 for the conviction of those who recently raised a coffin in its burial grounds. A strong cage of iron to encase a coffin is still on display in the Ulster Museum. A revolver and flintlock pistol used to protect the graves at Clifton House are still preserved in its board room.



*Coffin guard from the burial ground at Clifton House.*  
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the Ulster Museum)

Peace in the graveyards came in the wave of public disgust for Burke and Hare's activities when the supply of cadavers was regulated by the Anatomy Act passed in 1832.

Drennan left Edinburgh in 1778. His final examination was an oral one conducted in Latin seated around the table with five Professors of the Faculty. He was successful and awarded the degree of Doctor of Medicine. His successors had this

same type of final examination until 1823, when English was substituted for Latin, and a written examination augmented the oral one.

He practiced for a time in Belfast, then Newry and later in Dublin. In financial terms he was not over successful. His patients were mainly acquaintances or tradesmen and he found it difficult to give them stringent bills. His earnings in Newry between 1783-89 were at best £296, at worst £103. Around this time his sister wrote "the asking rent of a house in the newly developed Donegall Place was £110 and readily obtainable".

Dublin proved financially little better for Drennan, but politically stimulating. He embraced the cause of the United Irishmen, was tried and acquitted of publishing a seditious libel in 1794, but took no part in the subsequent rebellion of 1798. He married in 1800, and returned to Belfast when a legacy left him financially independent and able to cultivate his interests outside medicine. He had to wait for his escape from medicine longer than another literary figure, Somerset Maugham, who as a student walked away from the wards of St. Thomas's Hospital a century later when his play "Lisa of Lambeth" initiated a successful career as a writer and financial independence.

Belfast medical students owe a debt to Dr. William Drennan. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the establishment of the Belfast Academical Institution with its inherent hope of a medical school. Around him the prosperity of Belfast throbbed as the town was extending into the green fields towards Bradbury Place.

To anyone with an enquiring mind Belfast was an exciting place to be at the beginning of the 19th century. The Linen Hall library emerged from the Belfast Reading Society formed on May 13th 1788. The first year of the new century saw the formation of the Belfast Literary Society. William Drennan served on the board of the Charitable Society. His active support resulted in the introduction of vaccination against smallpox in that institution only two years after Jenner's original work was published in 1798. Drennan subsequently had his own children vaccinated.

He was enlightened in his attitude on the then current medical practice (1793) in midwifery, and considered "that simple water is the sovereign remedy against infectious diseases when frequently and properly used. Wash and keep clean should be the motto over every door of every hospital". Fifty years later Semmelweiss in Vienna reduced the mortality in a labour ward from 18 to 1 per cent by getting medical students to scrub their hands and finger nails in chlorinated lime water before they examined the patients.

He was a founder member and the third president of the Belfast Medical Society formed in 1806 and served on its committee. Its total membership was the 19 doctors who then served the 20,000 citizens of Belfast town.

He died in early February 1820. His funeral paused outside the gates of his beloved New College (Inst.) just six years old. His coffin was carried at his request by six poor protestants and six poor catholics. They were given a guinea for their labour. Their task was not demanding for William Drennan was small in stature. He is buried at Clifton House. His epitaph may still be seen, written by his son who remembered his father was the first to call Ireland the Emerald Isle in an earlier poem in 1815.

'Pure just benign; thus filial love would trace  
 The virtues hallowing this narrow place.  
 The Emerald Isle may grant a wider claim,  
 And link the Patriot with his Country's name.'



## II



*Royal Belfast  
 Academical  
 Institution*

A medical student walking the streets of Belfast at the turn of the century would still have been on vacation from Edinburgh or Dublin. He would be aware of the expansion of the town, but if he strayed beyond the White Linen Hall (site of the present City Hall) he would be into the woods of Cromac with its important supply of spring water. If he ventured further afield, along the ridge which is now the Malone Road, he would have been in green fields with large houses dominating the estates of Malone, Maryville and Belvoir. The fields ran down from the ridge to the marshy bog meadows to be later bisected by the Lisburn Road (1817) and trisected by the Ulster Railway to Lisburn in 1839.

He would be unaware he was walking in a town briefly to be called the "Athens of the North". The increasing prosperity of some of the citizens of Belfast did not engender a lethargic complacency: quite the reverse. A great movement for self-improvement through education and the care of the less fortunate resulted in The Belfast Literary Society, The Belfast Charitable Society, The Female Humane Society "for the relief of poor lying-in women", The Irish Harp Society, The Belfast Reading Society, later The Society for Promoting Knowledge (now Linen Hall Library), The Anacreontic Society (later the Belfast Philharmonic), The Galvanic Society (later the Philosophic Society), the first School for the Blind (due to the ravages of smallpox) and others all bore witness to the intellectual upheaval of the time. Medical students may have attended their meetings as members of their families joined and contributed to these societies.

Within this enlightened climate the Belfast Academical Institution opened its doors in 1814, offering a choice of school or collegiate education. Amongst its

fathers was William Drennan, another was John Templeton, a well known naturalist of Orange Grove, later renamed Cranmore (the great tree), in the Inst. playing fields today. The estate was originally Malone, but was renamed Orange Grove after King William sheltered there from rain or from a migraine in 1690. The story that Malone was so named after William refused the offer of a companion to accompany him on a walk, preferring to go on "ma own" is therefore untrue. The tree "to which the King tied his horse" was blown down in 1796, the adjacent tree carried the accolade until it too was tossed by a storm in 1808. An ash then assumed the mantle and it too fell around 1839. The present Spanish chestnuts are said to be over three hundred years old. They stand near the remains of the old house and some at least may have been unintentionally fertilised by the King's horse.

My apparent fixation with King William's horse arose from the lectures I had as a student in, of all subjects, venereal disease. In my first days in the another-world atmosphere of the Royal (after Queen's) I often noticed a wooden sign with the sign-written inscription "Dr. Hugo Hall" and an arrow vaguely pointing to the King Edward Building. The arrow I eventually discovered pointed to a consultants' clinic, not a location and Dr. Hugo Hall often lapsed from his clinical speciality to regale us, with amongst other things, details of King William's journey towards the Boyne.

Inst. had a difficult birth. The news of its conception elicited a response of £10,000 from well-wishers within two weeks of an appeal being launched. Government funding without which the collegiate department could not survive the post-natal period was hard to get and grudgingly given on a yearly basis; even then it was only £1,500 per annum. Sir John Soane, an English architect who had started his career as an errand boy and later held the Chair of Architecture at the Royal Academy with the notable designs of the Library of the House of Lords, the Law Courts in Westminster and the Bank of England to his credit, generously submitted designs for the Institution without any charge. With money in the bank for the building the Joint Board at Inst. then set about appointing staff. One Scottish candidate wrote to the Board in red ink at right angles to the pre-existing black writing on the page. An ex-military, ex-medical, ex-actor, elocution teacher in Belfast submitted an application, withdrew it but recommended his father who strangely was appointed without interview, — his son telling Inst. that the references (he the son had submitted) were equally pertinent to his father. One wrote in immaculate copper plate writing and begged them to "excuse his hurried scrawl".

However in spite of subsequent withdrawal of government funding for a time, Inst. survived and prospered. In the collegiate department James Drummond, schooled at the Belfast Academy, played a major role as Professor of Anatomy and Physiology (1818) in the Faculty of Arts. Students entering the Presbyterian ministry were given a smattering of anatomy in their training so that they could dispense corporal as well as spiritual help. While Monro had carried his ideas for the Edinburgh Medical School from Leyden, Drummond brought his ideas from Edinburgh to Belfast. Both were anatomists and both, Munro a century earlier, had a burning desire to get a Faculty of Medicine in their town. Drummond was unsuccessful in his attempt to give clinical lectures in 1827 in the ten year old Belfast Fever Hospital in Frederick Street, while Monro secundus was successful in a similar venture 60 years earlier in

Edinburgh.

The rope of poverty was always around Inst.'s neck. Drummond even refused his salary, £50 in 1823, a gesture the government would be glad to receive today, but alas for them things have changed. In 1784 however, another young Belfast medical student qualified in Edinburgh six years after Drennan and 30 years before Drummond. He had been taught as a boy by Michael Traynor in a hedge school in a cave at Red Bay and then at David Manson's pioneering school in Belfast. He returned to Belfast to practice from a house in Donegall Place, which he occupied for the rest of his life. He was the first President of the Belfast Literary Society as well as a founder member of a number of medical charities and a patron of the Irish Harp Festival in 1797. James McDonnell saw Belfast grow from a town of 14,000 when he began his practice to 85,000 at his death aged 82 in 1845, and the number of practicing doctors rose from 9 to 70 over the same period.

James McDonnell was beloved by his colleagues and his patients. He treated poor and rich alike. He was a friend of the Andrews family and greatly influenced Thomas's later decision to study medicine. Today his grave lies in the shadow of a Celtic cross in the churchyard of Layde, near Cushendun. A bronze bust is in the King Edward Building. The University is proud to have three pieces of a ten piece silver service presented to him in 1827 for his 65th birthday.



*James McDonnell, MD (1763-1845).  
Reproduced from a portrait by kind  
permission of Mrs Shorter, Kilsharvan,  
Co. Meath.*

James McDonnell was an active supporter of the opening of Inst. When the nitty gritty of setting up the Medical School came in the 1830s he, like his colleagues, felt the professors should be appointed from amongst their own hospital staff. The College (Inst.) said no, merit alone should prevail. The medical staff tried again with the proposal that the clinical professors should have practiced in Belfast for at least six months before appointment and this too was refused. This chauvinistic attitude was due in part to their (hospital staff) appointments being on a yearly basis and a professor with five year tenure would not be welcome. This proposal was also refused, merit and merit alone was to rule the academic waves. It is, however, an historical fact that pragmatism finally triumphed. All holders of clinical chairs were local at the time of their appointment until this chain was broken with the appointment of Harold Rodgers to the Chair of Surgery in 1947.

The Medical Faculty eventually was formally constituted in 1835. However, since 1821 the physicians and surgeons of the Frederick Street Hospital could introduce one pupil; a system unique to Irish medicine at the time. The first

resident pupil was Mr. W. Bingham. The first house surgeon was appointed in 1838 but as usual the surgeons stole the day for the first house physician, Dr. James A. Lindsay, was not appointed until 1882. He was later to hold the Chair of Medicine (1899-1923) and to be the President of the Medical Students Association in 1887-8. He had the distinction of attending both Inst. and later Methodist College. He published his *Medical Axioms, Aphorisms and Clinical Memoranda* in 1923. Number 53 states "Think of common diseases first". Others include "In searching for the obscure do not overlook the obvious". "There are few things more difficult than to establish a fact in therapeutics. The post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy is rampant". "The history of medicine is full of the records of fictitious cures". "The value and place of psychoanalyses are still sub judice. Its occasional success cannot be denied but it is a troublesome method and easily open to abuse". "In the treatment of pernicious anaemia there are four points, and only four, rest, fresh air, easily digested food and arsenic pushed to the limit". By the fifties some had disappeared and others were modified. "If you don't put your finger in it, then you'll put your foot in it" extolled the value of the rectal examination. Professor Lindsay was to address the Society many times, the last in 1926, his subject Sir William Osler. The minutes record that Osler was born on July 12th and christened William in honour of the Prince of Orange. Osler's aphorisms feature from time to time quoted in the minutes "Know syphilis in all its manifestations and all other things clinical shall be added on to you" (1928); "if the licence to practice meant the completion of his education, how sad it would be for the young practitioner and how disheartening for the patient" (1939).

The accolade "the father of Belfast Medicine" rests rightly on the head of James McDonnell, but equally it was Drummond who pushed in the New College (Inst.) to have the Faculty of Medicine established and was the Faculty's first Dean, so it is fair to say the Belfast Medical School had two founding fathers.

The hospital in Frederick Street flourished, built just after Waterloo and was opened in 1817. The most noble George Augustus Marquis of Donegall intoned over the foundation stone "This hospital is dedicated to the sick and to the art of medicine" and these sentiments were repeated in 1903 when the new Royal Victoria Hospital opened its doors on the Grosvenor Road.

A decade after the Frederick Street Hospital opened, the first clinical lecture was given by Dr. McDonnell at the age of 65. Apart from a brief and unsuccessful attempt by the Collegiate Department of Inst. to run its own hospital in a nearby disused cavalry barracks (Barrack Street today) the essential marriage between gown and "white coat" was in general a happy one.

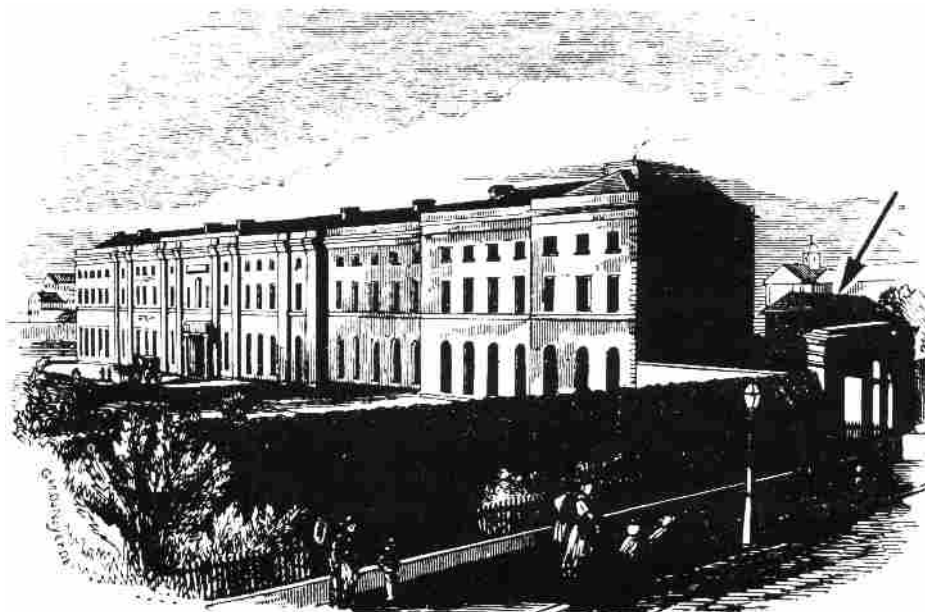
There were five foundation professors; Anatomy and Physiology and Botany - Dr. James Drummond; Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children - Dr. Robert Little; Chemistry - Dr. Thomas Andrews; Surgery - Dr. John McDonnell (James's son) and Materia Medica and Pharmacy - Dr. James Marshall.

Thomas Andrews, inevitably an Instonian, had a brilliant career. James McDonnell a close family friend advised him to go to Glasgow University to read chemistry but Andrews left after one year to study in Paris. He spent several months travelling from Bordeaux to the capital in the autumn of 1830 when he was sixteen years of age and arrived in Paris the following summer. Illness forced him to abandon

his studies in Paris and he returned to Ireland subsequently to read medicine at Trinity and later to graduate from Edinburgh in 1835. He was the first Medical Officer at the Belfast Union Infirmary. There his patients lay on straw on the floor without beds. Andrews went back to academic life and held the Chair of Chemistry at the Queen's College. He was the unique Vice-President of the Queen's College and together with Rev. Josias Leslie Porter, the President, overlooked a period of consolidation and steady progress of the Queen's College. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society at the age of thirty six in 1849. A museum in the Keir Building marks his achievements. The apparatus he used to liquify CO<sub>2</sub> is on display as well as the glass cylinders to contain the inert gasses he passed electrical currents through. These were the forerunners of the neon and the cathode tube.

The first Professor of Medicine was Henry McCormac, appointed 1837. He is credited with recognising phthisis, consumption and surgical tuberculosis as the same disease condition. He had worked unceasingly during the cholera epidemic of 1832 and was given a public testimonial. He was adamant that fresh air was the treatment of choice for phthisis. He put his belief to such good effect he appeared in court for breaking the windows of patients' houses with his cane. Robert Koch was to describe the acid fast bacillus in 1882. A cure in the true sense however had to wait until the 1950s when streptomycin helped to empty the hospitals including our own Forster Green of patients with tuberculosis. Tuberculosis was a ubiquitous member of any differential diagnosis in the first half of the present century.

The medical school at Inst. gave nearly 600 students its General Certificate equivalent to the primary degree of the Scottish Universities but the students had to go



*The Royal Academical Institution with the three-roomed medical school (arrowed) of lecture theatre, dissecting room and museum. From a print of about 1840 and reproduced in: J.H. Smith, **Belfast and its environs with a tour of the Giant's Causeway**, Dublin, William Curry, 1842*



*The medical school of The Royal Belfast Academical Institution, now demolished. The centre block, without the porch, was the original "medical school". (Reproduced by courtesy of the Board of Governors).*

elsewhere for their degree or licence. The Inst. certificate was recognised by most of the licencing bodies, e.g. the Royal Colleges of Surgeons of London, and in Ireland, Apothecaries Hall, Dublin, The Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow and London University. So an increasing cadre of physicians and surgeons built up in Ulster receiving at least the preclinical part and often clinical instruction in Belfast. The medical school was housed in a separate one storey building behind the North wing of Inst. and was demolished a few years ago.

John Jamieson wrote (in 1959)

"What is certain is that medical students in those days did not greatly differ from the variety with which we are acquainted now. It was not long before they made their presence felt among the student body of Inst. Their high spirits were not relished by the other students, who felt themselves as the men in possession threatened by these irresponsible newcomers. After some horseplay before Christmas, 1837, a humourless spokesman of the Arts students sent a letter in their name to the President of the Faculty of Arts in which he complained that Arts students had been molested by medical students when entering Inst. by the back gate for evening lectures, and that 'individuals of the Medical pupils, when reasoned with as to the folly and impropriety to contend in a forcible manner with a body so very numerous as we are, hesitate not to affirm that they could employ other weapons than those with which they have been gifted by nature. In this state of affairs,' continued this monumental prig, 'we have felt it our bounden duty, before applying to the Civil Law of our country, to have recourse to the interference



of you, who have been appointed the guardians of our personal safety no less than of our literary improvement.' The Faculty was not too impressed with this heart-rending plea, and decided that there were faults on both sides."

The staff were not immune from practical jokes. One lecturer in 1840 was tipped off that his rostrum had been festooned with rockets and a train of gunpowder laid from his chair down the room and through a hole bored in the door. This was to ensure the safety of those applying the match. The lecturer in elocution delayed his entrance, the gunpowder was set off, the rockets failed and the room filled with smoke. The principal architects of the scheme lost their class certificate for the year. The lecturer's language or his mode of delivery is not recorded. Snowballing however was the only offence which merited corporal punishment.



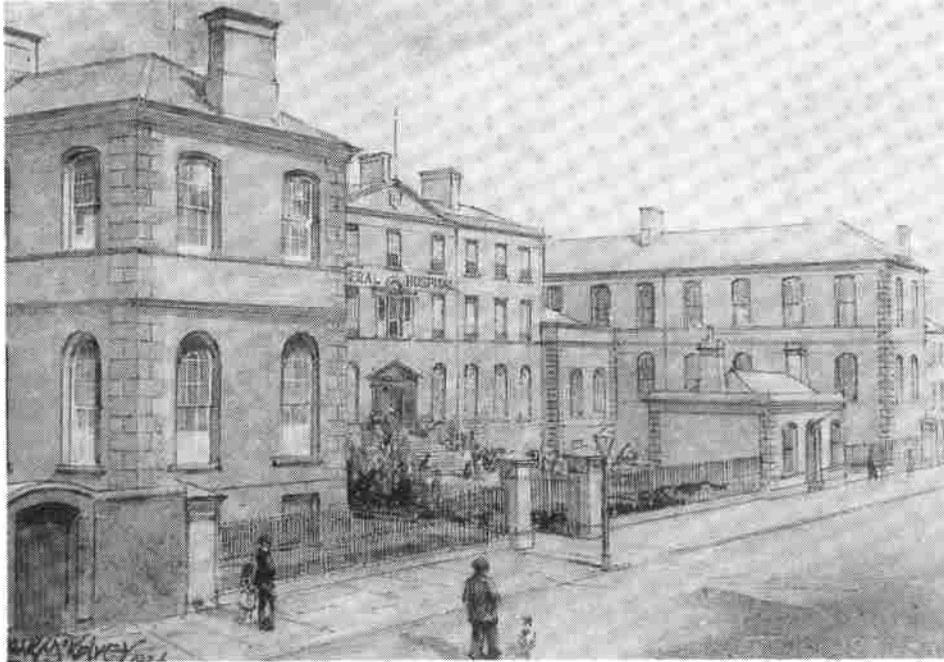
### III

A medical student walking through Belfast in the 1840s could have been on his way to lectures at Inst. or to clinical ward rounds at the Frederick Street Hospital. He might have been a pupil at Frederick Street, for the system of resident pupilships was established there in 1821 and was an original feature of Irish medical schools, later to be adopted by medical schools on the mainland.

The Belfast Union Workhouse for 1,000 inmates (City Hospital) was opened in 1841, three years after the Irish Poor Law Relief Act was passed. It originally had six beds for sick inmates but by 1849 these were increased to five hundred. Medical students were not admitted until fifteen years later.

The Institute for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind (since replaced by the Medical Biology Centre) opened in 1845. The town of Belfast was just beginning to invade the Malone area. Fountainville Terrace was built and the steep incline up to the Malone ridge was too much for the horses drawing manure from the livery stables of the town, so half the load was dumped there and retrieved later. Upper and Lower Crescent were being built and the first houses were already standing in Mount Charles.

The gas works opened in 1823 and the town illuminated by a multitude of lamps. The Lunatic Asylum (opened 1827) in the angle of the Grosvenor and Falls Road was the



*The Frederick Street Hospital 1817-1903*

1817-1848	<i>Belfast Fever Hospital</i>	1875-1899	<i>Belfast Royal Hospital</i>
1848-1875	<i>Belfast General Hospital</i>	1899-1903	<i>Royal Victoria Hospital</i>
1864-1865	<i>Extended - wings added</i>	1936	<i>Building demolished.</i>

most pleasing building used for a medical purpose but it was later demolished and the Royal Belfast Children's Hospital built in the 1930s.

A medical student could well have spent an hour or so at the Belfast Museum then in College Square North. The building still stands, a stone's throw from Inst. and is being restored. The Natural History Society had been formed in 1821 at Drummond's house. Seven scholars from Inst., sons of the town's business families met in his house in Chichester Street one evening. The society they formed was not for the weak-hearted. One strict rule was that each member deliver a scientific paper in his turn or be fined. Drummond was its president 17 times and delivered a total of 32 papers. Drummond with his sea-going experience led dredging expeditions in Belfast Lough and later a sea cucumber was named and is still recognised as *Thyonidium Drummondii* as is also a sea slug, *Eolis Drummondii*.

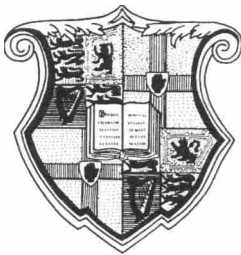
Professor Drummond always cherished a dream of a museum in Belfast, even petitioning the proprietors of Inst. in 1819 without success. November 1st 1831 was a proud day for him and his seven young apostles. Today the "Apostles of Ireland" in Toronto have several Queen's graduates within their number and have individually been very generous in their help to the University. The Museum opened and at last they had a permanent home for their collections. The wanderings of members of the prosperous business families yielded specimens from far and wide. Bird skins from

Rathlin Island rubbed feathers with birds, including an emperor penguin, sent from the Falklands by Captain Crozier. His statue with its attendant polar bears still guards the entrance to Banbridge. The penguin stared at crowds of up to 5,000 who visited the museum in the Easter holidays to wonder at Takabuti the Egyptian mummy. The Egyptian princess and bird are still at Stranmillis one hundred and sixty years later.

In the York Street area or in the fields around the Dub, he could find cock fighting, even bull baiting, fist fighting or he may well have mixed with his own to ride to one of several packs of hounds. He would have been aware of the great increase in the number of linen mills with its attendant miserable housing. Successive failures of the potato crop forced the people off the land to Belfast in the hope of earning a meagre living, living in uncontrolled, squalid buildings. As many as three families lived in a small four roomed house with narrow alleys between them with little or no fresh air or sanitation. In 1847, while the Queen's College was being built, 15,000 people were receiving charity daily and a third of these had come into the town within the previous eighteen months.



#### IV



*Queen's College*

A medical student in 1849 would have felt a sense of excitement or at least inconvenience as the Medical Faculty moved from Inst. to the Queen's College. The dissecting room, however, remained at Inst. Across the University Road, College View Terrace (the three small houses beside the Union) was already in position with University Square soon to be built. Sir Charles Lanyon was well known for the design of many buildings, including the Belfast Union Hospital, The Frederick Street Hospital, The Institute for the Deaf, the Dumb and the Blind (1845), and for closing the vista of University Square with The Presbyterian College in December 1853. His headstone, with its small gothic arches, has recently been restored to view in Knockbreda Cemetery when the graveyard was tidied up.

The Harley Street of Belfast had been near Inst. around the area of the Black Man. When the centre of medical activity moved to the new Queen's College,

University Square and College Gardens provided the homes and consulting rooms of the medical establishment.

There was little accommodation available for the medical students in the Queen's College. Two rooms, a lecture and preparation room were made available in the corner of the main building nearest the Library. In spite of the disappointment in Inst. when its Collegiate Department was closed, it cooperated by leasing its anatomical rooms to the College. Space at the College was scarce. An attempt by the Academic Council to convert part of the medical rooms to a sitting room for professors was naturally and successfully resisted and they had to make do with converting their own Council Room into a sitting room. Two lockable toilets were partitioned off however in the students' cloakroom off the entrance hall to which each of the professors was given his own key.

The College was not the most comfortable of ivory towers. Some work was outstanding when students were admitted for the first time in 1849. The large window (now War Memorial window) in the hall was unglazed and for the first weeks no heat was available. The Ulster population expressed its good wishes to the new College by providing nearly £1,000 for scholarships. The entire cost of the site, building and furniture of the College was £34,357 6 shillings and 6 pence, so the sum of £1,000 was a very generous gesture.

At this time Belfast was again in the grip of a cholera outbreak. 2,051 cases in 1849, with a 30% mortality. The Belfast Hospital had 2-3 patients in each bed or on the floor on palliasses in the wards.

The young Queen Victoria and Prince Albert came to Belfast in 1849 and inspected the unfinished buildings of the College on their way to the Botanic Gardens — which had opened in 1827 — its gates locked to the public but administered by the Belfast Natural History Society. The Queen also visited the Frederick Street Hospital, gave it £300 and fifty years later it was renamed, The Royal Victoria Hospital. Queen's commemorates her visit with black bricks spelling out VR 1848 in the wall on the inner side of the south wing of the quadrangle near the cloisters. The bricklayer maybe thinking that an eight was more symmetrical than a nine.

In 1845 A.G. Malcolm was appointed to the visiting staff of the hospital and brought a methodical and enquiring mind to the medical problems around him. While others had toiled unstintingly with little clinical success to treat the successive outbreaks of fever, he was convinced poor sanitation and housing was a major factor in initiating the epidemics, for the ravage was less in the better planned suburbs. He estimated between 1822 and 1852 62,000 cases of fever had resulted in 6,000 deaths. The average life span of the citizens of Belfast was a brief nine years. The infant mortality rate was high.

Linen was king. Forty steam powered mills produced linen cloth and provided miserable and disease ridden employment as people fled from the country, driven by famine into the slums of Belfast. Medical students however were in the main from outside Belfast and lodged with relatives or friends; others found lodgings mainly around Joy Street. Board cost 7 shillings and lodgings 5 shillings a week.



*Dr. Andrew George Malcolm (1818-1856).  
Physician and teacher.*

Dr. Henry Cooke was a bitter critic of Inst. and later the scheme for the Queen's Colleges in Ireland. He was an unsuccessful candidate for the presidency of the Queen's College. He was however later appointed to the Chair of Sacred Rhetoric by the Presbyterian Assembly. He was the first Presbyterian dean of residence and was anxious to make contact with his flock amongst the medical students; but unfortunately an hour suitable to both sides for a meeting could not be arranged during the first academic year. His statue replaced one of the Earl of Belfast on the same plinth near Inst. in 1876 and is known to all as the Black Man; retaining the description of the previous occupant's black painted bronze statue.

Medical students were required to attend one-quarter (after 1850 one-third) of the complete course lectures in Queen's. Those who had displayed an ignorance of the classics at matriculation could be required to attend the lectures in Greek and or Latin but this requirement was short-lived and lapsed. Students then, as now, felt that material in lectures should be relevant to forthcoming exams, even more so than to their general education.

Andrew Malcolm was born in Newry, yes he went to Inst., and graduated M.D. from Edinburgh University in 1842. Of 87 graduates in Medicine that year 16 were Irish. He summarised his lectures in pamphlet form, printed them at his own expense and distributed them to students in Belfast. He favoured bedside teaching with a full physical examination and case notes. His assessment of students' progress included a practical examination of these skills. He quickly and willingly advocated the use of the microscope improved by J.J. Lister (Lord Lister's father) in the 1820s. The introduction of Laennec's stethoscope in 1816 helped to foster the idea that a disease process could be limited to the chest rather than the then prevalent idea that all diseases were a reaction of the whole body. Schwann's concept that plants and animals consisted of cells was only a few years old. Just two years before Malcolm's death Virchow was to convince the scientific world that cells only arose from cells, 'omnis cellula e cellula' and a few years later after Malcolm's death that the cell was the centre of disease processes. Thus humoral pathology was finally laid to rest.

Malcolm advocated a Clinical Improvement Society for medical students with a member of the medical staff as a patron, and while this idea didn't get off the ground, students were however admitted to the meetings of the newly formed Belfast Clinical and Pathological Society.

He addressed the Society at a medical conversazione in 1856 in the Corn

Exchange. The hall was bedecked with the flags of many countries, some statues including William Tell and Napoleon were on show. The trade exhibition comprised surgical instruments from Edinburgh and from Belfast. Tea, coffee and buns were provided by a Mr. Thompson a merchant from Donegall Place. Malcolm described the microscope as the "queen of instruments" and claimed its use surpassed chemistry, electricity and the stethoscope together in providing anatomical, physiological and pathological knowledge. He was particularly proud that abstracts of the Society's weekly meetings (on Saturday afternoons) were sent to members all over Ulster. He looked forward to the time when medical reporters will give "our brethren in Letterkenny or Culmore full reports of the activities of our Medical Parliament in Belfast" with the Society acting as a focus for postgraduate education.

He was the first clinician to regularly teach pathology to medical students. He offered a course "The Institutes of Medicine" (making use of his own collection of pathological specimens) to the Queen's College. He used the same name for his proposed course of pathology as one long established in Edinburgh of physiology. The College agreed, limited the course to one year, but instructed Malcolm not to use the title of lecturer or professor of the College. In the event his death at the age of 38 robbed Queen's College of its first lecturer in pathology and Belfast medicine of one of its most progressive teachers and physicians. Malcolm was ahead of his time. Today's technology in everyday medical practice would have come as no surprise to him as he embraced the new technology of his own era and saw its potential value in the art of Medicine. Blood letting was still a common treatment for a multitude of diseases. He was a good friend to medical students as well as an enthusiastic teacher.

The Ulster Medical Society was formed in 1862 when the Belfast Medical Society was fifty six years old and the Belfast Clinical and Pathological Society, not yet a decade old, merged. The Ulster Medical Society flourishes today. Its rooms are in the Whitla Medical Building and contain many elegant portraits. Its journal is well respected and its rooms house many souvenirs of Sir William Whitla's generosity.

## V



A medical student in the 1880s would have had considerable difficulty walking from one end of Belfast to the other as the town now had extended along the Shore Road and to the Malone Road where the higher ground, the present Malone Road,

was being developed. He could have availed himself of a carriage, chariot, landau, sociable jaunting car, gig or cart, and he would be dismayed but not reassured that the fare would not be more than 6d per mile. He would have walked.

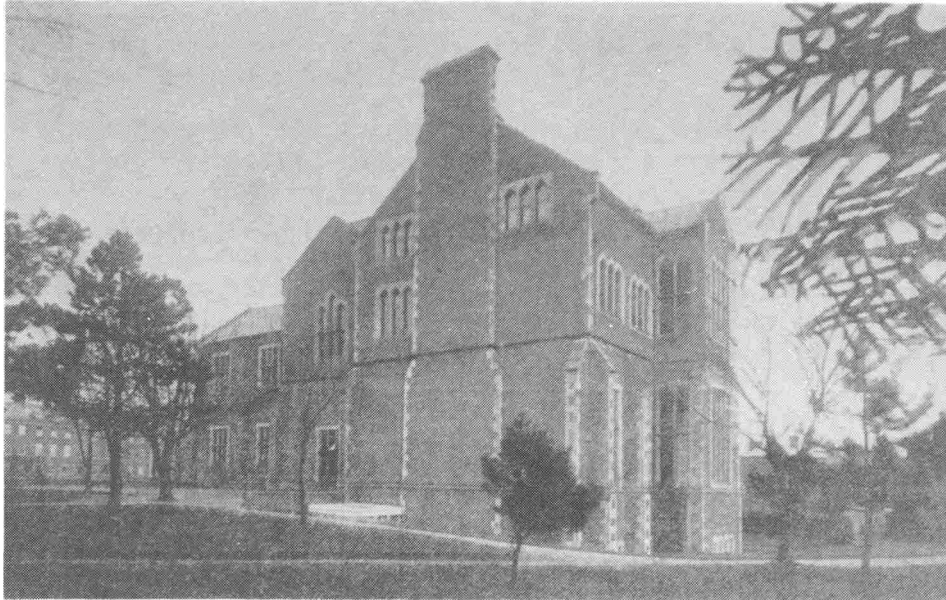
The splendid Great Northern Railway Station (opened 1849) was the focus for the horse tram routes which operated later on. Single deck trams drawn by horses ran on metal rails from Castle Junction to Botanic Gardens after 1872, but soon other lines went as far as Dunmore Park and the Ormeau Bridge. Ten years later there were 94 double decker trams and 800 horses. There was a massive building boom and the supply of houses in areas like Rosetta and Malone outstripped demand at least until the tram lines reached out to them. The railway got to Dublin at the mid century so that the three day journey by coach with two overnight stops of a century earlier was reduced to hours. The Belfast Newsletter was over a century old and published daily and kept all well informed of the news from Belfast and abroad.

At the College a new medical building at the lower end of the quadrangle opened in 1863 and was enlarged in 1866. It had an anatomical museum, a large dissecting room, lecture theatre and laboratories and this building was the focal point of medical lectures. The dissecting room closed in Inst. A gymnasium, the first building for student recreation, stood on the site of the present Drill Hall. The library had been opened in 1868 and relieved some of the congestion in the Lanyon Building. The British Medical Association had its annual meeting in Belfast in 1884, presided over by the Professor of Medicine at Queen's, James Cuming. Students no doubt attended the lectures and functions.

The hospital in Frederick Street had got over the financial problems which reduced the house surgeon's salary from £100 to £10 in 1854. Two wings had been added with 86 beds in the sixties and the Charles Lanyon designed operating theatre was in constant use. The first operation using ether anaesthesia in Europe is credited to an Errol Flynn (in today's parlance Rambo) of surgery, Robert Liston, Professor of Surgery at University College Hospital on 21 December 1846. Before anaesthesia speed was all important. He would free both hands by holding his scalpel in his mouth while legs were amputated in less than two minutes thirty seconds including, as Gordon relates, in one case accidental removal of the testicles as well. Perhaps not as big a disaster as one might think for the patient who had the subsequent problem of inevitable sepsis to contend with. On another occasion again with a leg amputation (under 2½ minutes as usual) fingers of an assistant were removed and the coat tails of an observing doctor cut. This one operation resulted in a 300% mortality, the patient and the assistant died later from infection, the spectator, thinking his flesh may have been pierced, from a coronary thrombosis in the theatre beside the table.

Irish surgery however was only ten days behind Liston for on the first day of 1847 John McDonnell, younger son of James, amputated an arm in the Richmond Hospital in Dublin, again under ether anaesthesia. Chloroform however was used as an anaesthetic agent in the General Hospital in Frederick Street in 1850.

In the mid eighties the number of medical students totalled 244 in a total student number of 460. It is difficult today to realise the authority and power which rested in the President of the College whose dictates were absolute law. He closely controlled



*The medical building at QCB opened in 1863 and extended in 1866. It stood in isolation on the site now occupied by the Administration block.*

the daily activities of the students and equally the staff. The Jarratt Report has recently advocated a much more managerial type role for vice-chancellors and the professors of today's universities. This was the '*modus operandi*' of the old Queen's College. Students were required to attend and be recorded as attending every lecture. Their parents not only had to attend the matriculation ceremony, they had to formally accept responsibility for their sons' behaviour. The students were required to live in lodging houses which were recognised by the College and non-attendance at Church on Sunday could, but didn't, result in rustication. The medical student found his attendance at the hospital brought him into another world of autocracy, that of the physician or surgeon in charge of the ward and there was also the additional hazard of keeping on the right side of the ward sister.

One has no modern day problem of terminology or any other ology referring to the students as "he". They were all male. The first female student was admitted to the Arts classes in Queen's in 1881. Queen's was the first college of the Queen's University in Ireland to do so. A couple of years later the Professor of Midwifery hoped that "the culture and refinement of the age would preclude a similar event in the Medical Faculty". It was not to be and the example set by the first "woman" in 1881 to join the College was repeated later. However it was "ladies" who were admitted to the medical classes in 1889 and Miss Jean Bell was the first female medical student in Belfast.

Miss Pechey of Colchester applied to The Queen's University in Ireland to sit for her M.D. She was willing to attend one session at a Queen's College and so comply with its regulations. She had four years' study in Edinburgh behind her. The Senate consulted the law officers of the Crown and turned her application down. Three years



later in 1876 she had completed seven years' study of medicine and tried again. This time the Senate said yes. She applied to The Queen's College Belfast Medical School to attend a session. They refused and effectively overturned the Senate's decision. In the event she obtained a licence from the King's and Queen's College of Physicians in Ireland one year later and the degree of M.D. in Berne. She then worked in a hospital for women in Bombay until her death in 1908.

In Edinburgh Sophia Jex-Blake had similar difficulties although she had already studied Medicine in New York. In 1860 she was admitted to classes in Botany and Natural History but not allowed to attend classes with men or to graduate. She went to London where she set up a medical school for women and graduated M.D. in Switzerland. When medical examining boards were allowed to examine women by law after 1876, she practiced in London with a licence from the Irish Royal College of Physicians. She returned to Edinburgh and set up not only a school for female medical students but also a dispensary for women, later to become the Bruntsfield Hospital, still largely staffed (current legislation permitting) by women for female patients.

In Ontario, Emily Stowe was appointed the first woman principal of a school in Canada in the eighteen fifties. She was later refused admission to the University of Toronto medical school in 1868. She graduated, however, in the New York medical school to become the first woman doctor in Canada and treated patients for a time, illegally until 1880. Her daughter Augusta, who died in 1943, however, gained a place in the Toronto School of Medicine and graduated in 1883. She was the first woman to study and to graduate in medicine in Canada. She and her mother quickly established the Women's Medical School in Toronto which later merged with the medical school at the university.



*"Dr. James Barry" in uniform - "his" pony netted and "his" valet and "his" dog in attendance. "Cape Times" December 1904*

A different approach to the problem was that of James Miranda Barry, who graduated from Edinburgh in 1814. He may well have attended the same classes as James Drummond. "He" was commissioned into the Army and "he" served for 46 years reaching senior rank. "He" later fought a duel but it was only after "his" death in 1865 they realised that James was really Miranda and had borne a child. Possibly to save any further embarrassment, no detailed examination was carried out after her death so that her anatomical and pathological detail was rightly buried with her body.

## VI



*Royal University  
of Ireland*

The Medical Students' Association was founded in 1886, the second student society in Queen's. The Literary and Scientific Society was then thirty six years young. Its aim was the self-improvement of its members by writing papers on scientific and literary subjects. All but six of the student body initially declined this attractive prospect, but after a few years the membership rose to over 100. Titled speakers drew large audiences. In 1863 the Bishop of Down and many other ticket holders couldn't get in to a lecture on Syria, for ticketless students had got the seats by the simple expedient of physical force. This lecture by Lord Dufferin was a huge success in spite of the hassle going on outside. There was no shortage of speakers. Ladies were integrated and the earlier problems of space were solved by holding the meetings in the Great Hall and later in the Students' Union.

A curious liaison later developed. The rugby team from Cork in 1905 was accompanied by a delegation from the Philosophical Society of Queen's College Cork. While the rugby teams competed for the Dudley Cup (presented a few years earlier by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland), the others debated and this unlikely co-operation developed into a "Dudley week" later held at successive colleges in turn.

In 1886 the Royal University of Ireland was five years old. It had replaced the Queen's University in Ireland comprising the Queen's Colleges of Belfast, Cork and Galway. The Royal University was in the main an examining body, so much so that more than one sixth of its total endowment was available as prizes and exhibitions at its examinations. Its syllabus compelled medical students to study Latin, English or mathematics in their first year or combine these with first year medical subjects. So

medical students faced the possible expense of an additional year's study and the unavoidable expense of travelling to Dublin to sit an additional professional examination.

The average number of Belfast students graduating in arts remained steady during the Royal University's first decade but the number graduating in medicine fell. The number of students in the medical faculty decreased; 364 in 1881-82 to 222 in 1888-89 and to 206 in 1898-99 and of these an increasing number sought their licence to practice in Scotland.

The declining numbers also meant a painful loss in earnings for professors from student fees for lectures. The professor of anatomy and physiology took, without any pleasure, a dip in earnings of almost half between the years 1880-1885. The effect on the salary of the professor of modern languages (no longer a compulsory course under the Royal University's regulations for the medical curriculum) was catastrophic. He had a drop in salary of 70 per cent.

It is not surprising that the Royal University was less than popular with academics in Belfast. The hassle of students travelling to Dublin for examinations, the hassle of an imposed curriculum and the dilution of the input of Belfast into the university decision making processes all contributed to the unsatisfactory image of the Royal University. The declining numbers produced an additional difficulty for the president in Belfast, Reverend Josias Porter as he sought funding for much needed laboratory accommodation.

The General Medical Council established in 1858 was taking its duty to overview medical education seriously by sending out observers to different medical schools. The reports were not all complimentary, in particular they were unhappy at the paucity of oral examination and the lack of examination of practical skills. They insisted two examiners should always be present. The Queen's University in Ireland had been awarded the degree of M.D. as its primary degree and the course at Belfast was no longer than that (the 3 years) needed for a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians. Some students opted to have their instruction in Belfast but go for the licentiate of the Colleges. The licence was also recognised for entry into the government and the military medical service while the Queen's M.D. was not. Belfast students found unfamiliar faces examining them at the Royal University exams at Dublin. Only three local professors were involved leaving students with the inevitable feeling they were getting a raw deal in the process. Two Dublin examiners were reported by the Belfast Students to the Senate for having grinds just before the examination, and discussing the actual questions in the forthcoming examination. The number of Belfast examiners was later increased to ten.

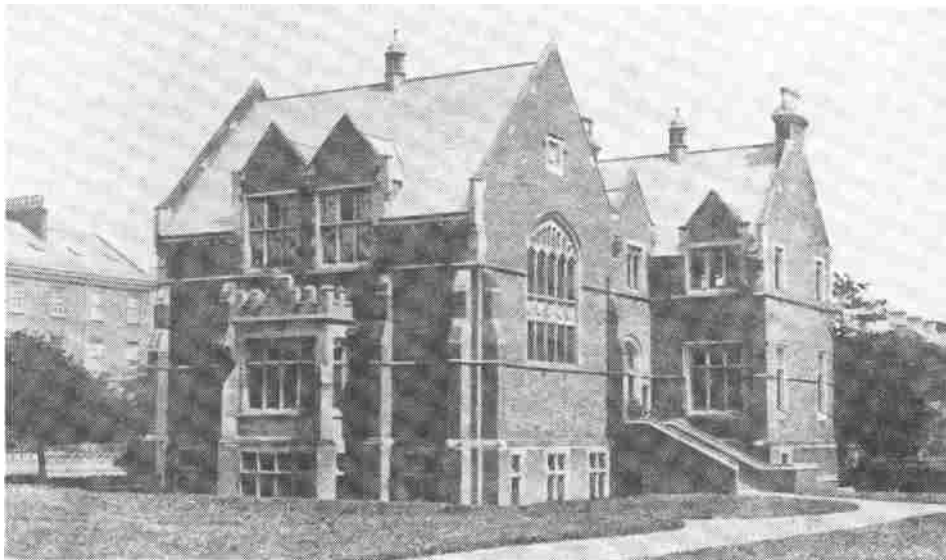
The Association was anxious to regain entry to the Belfast Union Hospital near the College. Students had been admitted in 1857 for several years to see cases of venereal disease in the Infirmary. Later the College proposed its clinical teachers should supervise teaching at the hospital which the hospital doctors found unacceptable and insisted they would teach. The Professor of Materia Medica, Dr. Seaton Reid, on the staff at the Union had a rough time from his medical classes. A porter, stationed in the theatre, was unable to maintain order. Reid resisted students

coming back into the hospital on the basis that "patients did not like to be tossed about by students". The lack of clinical instruction meant the Royal University would not recognise certificates of instruction issued from the Union Hospital. Relations between College and hospital deteriorated further when the latter refused to allow unclaimed bodies from the workhouses to go (quite legally) to the Medical School at Queen's.

It was the Medical Students' Association who in 1892 rectified the situation by presenting a strong and reasonable case, which was accepted and medical students were admitted once more. Three unpaid clinical lecturers were appointed and hospital staff would also teach if they wished. Six resident pupils entered the hospital in 1924. Teaching rounds started two years later and in 1942 the University Professors of Surgery and Medicine were invited to participate in teaching in the City Hospital.

In the College there was little in the way of student amenity. The carpenters' shop beside the public water closets was offered but the Association was not impressed and pushed for adequate reading and refreshment rooms for all students. They found a sympathetic response from the President, the Rev. Thomas Hamilton. A splendid fund raiser at the College, with over 25 stalls and all the fun of the fair, was held in 1894 in the College and Botanic Gardens. The main bulk of the cost of the new Union was already subscribed by benefactors and graduates. This included £500 given by friends in memory of Hans McMordie on condition a room in the building should bear his name.

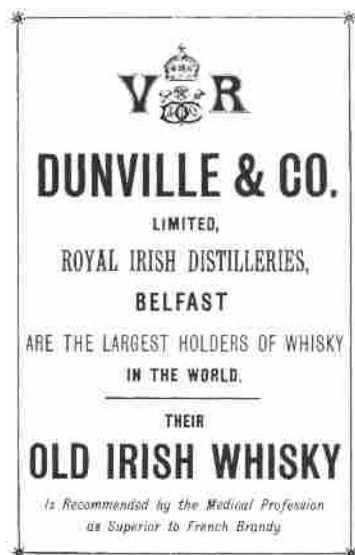
The new Union (now Department of Music) opened in 1897. Buildings for Chemistry, Physiology and Pathology and Surgery were soon to follow in the area now occupied by the Social Science Building and were erected around the same



*The original Students' Union opened in 1897*

period. So that the corner of the quadrangle near Botanic Avenue and University Square was almost entirely occupied by medical buildings.

The first President was Henry O'Neill. To those who divide their contemporaries into those who curse and those who don't, even if their fingers are caught in a car door, Henry O'Neill presented no problem in classification; he easily fitted into those who did. He demonstrated the presence of sugar and urine by putting one finger into the specimen glass and licking another and enjoyed seeing some of the class fail to see his ploy and licking their wet finger. He was a constant and eventually successful advocate for public health and persistent in any cause he espoused. He spent the years from 1883-1890 to persuade the medical staff committee to spend £10 on urine testing equipment. Today the O'Neill Memorial School at Crossnacreevy still stands and commemorates his generosity.



Some of the medical students of the day might from time to time have taken a medicinal drink of whiskey. It might well have been distilled at Dunvilles of Belfast, at one time the largest whiskey distillery in the world. Scotch whisky was well behind. R.G. Dunville was now in control of the family business. The Sorella Trust had been set up in memory of his late aunt Sarah Dunville and administered by an uncle. In 1874 the Dunville Studentships were endowed by the Trust. £45 for one year and £100 for the next. They were open to female students (it was 1881 before women entered the College and 1906 before a lady won one). The value can be compared with the 8s - 5d a young spinner earned per week 10 years later working 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. with two half hour breaks in unhealthy and even dangerous conditions.

In 1890 R.G. Dunville bought a couple of acres of land at the junction of the Grosvenor and Falls Roads from the Trust. Across the road were the green fields around the Belfast Lunatic Asylum. He gave this land and £5000 to convert it into a public park to the Belfast Corporation of the two year old City. He hoped the use of the park would reduce sectarian strife. His £7000 enabled the Sorella Trust to endow a separate Chair in Physiology at Queen's at a salary of £240 per year and the holders of the Dunville Chair to be known as the Whiskey Professors.

Today the grass of the Dunville Park is largely covered in tarmacadam. The finely decorated terracotta fountain no longer plays and its tiles mindlessly vandalised. The two streets enclosing the park are Sorella and Dunville Street. A marble relief of Sarah Dunville is in the Professor's room in the Medical Biology Centre. Some of their whiskey is still about, but those who have it are holding onto their historic bottles.

It is invidious, even unfair, to single out the Dunville generosity. Dr. Robert Sullivan, John Porter, the Rev. Hercules Pakenham, Lord Blaney, John McKane, the friends of Dr. Thomas Andrews, Professor Frederick Purser, Mr. Robert Mackay Wilson, Sir James Musgrave who founded the Musgrave Chair of Pathology, the Misses Riddel, Sir Donald Currie, Sir Otto Jaffe, J.C. White who endowed the Chairs of Bacteriology and Biochemistry, all gave generously of money and often of time and advice to Queen's to ensure its survival and progress.

The Medical Students' Association had to share its year of birth with other neonates, the Eiffel Tower in Paris, and the Statue of Liberty in New York engineered by Eiffel after Bartholdi's original sculpture in Paris, the first Wimbledon tennis tournament for men and the first motor car in Germany. The safety bicycle with two wheels of equal size replaced the penny farthing. A medical student at the College sports at Cherryvale a few years later would have joined in the laughter at the cycle with strange large air-filled tyres with William Hume of the Cruisers Cycling Club in the saddle. Willie, however, had the last laugh and won all his races easily. John Boyd Dunlop, the inventor of the tyre, a Scottish veterinary surgeon practicing in May Street became a local celebrity. A spectator from Dublin saw the possibilities, and with others floated the Dunlop Rubber Company, which later exported huge numbers of tyres to America. Dunlop gained little financial reward for his invention. His name lives on. His bicycle is still to be seen in the Transport Museum at Cultra.

Coca-Cola first appeared at the same time. Originally containing cocaine it was sold with many similar preparations in chemist's shops as a cure for headaches and as a tonic. Most of the other preparations have disappeared, as did the cocaine but Coca-Cola lives on.

Henry O'Neill preceded and succeeded Professor J.A. Lindsay of aphorism fame as president. He in turn was followed in the office by Dr. Henry McKisack, Dr. William McQuitty and Dr. Arthur Mitchell. In 1892 Dr. Johnnie Morrow was president. Profane and violent language was the rule when he was annoyed. His ward rounds were described as uproarious. He could be fawning or brusque. He was also Lord Pirrie's personal physician and medical officer to Harland & Wolff. He would make a bee line for any shipyard workers in the ward and having found out their names from the sister addressed them cordially. One such was described by him in a loud voice, as the best known workman in the yard. The man replied in an equally loud voice "There's not a man down at the yard who doesn't know you Dr. Morrow" Johnnie beamed and demanded "What do the boys say about me?" "Och sure they say you're a slippery ould tit!" He retired then in a temper, and finally in 1930. To record these events is not to diminish his memory. Henry O'Neill and Johnnie Morrow both obeyed the eleventh unwritten commandment "Thou shalt not take thyself too seriously".

A rising star in the medical firmament one hundred years ago was William Whitla. He left Monaghan, attended the Methodist College and trained as a pharmacist in Belfast, before qualifying in medicine. He was an able administrator and published a list of the hospitals used for clinical teaching as the advent of the Royal University and the General Medical Council put medical schools more on their guard. The Belfast Royal Hospital (Frederick Street), The Lunatic Asylum (Falls Road), The

Belfast Children's Hospital (Queen Street), Ulster Hospital for Women and Children (Templemore Avenue). Belfast Ophthalmic Hospital (Great Victoria Street) and the Lying in Hospital (Clifton Street) provided a total of 807 beds with a yearly total of 3,600 patients, 24,000 out-patients with 67,000 attendances. Medical students walked the wards in all these hospitals. In addition, the Belfast Union (Lisburn Road), Throne (Whiteabbey), Samaritan (Lisburn Road), Ulster Eye and Ear (Clifton Street), Skin Hospital (Glenravel Street) and Mater Infirmorum (Crumlin Road) added a further total of 1700 beds, 11,000 in patients and 7,500 extern patients. This information was conveyed to the Royal University. A decade later the students and the staff were unhappy; the former at what they knew was their disadvantage at the Dublin exams, and the latter because they had under representation in the Examining Board and desired their link with Queen's should be more formal.



*Sir William Whitla appeals for funds for the "new" Royal on the Grosvenor Road.*

Whitla's administrative ability and clinical popularity, together with his knowledge of pharmaceuticals made him the ideal candidate for the Chair of Materia Medica which he occupied with great distinction from 1890 to 1919. He was the father of empirical prescribing and his first major book "*Elements of Pharmacy, Materia Medica and Therapeutics*" later was followed by "*Dictionary of Medical Treatments*". Both were best sellers; 9,000 of the dictionary were sold in 9 months and it was even translated into Chinese. His remarkable generosity to the medical profession and Queen's is still without equal.

Today the Whitla Hall, delayed by the war, was built from his legacy made in 1934. The Vice-Chancellor's residence and its seven acre garden, in Lennoxvale was originally the Whitla home. He gave the stained glass window at the end of the Royal

corridor to the Frederick Street Hospital, for years it was in the extern hall at the Royal but when this was divided it was moved to its present position. He partly designed, built and gave the Medical Institute in College Square North to the Ulster Medical Society. It is still there but now dilapidated. The four terracotta heads in the entrance of the Whitla Building: Andrews (Chemistry), Redfern (last Professor of Anatomy and Physiology), McCormac (Medicine), and Gordon (Surgery) are from the old Medical Institute. Peter Redfern's huge portrait hangs in the back stair to the first floor in the Anatomy Department, holding a piece of chalk, the most enduring of all visual aids. The stained glass window in the Ulster Medical Committee Room in today's Whitla Building also came from College Square North. It commemorates the bravery of Dr. William Smyth of Burtonport, Co. Donegal, who died from typhus fever when he went to assist the local doctor to treat an outbreak on Arranmore Island.

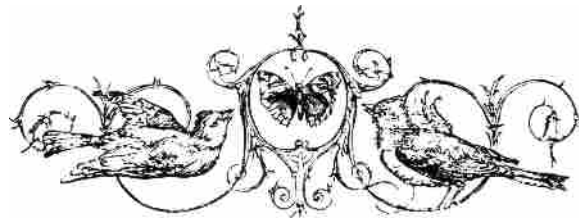


*Horse-drawn ambulance about 1892 manned by the Belfast Fire Brigade.*

Galileo in the hallway of the Medical Biology Centre was brought back from Italy and given to the Ulster Medical Society in 1915. The stained glass windows in the hall of the Whitla Building, of Ophelia and Orpheus, remind us of his love of Shakespeare, indeed he often had touring companies for after show suppers in Lennoxvale. In a scene from "As you like it" in stained glass, he appears on the right as Corin. He is not recorded as a president of the Students' Association but presided over a meeting of the British Medical Association in Belfast in 1909. The medal he was given by his



colleagues to commemorate this visit was in turn given by him to the Ulster Medical Society and is its presidential badge of office.



## VII

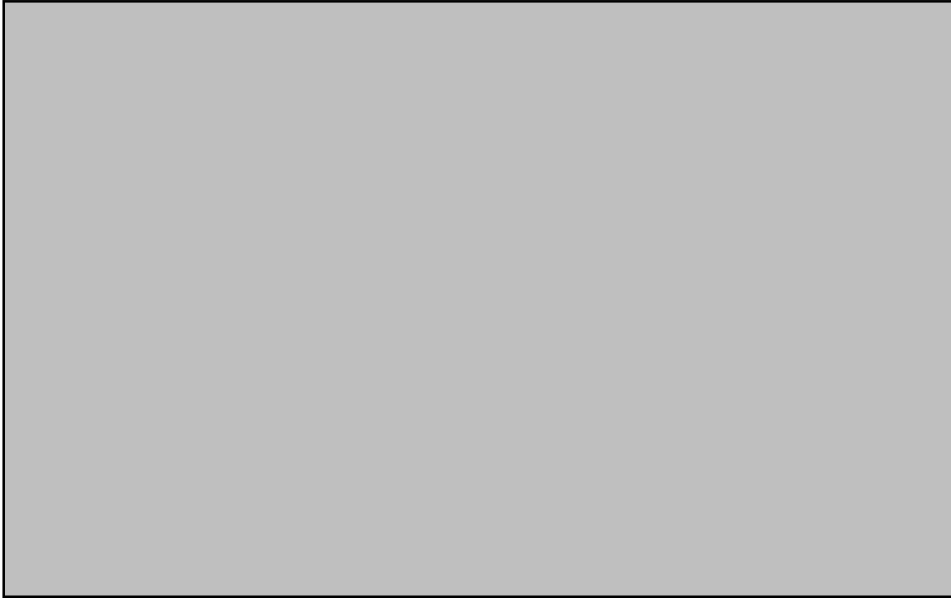


*The Queen's  
University of Belfast*

A medical student at the end of the first decade of the 20th century would have been on his way from the University along Roden Street to the new hospital, to the Mater Infirmorum on the Crumlin Road or the nearby City Hospital. The Queen's University of Belfast received its charter and became an independent university and self-governing. Its control lay in its Senate and it awarded its own degrees.

Up the Grosvenor Road the new Royal Victoria Hospital was opened, standing in the grounds of the old Lunatic Asylum. The hospital in Frederick Street closed. The style of the building represented a defeat for William Whitla. He favoured a pavilion type hospital design à la Nightingale but Lord Pirrie, generous benefactor to Queen's, as well as Chairman of Harland & Wolff thought otherwise. He won on two counts. Firstly, the one storey design of the wards; secondly, its situation on a direct road from the shipyards in the midst of the surrounding mills. The alternative site was the Ormeau Park. The medical student walking along the corridor in the early 1900's probably didn't realise he was walking in the first air-conditioned building in the world. The expertise already in Belfast could build two ten foot diameter fans driven by a steam engine to push air through the hospital with its permanently closed windows. The dust was removed by ropes moistened with running water (now by filters) and the air (heated if necessary) was pushed down a long tunnel under the corridor and deflected into ducts for each ward. The steam engine is restored and can still drive the fans if the modern electric motor is out of action. The fans can move ten million cubic feet of air per hour. The design (the plenum system) was already well known in the engine room of ships.

At the University, medical buildings, the Union, the library were all extended before the outbreak of the First World War. The large physics building almost completed the quadrangle on its lower south side. It was closed in the thirties when additional accommodation was built for the Faculty of Arts and a room provided for



*Belfast Lunatic Asylum.*

**(Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the Ulster Museum)**

the Senate. Over the arch on the south side is a crest of the Royal University of Ireland.

The years until 1908 when The Queen's University of Belfast opened its doors saw the Medical Students' Association active and healthy. The first lady committee member appeared in 1899. President Hamilton was the patron. The meetings were in the main well attended. There was correspondence with the Cork Medical Students' Association regarding the unfair questions at the Royal University of Ireland examinations. They memorialised the Royal University requesting recognition of the courses at the Belfast Union Infirmary. This was signed by all the medical students. They presented the Students' Union Society with a chair at the cost of £1. Annual Parliamentary nights were held sometimes with the Literific Society. The committee and staff acted as ministers, speaker and opposition. They asked for Wednesday as a half day from lectures. In 1901 they subscribed £10 to the Royal Medical Benevolent Society, but in succeeding years the secretary of the charity had to write at least one letter, sometimes two, to ask for a subscription to which the committee yearly agreed, but while the spirit was willing the purse was weak and the contribution got as low as £1 for two years.

They spent £8 on a microscope, placed a brass plate on it, put it in the care of the Union Steward so that it could be borrowed on signature. Two years later it and the slides with it had disappeared and the matter was put in the hands of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

They must have given Dr. Cecil Shaw, Lecturer in Ophthalmology and Otology, a lively welcome, for the committee resolved to send him a letter of welcome, "such letter not to savour of apology". The Association had a yearly membership of around

100. They were to all intents and purposes the equivalent of the modern Staff Student Committee. They had active staff participation at the meetings, usually five per year. These were advertised on a suitable occasion in the local newspapers and well attended by the public. They could travel to Queen's (after 1905) in the new electric trams.

The Students' Representative Council was formed in 1900. The Medical Students' Association had no difficulty in affiliating with it. Medical students numbered 240 out of a total 403 and the first three presidents of the Students' Representative Council were students of medicine. The Students' Union Society administered the Union building and even into the 60's they were a much more active concern than the Students' Representative Council. It however had more privilege in access to the "front" and a more comprehensive system of constituency election. Its office was the first floor in the last house in University Square. Lord Ashby (the then Vice-Chancellor) sought to regularise the situation when the new Union building appeared on the horizon. The Union Society went down with its guns blazing.

In the early fifties the University cancelled all lectures for two hours and the students crowded the Whitla Hall. Nine hundred were persuaded that the Students' Union Society should stay and about three hundred wanted a change. It was a rowdy, jolly meeting. A very successful businessman today in Vancouver printed 1000 leaflets which fell like snow in the hall as they were made into darts. The proceedings were interrupted by the induction proceedings of two Medical Professors, released from a cage outside the Whitla Hall and bespattered with eggs and flour. A mass exodus of the medical students was prevented by a promise from the inductors they would meet after the vote in a nearby place of refreshment. They were warmly welcomed later on as they provided additional funds. The two principals of the rag having almost exhausted their captors' wallets in providing them with fluid refreshment.



*Professors Jack Pritchard and Graham Bull ragged in 1952*

Rugby had been played in Queen's since 1869 with the accolade "Queen's has every right to be proud of her sons". The third XV were known as the Pirates and had a proud heritage. In 1904 the Dudley Cup was presented for competition between the three Queen's Colleges - now it is open to all the Irish Universities. Queen's rugby was noted in 1907 for its open style but it was also noted that an equally strong characteristic of all Queen's teams was their inability to maintain to the end of the match the form they had shown at the beginning.

By 1907, 59 Irish caps had been won by Queen's players. In 1907 the President was patron, the Vice-Presidents were fifteen Professors and seven doctors, the Captain and Vice-Captain were doctors of medicine. Medical students played a major role in the Rugby Club until the 60's. The first club ever to tour Canada was Queen's in 1953 and three quarters of the team were medical students or doctors. A rugby blue almost ensured a house officer appointment in the Royal and the remark (by an examiner) that "one well-known international has passed his final without my having to help him" is now part of student mythology. On the other hand, one student got so fed up with one international player, she told him there was nothing wrong with him that a "paracentesis of his head wouldn't cure". Today the Pirates are no more, but a team of medical students is named the Spirochaetes. The Spiros try to confuse the locals in places like Letterkenny with calls of thyroidectomy and auto-immune disease. This erudition has little or no visible effect on successive oppositions in terms of results. One weekly phenomenon when the Pirates were going strong in the fifties was the magnificent limping of one of the backs down the Royal Corridor each Monday morning. Bets were placed at which ward door the limp would change to the other foot. He had his regular X-ray on Saturday after the match before proceeding to the Hop in the Students' Union. A special drawer in the X-ray Department was reserved for the ever-growing pile of films. There was only one part of his anatomy which had not been X-rayed at least four times.

The Athletic Club was formed in 1871 and its proudest achievement was the world high jump record in 1956 at the Cherryvale Grounds. Thelma Hopkins, a dental student, cleared 5ft 8½ inches. This is the only world record in athletics ever achieved in Ireland.

The Hockey Club was also fielding two teams each week but its pitch at Osborne was terrible and the subject of constant complaints to the Irish Hockey Union. Lawn tennis was played on the front lawn of the College. The Gymnastics Club was already "an old land mark" in the College, and an army instructor taught military free drill. The Cricket Club, started some years earlier, lapsed from 1892 until 1906, urgently asked for a College ground. The Swimming Club started in 1899. The Golf Club began around 1906 and played at Malone. Matches against the staff were lost; the students claiming that so many of the staff were Scottish and therefore had a headstart in their youth!

Rowing started in 1864, lasted 4 years, lapsed and revived in the thirties. Again up to six medical and dental students could be in the senior VIII at any one time. The cox was inevitably a dental student. About 1952 the ethos changed from a socially acceptable physical activity to an all out physical one and the number of medical students dropped in the Senior VIII. One medical student was so keen to row he

competed in regattas under an assumed name. He was supposed to be writing his exams, but wished to keep his vigilant father in the dark.

The Gaelic Football Club now regularly fields four fifteens. It was founded in 1932 and medical students have represented Ulster on numerous occasions. The Club has a proud record of three wins in the Sigerson Cup.

The Hurling Club competes regularly with other Irish Universities for the Fitzgibbon Trophy with its fair share of success. In camogie too, the Queen's team more than holds its own with other universities in Ireland in the competitions for the Purcel Trophy.

On the less strenuous side the Gaelic Society (Cumann Gaedhealach an Cholaiste) was founded in 1905. They won a shield at a Feis in Toomebridge in 1906 for proficiency in the Irish language. The Chess Club was complacent in the slogan "Long may the game of kings continue to be the game of Queen's". In 1907 a four day fete was held at the College to raise funds towards the purchase of suitable playing fields. The list of patronesses is impressive. There were five Countesses, one Duchess, two Marchionesses, two Viscountesses and thirteen Ladies. The General Committee had 140 lady members. Ground was eventually purchased at Newforge, but it could not be drained and subsequently Cherryvale was purchased. Now the playing fields cover over 100 acres at the Dub.

There was a general complacency as these minutes of 1907 show about the meetings.

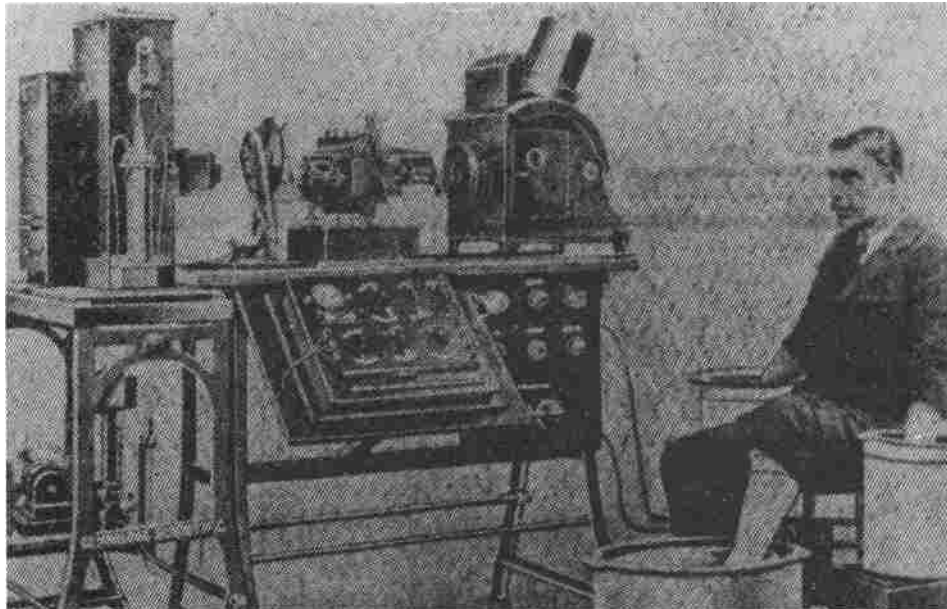
"The Inaugural Meeting of the Session 1907-1908 was held in the McMordie Hall on Monday, 11th Nov. 1907 at 8 o'clock. There was a very large attendance which included The President of the College, Sir Otto Jaffe, LL.D., Professors Letts, Symington, Sir John Byers, Sinclair, Lindsay, Milroy, Gregg Wilson, Symmers, Gregory Smith, Morton and Henry, Drs. J.A. Milroy, McKisack, McQuitty, McCaw, Henry O'Neill, Morrow, A.B. Mitchell, Robert Campbell, Fullerton, Blakely, Burnside, Howard Stevenson, Allworthy & Leathem; R.F. Blake F.I.C., F.C.S. and J. Wylie; the church was represented by Rev. D. Purves D.D., C. Davey B.A. and J.R. Prenter M. A. etc., while the dignity of the law was upheld by Alderman John McCormick. The attendance of the students of the College was one of the largest on record and their conduct left nothing to be desired. Dr. Leighton occupied the chair and called upon the Secretary, Mr. W.W.D. Thomson, B.A., to read the minutes of the last General Meeting which were passed. A list of apologies for non-attendance was read which included the Lord Mayor, the Rt. Hon. Earl of Shaftesbury, Lord Arthur Hill, M.P., G.S. Clark, M.P., Sir James Henderson etc. etc.

Dr. Leighton introduced the new President, James Warnock M.A., M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., in a few remarks, dwelling upon the past brilliancy of his career and his suitability for the great honour which the B.M.S.A. had conferred upon him. Dr. Warnock, on rising, was saluted by hearty and sustained applause, and read a most masterly, but only too short exposition on "Science in Medicine", showing the necessity for a thorough scientific

education for all Medical Students. On the termination of his address Dr. Warnock called upon Benjamin Moore M.A., D.Sc, Professor of Bio-Chemistry and Dean of the Medical Faculty in the Univ. of Liverpool to deliver his address on "Universities, Ancient and Modern". For an hour Prof. Moore performed the no mean task of holding quiet and absorbed his large audience with his erudite history of the rise of University training and then passing from Ancient Universities Prof. Moore pleaded hard for the establishment of a Belfast University, speaking with the greatest confidence and advancing many and weighty views in favour of his opinion. A vote of thanks to Prof. Moore was moved by President Hamilton in his usual neat and careful manner. Dr. Letts in seconding heartily welcomed his old student - Prof. Moore - back again to his Alma Mater. The vote of thanks was supported by Sir Otto Jaffe and conveyed by Dr. Warnock to Prof. Moore amid ringing cheers. Prof. Moore, in replying, left as his last word to the students and advice not to work twelve hours a day at textbooks, but to try and learn more from each other. This concluded the most successful inaugural meeting perhaps ever held by the B.M.S.A."

Later that year the Committee gave 5 guineas to Lady Pirrie in memory of Professor Cuming and their generosity was recorded on a marble plaque (since removed) in Ward 6 at the Royal.

The only contentious issue was the accommodation at the Maternity Hospital in Townsend Street. The secretary was usually ragged by members of the audience when he read his report. Attendance by the medical staff and hospital staff was high. Professors almost always proposed and seconded votes of thanks.



*The first E.C.G. machine in the Royal in 1915. The apparatus was praised for its compactness.*

The Annual General Meeting of 1911 defeated a motion that owing to poor attendance by students the Society should be abolished for a year. "The role of women in medicine is a failure" was debated for the third time in the Association's history. The male chauvinistic pigs were less reticent in expressing their feelings than would be the case today and were accorded tremendous rounds of applause. One of the opposers (later a Consultant Gynaecologist) claimed women were more likely to become hysterical in critical situations and women in medicine were "like mustard plasters, very irritating". The female proposer of the motion was considered by the male secretaries in the minutes as undoubtedly being too personal when she described one of the proposers "as a busy little wasp buzzing about and putting his sting here and there".

Two hundred and four paid up members left a healthy balance of almost £3 at the end of the year.

The year 1915 saw a meeting "Junior Doctors in Military Service" in the McMordie Hall. The medical students were exhorted to get into the Army right away as their predecessors had done. A similar call by a Miss Anderson awakened and latent enthusiasm of the denizens of the balcony who made numerous audible interruptions. A missile is recorded as having hit the junior secretary with unerring precision over the ophthalmic division of his trigeminal nerve so that for a short time he was reduced to a "condition bordering on collapse". Ladies threw contemptuous glances upwards to the balcony and these comely and tempting targets were showered with peas. The secretary also received his share of missiles so that he claimed it was impossible for him to take coherent notes. The Minutes are in fact clear and comprehensive. The majority in favour of military service was overwhelming. The speaker against was surprised to find, while his words were applauded, his proposal received little support. It was the last day of term, Christmas was just ahead and the students wanted a bit of crack. They would need all the exuberance of youth to tolerate the obscenities they would later encounter so bravely in the trenches in France. Captain (later Brigadier) John Alexander Sinton of the Indian Medical Service, a graduate of Queen's and a former houseman in the Royal, was awarded the Victoria Cross. He was later elected a Fellow of the Royal Society and was Pro-Chancellor of Queen's.

In the war 54 doctors and medical students gave their lives. Wards 5 and 6 at the Royal were used for wounded soldiers and sailors.

In the twenties the secretary of the Benevolent Society still was writing his yearly letter. The minute book of 1918 was lost in the Union when the building was taken over for use as a hospital. In 1919 the committee decided white coats should be worn by students in hospitals. Evenings were devoted to discuss "Shock", "The Thomas splint", "War wounds" usually with the benefit of the experience of a returned Medical Officer.

The Vice-Chancellor of Liverpool University came to address the Association in 1920. There was a parliamentary evening with the Literific. Sir Almroth Wright came to speak on clotting, telling his audience on a Saturday afternoon he wasn't going to deal with the subject in a physiological way as there was much in that subject it was unnecessary to know. He would speak in a practical way. In 1921-22 Ian Fraser was

secretary, later to be President in 1938, President of the British Medical Association, President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and Sir Ian is happily still doyen of Irish Surgery. A smoker consisting of musical items by the Queen's jesters, anecdotes, a wordless Spanish tragedy by three members was greatly appreciated.



*The Queen's Jesters. The "girl" in the front row played rugby for Ireland. Air Vice-Marshal Sir William Tyrrell. (Reproduced by courtesy of Sir Ian Fraser)*

Professor Walmsely was President. He is remembered with great affection by those he taught. He began his lectures in the late forties almost in a whisper. His voice rose as total silence descended. The toxicity of urine is well remembered by his phrase "Outside every country pub is a spot where even the nettles won't grow". Recently I reminisced with some colleagues, all the wrong side of thirty, and we were agreed if we could attend one lecture from the past again it would be one of Tommy's. In November 1942 when the snow had lain deep for three weeks, he looked closely at four girls in the front wearing trousers. "I will return when the ladies are properly dressed", he whispered and left. I wonder what his reaction would have been to the girl with multi-coloured hair who appeared in the first year class of 1985. His remoteness was a myth and a twinkle was never far from his eyes. Two hundred and fifty attended the 8th General Meeting of the session to hear a speaker from Glasgow.

Surgeon Kirk succeeded his future son-in-law as president in 1922. The Queen's jesters appeared in concert. They could fill halls with the public anywhere. They even went on tour. Silence reigned during the Presidential Address - "The ignorance of examiners" his subject brought in a full house. An audience of 600 listened to the Recorder of Belfast the same year. Students' five members read papers. In 1923 the first year representative on the Committee was J.H. Biggart, later to be President of



PROGRAMME.	
1928	
Nov. 1	SMOKING CONCERT
Nov. 9	A PAPER: "Experiences of an Anthropologist in Africa." E. W. SMITH, F.R.A.I.
Nov. 20	PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: "Quackery in Electrical Medicine."
Dec. 14	A PAPER: "Primitive Australia." PROF. GREGG WILSON, O.B.E., D.S.C.
1929	
Jan. 25	STUDENTS' NIGHT.
Feb. 1	ANNUAL DANCE.
Feb. 8	A PAPER: "Medicine in History." PROF. R. J. JOHNSTONE, F.R.C.S., M.P.
Feb. 22	A PAPER: "Life in the R.A.M.C." MAJOR W. BROOKE PURDON, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C., R.A.M.C.
Mar. 5	PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE with the Literary and Scientific Society.

the Association in 1939 and 1940 as well as the Dean of the Medical Faculty for 27 years. Already there was evidence of the B.T.A. degree syndrome so prevalent in the 60's and 70's (Been to America) as successive surgeons in particular gave accounts of the American and Canadian Hospitals they had visited. At one meeting the Vice-Chancellor of the day proposed a vote of thanks to the speaker in a few well chosen words and a couple of meetings later, Dr. Livingstone, Vice-Chancellor, addressed the meeting "A Neuresthenic of the Second Century A.D. - Aristides." The same session saw a lecture on the Temples of Healing in Ancient Greece. At the Annual General Meeting the secretary was accused of impairing the dignity of the Association by appearing at meetings "without a boiled shirt" and "in one of them black gowns".

Good relations with staff both at the Royal, the Mater and the University were complacent and replete. The yearly dance was well attended and without financial loss. There were no great burning issues with which to memorialise Front or hospital. Teaching at the three main Belfast

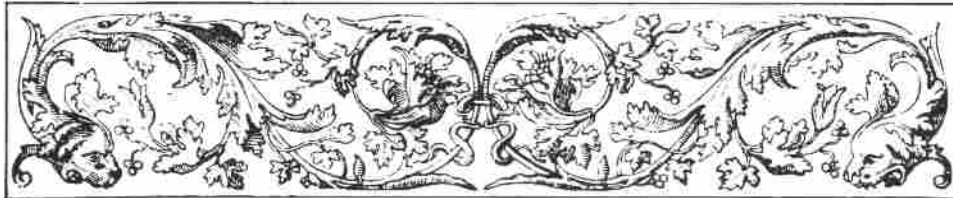
hospitals went smoothly. The Mater Infirmorum opened in 1900 and was recognised as a teaching hospital by the Queen's University soon after it received its charter.



*The Mater Infirmorum Hospital opened in 1900.*

Professor Walmsley gave his later oft repeated lecture "A Basket of Bones" for the first time. Some speakers appeared for the third or fourth time to address the Association. The medical students at University College Cork set up a similar association in 1930 and asked Belfast for advice. The same year the University refused to reduce the fee for the Residential Hostel close to the Maternity Hospital in Townsend Street. In January 215 guests attended an evening function in the Carlton in Donegall Place at a total cost of £27 10s for tea and buns. The band (included) cost £6.

No mention is made in the Minutes of the large numbers of students who attended the Rotunda in Dublin for their Obstetrics and Gynaecology course. The efforts of Professor C.G. Lowry to have the Royal Maternity Hospital built in the Royal grounds with its 100 beds successfully arrested this pilgrimage south by Belfast students.



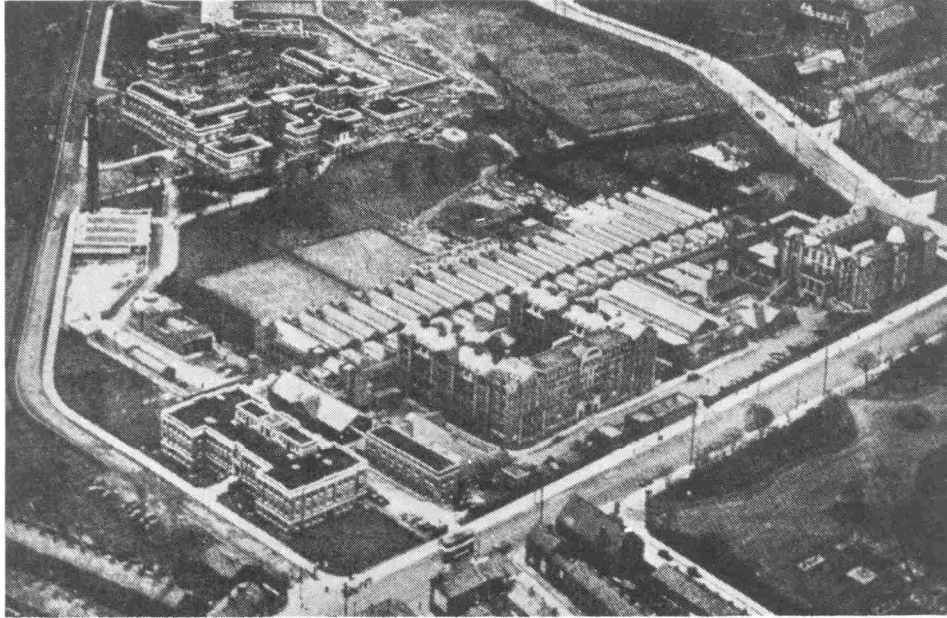
## VIII



A medical student in the mid thirties would commute between Queen's and the Royal for some of his lectures. The opening of the Institute of Pathology in 1933 provided lecture theatres, museum and reading rooms for students on the Royal site. Two decades later the Institute of Clinical Science, the Medical Library and the building for the Departments of Medicine and Surgery continued the trend. The Royal was established as the centre of clinical lectures as well as for the long established clinical teaching in the wards. On the City site, the Jubilee Maternity Hospital, opened in 1935, provided undergraduate teaching and training facilities.

In the thirties there were usually five general meetings each year usually held in the McMordie Hall. A wide variety of speakers addressed well attended and happy meetings, Professor Flynn from Zoology, Colonel Landman of the Harvard Medical School. The subject "That Queen's medical students were embryo tradesmen and as such should not be apprenticed in the University" was proposed by the Literific and opposed successfully by the B.M.S.A.

A trip to London by 35 members with the president, Sir Ian Fraser, in 1939 was



*The Royal in 1938. The Institute of Pathology stands on its own in the lower left hand part of the picture.*

*The Royal site in 1984. Mortuary mansions and the two remaining nurses huts are arrowed.*



S.R.C. Ritchie.  
 Hon Secy.  
 27/10/44

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Alexander Fleming

much enjoyed and elicited the minute that "some found it impossible to retire to bed such was their thirst for knowledge".

With the outbreak of war the committee organised a scheme to have about forty students available for blood transfusion duties in the event of an air raid. Sir John Henry Biggart in his presidential address made an impassioned plea for postgraduate education in medicine. In the same year a clinico pathological club was formed and met yearly. In 1944 Sir Ian Fraser, then a serving officer in the R.A.M.C. described the trials he had carried out with the new drug penicillin for the treatment of war wounds in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. He described the results as amazing, not only in preventing infection following trauma but also in the treatment of gonorrhoea, pneumonia and meningitis. He was followed in the same year by Sir Alexander Fleming, who spoke in the Great Hall of the University. His signature is recorded in the minute book beside that of S.R.C. Ritchie, who was the secretary at the time.

In 1933 the minutes recording a lecture on Poisoning ran as follows:— "Herbert Rouse Armstrong was a man not happy in his choice of wife. Herbert was a retired major to the outside world; at home his wife was colonel. Amongst other inconsiderate little traits, she was a strict teetotaller for him, so that it is scarcely a matter of vague wonder why Herbert, on August 4th, 1920, purchased ¼lb of powdered arsenical weedkiller. Indeed, the wonder is he did not buy ½lb of that useful commodity.

To cut a long story short, Mrs. Armstrong died on Feb. 22, 1921. Now all was peace for Herbert — no one to disturb the happy carousals, the philosophic bonhomie, the alcoholic evenings of our Mr. Armstrong. Even the advent of Friday night he could contemplate with calm, there being no Mrs. Armstrong to remind him of his bath.

But one Oswald Martin kept constantly at war with Herbert: so Herbert invited him to tea and proffered him a hot buttered scone containing of arsenic one grain. This charming act of friendship, meant solely for the gastronomic delectation of Mr. Martin, unfortunately aroused in him the most extraordinary symptoms, symptoms which in turn aroused the suspicions of one Dr. Hinck who had attended Mrs. Armstrong in her last fatal illness. Now the fat was fairly in the fire — too hot for Mr. Armstrong, who was eventually hanged for the murder of his wife on November 10th, 1921."

In the Second World War four nurses and forty eight doctors and medical students were killed.



*Professor Sir John Henry Biggart, Dean of the Medical Faculty (1944-1971).*

A Diamond Jubilee dance was held in the Students' Union in 1946 and five wives of staff members acted as "matrons".

In 1946 each medical student was given 10 clothing coupons to purchase protective clothing and the coupon allocation was considered by the committee annually for the next few years.

After the war the good ship Belfast Medical Students' Association sailed serenely on. The family atmosphere engendered by Sir John Biggart's Deanship persisted. His training in Scotland had left a canniness about his stewardship. If something had worked successfully for 20 years that was a matter of merit rather than the signal for a rush to change it. The overall staffing levels were low in relation to other universities but John Henry claimed the staff were hand picked and why employ two people to do something one good person could do? Each morning John Henry came to Queen's, had a chat with the steward at the front door (who incidentally was the entire Personnel Department for non academic staff. He had the power to hire or fire). The steward reported the latest goings on with the preclinical students and staff.

The next stop was the Faculty Office in University Square with Colleen in control, so that by the time he reached the Institute of Pathology at the Royal, he had been well briefed on the current state of affairs. His door was always open so that burning issues could be sorted out without attendant hassle or the law laid down when appropriate. In the wards, the consultants reigned supreme. Their lines of communication were the sisters - one to two wards - and the junior staff. Individual idiosyncrasies were catered for and pandered to. In one ward the ritual making of coffee necessitated adding a blob of butter to the pints of milk in a large saucepan. This was always done. Housemen were not entitled to open their car doors for them, if a registrar was present he did. Patronage was the order of the day and few wanted to rock the boat with the prospect of sinking their own careers. Committee meetings were mainly concerned with selecting speakers for the coming session and the price of the band for the annual ball.

Parliamentary nights and debates with the Literific also lapsed. The cost of living-in in the hospitals and the length of the white coat worn by students produced only minor ripples. "To the Pacific and back" or "Hospitals I have seen in America" still were recurring topics. In 1949 whether to have a bar or not at the dance necessitated a vote. More than 500 attended the dance, supper was 2s/ 6d and ice cream and lemonade was freely available for cash.

The Belfast Medical Students' Association came under the wing of the British Medical Students' Association of the parent British Medical Association. Conferences

of its Scottish region were held in Scottish Universities or at Queen's. The British Medical Students' Journal was popular. The meeting of the Scottish Council in Belfast was taken up with the burning issue of the quality of the paper in the diary and the absence of Aberdeen Medical Students' Association as well as trying to get placements for students in other hospitals during vacation.

After the advent of the National Health Service Queen's had appointed a Resident Medical Officer and this was commended. The session 1949-50 still found a debate "Should women practice medicine?" on the programme and a talk on "Hospital in other lands" but the "smoker" lapsed in favour of a hop. The annual dance regularly filled the Whitla Hall and its balconies with over 600 in 1949.

In 1953 a plane from London crashed at Nutts Corner. Four students from the faculty of medicine were killed. Their memory is preserved by the annual award of the Whitla Medal.

The President in 1950, Mr. MacLaughlin, drove a Rolls Royce with the registration BMA 1 and it was a popular student belief he had won it, not by removing tonsils on the kitchen tables of Ulster, but in a raffle run by the B.M.A. By now the B.M.A. in London provided a guest lecturer each year for the local Association from a list they provided. Mr. Ian McClure drew a packed house for his lecture "The resected rib" which drew "roars of approval from the male students" as the pre-lecture mythology painted a lurid picture of its content. The dance again drew 600 people in the Whitla Hall, the committee were later taken aback at the excessive cost of suppers at £75 and asked for a reduction in price.

Resident pupils in the Royal complained they could not get practical training in extern as non-resident pupils were appearing there to suture. Mr. I. Roddie's powers of persuasion were not sufficient to prevent a motion "that hypnotism is of value in medicine" being defeated. The then Vice-Chancellor, now Lord Ashby, gave some "comments on Medicine in Russia".

In the early fifties the attendance by staff at the meetings of committee and general meetings had fallen off to the extent that a formal staff-student meeting once a term was proposed. Students now invariably proposed and seconded votes of thanks at the general meeting.

A locally produced and edited journal for medical students was proposed by Miss Mary Vint. It was agreed that it should appear in 1952 and its first editor was Lionel Banks with Mary Vint as sub-editor.

Next year Dr. H.C. Graham M.C. known to all as "Koch" gave a lecture on his experiences in the trenches during 1914-18 with the sombre reminder that at the Somme, on the 1st July 1916 the 36 (Ulster) Division sustained 5,500 casualties after three days of fighting. He transferred to the Royal Flying Corps and later identified the body of Baron Manfred von Richthofen "The Red Baron" who had shot down eighty planes. A Canadian pilot attacked from the air while Australian machine gunners fired from the ground. The Fokker aircraft landed intact with its dead pilot. The post mortem was carried out by Dr. Graham and Colonel Tommy Sinclair, the Consulting Surgeon to the Fourth Army in France, Professor of Surgery in Queen's

1886-1923 and Pro-Chancellor in 1931. The pilot had one solitary bullet wound in his chest. There was a German claim he was shot after he landed. In his audience was at least one Spitfire pilot of the Battle of Britain fought in the skies of southern England. He was only a couple of years older than those who had come straight from school.

The discontent of the resident pupils at having to shave the nether regions of patients prior to some operations was noted as was the slow infiltration of housemen into the students' huts. The student hut still stands, painted green just beside the mortuary and now used as a telephone exchange. They were christened the Mortuary Mansions. They shared equal notoriety with the twenty odd corrugated iron huts which housed some of the more adventurous nurses. Only two remain today, most were demolished to make way for gynaecological wards to the left of the covered way from Musson House to the main hospital building.

The honorary secretary (much to his distress) read the minutes amidst a conspiracy of complete silence at the next meeting. The then Vice-President of the day's daughter was subsequently one of the last four candidates from which America chose her first female astronaut. The administrator at the Royal, yes *the* administrator, assured the committee the infiltration by housemen in the students' huts would stop, but considered it was an essential part of the medical training to "prep" patients. There was one secretary and typist for two ward units and the hospital almoner and her single assistant ministered to the social needs of all the patients.

By now each year could elect two male and one female student to the committee. The chairman of the Medical Staff at the Royal concurred with the opinion shaving the pubic and anal regions was a part of medical training and the committee decided it was a matter for the Hospitals Authority.

A Canadian student wondered why there was a compulsory post-graduate houseman year as the University had a contract with him he could qualify into practice without the compulsory extra houseman year as ordained by the Medical Act of 1950. The committee was inclined to take the requirement of the extra year as "fait accompli" but the Canadian wrote to the Secretary of the General Medical Council. Today the same Canadian, happy to be surrounded by the better things in life in British Columbia, including a huge herd of pedigree Hereford cattle in his estate, speaks with great affection of his student days in Belfast and his digs in Donegall Pass.

More attention however was not being paid to student comfort. Lockers for the ladies, additional towels for the men. They wrote to other schools concerning the "preping" issue. Belfast turned out to be unique in retaining the custom. An eight piece orchestra played at the dance from 9.00 p.m. to 2.00 a.m. and cost £25.00.

Snakes Alive got off the ground and saw the light of day. The first proposal for such a magazine was made by a committee member, J.H. Biggart, in 1927. Articles were vetted by the committee and any with a hint of contention rejected. The editor was to be elected at the AGM of the Association, the business manager was to be the assistant secretary of the Belfast Medical Students' Association. Miss Bolt now assumed the editorial chair. The first issue was a great success. In the event 300 copies were printed. The first editorial by Miss Bolt is even more apt today than it was then. She echoed the sentiments of Sir Ian Fraser at the oration to open the hospital

teaching session at the Royal "If anything is to be added to the curriculum, let it be spare time". Some past editors now find themselves in places as far apart as Belfast, Niagara Falls, Calgary; two are in Australia. There were generally five or six general meetings of the Association per session. The Games Fund of the University asked for a levy of 2s/ 6d per member to build up a central kitty to improve amenities for the student body. The Belfast Medical Students' Association didn't like it. They saw the Dean, he saw the Vice-Chancellor. The Front was undeterred by the representations and insisted on 2s/ 6d. The President of the Students' Representative Council wrote that "one large society which issued membership cards without charge and paid affiliation fees to a London based society was being subsidised by the rest of the student body". The President of SRC was asked for an explanation. The Association readily accepted the implied rebuke, refused to pay the 2s/ 6d levy per member, and an article in Snakes Alive would clearly show the benefits from Queen's association with the parent British Medical Students' Society. The article would further point out SRC's failure to help medical students. A motion of no confidence in SRC was quickly passed. This in spite of the treasurer in the previous year's general report acknowledging a grant of £75 from SRC had made all the difference financially and the medical sub-committee of the SRC were BMSA's own people.

The Dean checked up with the committee about reports of rowdiness in first year chemistry lectures. This was explained by the committee that as interest waned, rowdiness increased. Certainly there was a tradition of rowdiness in the first year lectures. The Professor of Botany made no secret of his dislike for medical students. His tone was brusque, his manner pompous. Many will remember his postcards with eight word answers to fundamental botanical questions, his barked command "cover your numbers" so that a roll could be taken of those numbers still exposed and the names of those who were thought to be the origin of various noises were noted with a promise that the incident would be remembered in March at examination time. In the event it was all bluster. His bark was worse than his bite. Bacteriology he readily summarised. Medical students will have no difficulty in remembering the three great types of microorganism. First there is the coccus or billiard ball, then there is the bacillus or cigarette type and finally there is the spirillum or corkscrew type.

The Professor of Zoology was Errol Flynn's father and enjoyed a joke. He was in the habit of getting one of the fifty six cinemas in Belfast to show Errol's latest epic late at night. He was unaffected by his son's single handed conquests of the Japanese army or shooting down most of the German Air Force. In Chemistry, suitably treated beakers of urine illustrating ketosis were circulated and invariably passed back filled to the brim, so that the girls who always sat in the front row had the delicate task of balancing the beakers back on the rostrum at the front. A veteran of the Indian ocean naval force (who originally hailed from north Antrim but had lost his rural accent overboard near the Seychelles) suddenly stood up in a lecture to demand (after 45 minutes on the subject) "Good God man what is an alpha particle?". It was all benign and today the National Health Service still goes on without its doctors knowing that "a seed is ripened integumented megasporangium".

Later in the year the committee decided to pay the levy to the Games Fund and accepted the argument that the Fund needed help as so many societies were now



applying for grants. The Association tried and failed to have the levy dropped to one shilling for non-athletic clubs. The 2s/ 6d in the event was included in the cost of the next annual dance ticket. Regional meetings of the British Medical Students' Association were attended in Liverpool and Leeds and the Belfast branch changed its affiliation from the Scottish to the more active Northern Division.

The ingress of 5s- per member from the Games Fund not only silenced the criticism but prompted the suggestion of an annual dinner. However this was countered by the suggestion of two annual dinners, one for the men and one for the women, as it was felt after dinner speeches and discussion would be unsuitable for ladies. In the event the suggestion was defeated. Snakes Alive finances were good enough to send a delegate (but two attended) to a conference of medical school journal editors in London. The profits from the Annual Dance funded a free Hop.

Snakes Alive continued to flourish throughout the fifties while Qubist was the Students' Representative Council's weekly journal. Snakes was a very different magazine from recent issues. Later, Bernard McLaverty, now well known for Cal and other novels was a technician in the Anatomy Department and published his first short stories in Snakes. Two thousand reprints of a symposium on the drug industry were purchased by a major drug company and distributed to the profession. University and hospital staff contributed numerous articles.

The Association annually provided a float for the Rag procession. Mock operations and POP was applied on the earlier ones but by the late fifties the activity was mainly throwing bags of flour at the public and young secretaries were hoisted onto the float accompanied by suitable screams of satisfaction as their companions were left in the crowd. A conscientious door to door collection in the suburbs in the morning preceded the procession which brought the centre of Belfast to a tolerated standstill. The gasp which rose from the crowd in the flour filled air of Castle Junction, when the 1% of the body surface (which makes all the difference to the rule of nines in burns) slipped from the half suit (in the sagittal plane) a male student was wearing, has never been repeated. He was climbing onto the platform at the top of a large steam roller at the time.

The names of today's consultants, well respected general practitioners and current Professors in Australia, Canada, America, London and Belfast all appear in the committee membership. Preclinical students were included in the delegations to the national conference in London and to the regional conference in Leeds.

Ties were 10s 6d and scarves £1 6s. There was an attempt to get a wash hand basin in the bridal suite, a double room in the Mortuary Mansions and in the girls' room in the East Wing.

The panel at the Any Questions night, named after a popular radio programme of the day were faced with such burning issues as:—

Should doctors marry doctors?

Are mannerisms in teachers an attribute or disadvantage?

Does the study of medicine harden women and make them less affectionate wives or is the woman's place only in the home?

Is Botany an essential part of the medical curriculum?

A female student reported the loss of an article of underclothing at the hospital laundry to the Committee and the secretary was instructed to write to the hospital for a replacement. The annual dance was still popular and as the Health and Safety at Work Act was unknown, crowds of over 500 danced in the Whitla Hall blissfully unaware of future legislation. The free bar was now proving to be so popular to all and sundry that the committee went to great lengths to keep it semi-private. The decorations used the previous year were searched for in Riddell Hall before new ones were purchased. Ernie of the Anatomy Department was appointed barman in the private bar at the dance with supplies of £15 of "liquor". He was backed up by four commissionaires from the British Legion, the University Steward, the Whitla Hall porter and six other porters ("to work before and after") while the guests and committee had their buffet supper in the Old Staff Common Room away from the gaze of the members. A present day Professor of Cardiology in America was tasked with keeping an eye on the commissionaires. Preclinical students were reprimanded for selling tickets to students who were not members of the Medical Faculty.

The charge of the University for £10 worth of damage to the grounds and shrubs on the night of the dance was countered by the plea that the Association had only hired the Whitla Hall, not the grounds as well.

The only serious issue was the ruling "that only colonial and foreign students could carry out their houseman's year abroad" which was resisted but later upheld by the British Medical Students' Association and the issue dropped locally. In the fifties the emigration of doctors which had always been a feature of our graduates reached 40 or more percent of the total number graduating. The National Health Service was just beginning to increase staffing levels but many could not see much future in Ulster. They could go almost anywhere in the United States with the exception of Florida and California and anywhere in Canada into general practice. Those who got their Membership or Fellowship (often at their first attempt) went to hospital jobs and now there are many Senior Consultants scattered across Canada and the United States, often holding a clinical teaching appointment as well. The financial reward of practice elsewhere was an undoubted factor. Today this door is closed but anyone then suggesting that unemployment of medical doctors was even a remote possibility would have been regarded as unbalanced in mind.

The fifties passed quietly. A written apology from Mr. R. Shanks, B.Sc. for absence from a committee meeting was recorded and accepted in 1955. The advisability of holding an annual dinner was accepted. Doubts were still expressed as to the effect of the speeches on ladies present. The secretary's report in 1956 was greeted with the usual uproar, fireworks and water sprays. The committee now consisted of three members from each year totalling 18, seven student office bearers and President and Senior Staff Treasurer. They welcomed the SRC proposal that students should wear gowns at lectures and examinations. Students on the Royal site however should be excused.

A general meeting was told that the amount of damages awarded against hospitals in 1948 was £7,500; in 1953, £153,000, now it is nearly £20,000,000 per

annum. Factors given included the decrease in status of doctors from civil servants, and of their infallibility by the general public. The hospitals supported like the Royal by voluntary subscription before 1948 were not liable for action taken by their honorary members of staff.

There was little of serious contention. Parking space was asked for students at the RVH and refused. Ten years previously only three students in one year had a car and those were easily parked under the King Edward Building.

The grant from the Games Fund was deplored - £16.00 but the grant was given on the number of paid-up members. So then as now the membership as distinct from the potential membership was the vital factor. The SRC was cited as having the audacity to expect the Association to make a profit from its "Hops". The representation of female students (a total of 11 out of eighty in one year) still was the subject of prolonged debate.

Presidents reflected the growing international origins of the staff. Professor Pritchard (Australian) 1954, Professor, now Sir Graham Bull (South African) 1955, Mr. T. Kennedy (London University) 1956, Professor Greenfield (English) 1957, Professor G. Dick (Scottish) 1958, Professor O. Wade (Welsh) 1961, Professor T.K. Marshall (Yorkshire) 1962, Dr. R. Womersley (South African) 1962, Professor Vallance Owen (Welsh) 1968 and Professor, now Sir Peter Froggatt (Trinity College, Dublin) 1969. The presidency was not offered lightly; as many as six candidates were proposed and after the proposer had painted a glowing picture of his choice a vote was taken.

The 2s/ 6d levy still caused difficulty in its collection and at times friction with the S.R.C. The grant from the Games Fund fell invariably far short of expectation and was deplored. On the other hand, teams were sent to compete for the Provincial Hospitals Cup in rugby and delegates to the meetings of the British Medical Students' Association in England. A complementary ticket to the Rowing Club dinner was passed to a female committee member. Subsequent investigation revealed the dinner was "homosexual rather than heterosexual" and a male member attended instead.

The first annual dinner was held in 1958. By now J.D. Biggart and D. Hadden were to the fore in the Association. The Games Fund grant had risen to £40. A delegation had gone to the Vice Chancellor to try and get the grant from the Games Fund increased. The Vice Chancellor was unimpressed. A mole let the Committee know the Vice Chancellor remarked they were "a sort of trade union" after they had gone. The name of the mole was not recorded. There were however no resignations.

The raising of the 2s/ 6d levy for the Games Fund provided a yearly reminder of the Association's link with the rest of the student body. More teaching was given on the Royal site but the preclinical students were still on the University site. Their lukewarm contributions to the Association were at times deplored by the clinical members. The committee at times found the stretch of one leg in the Royal and the other in Queen's a difficult balancing act but they could turn it to their advantage in the search for funds.

The Clinical Conference of the British Medical Students' Association was held

in Belfast in 1959. It lasted 4 full days. The Hospital Management Committee at the Royal gave £250, drug firms £220, University Finance Committee £240 and the Games Fund £50. Nineteen mainland universities were represented and the total cost to each delegate was £4, including travel.

Meanwhile at the Mater Infirmorum Hospital the Mater Students' Association flourished during the fifties and early sixties. It had evening meetings and a well attended Annual Dinner and acted as a Staff Student Association.

The Presidential address became more rowdy each year. The outgoing President brought his wife as she received a bouquet of flowers. He received a committee photograph. The incoming President's wife came because her curiosity had been aroused by what she considered was the outgoing President's wife exaggerated lurid account of the proceedings and to share the undoubted honour his students had bestowed upon her husband. The incoming President's wife found the reports were not exaggerated. One even wore a wide-brimmed hat to find sundry thrown articles were lodged in the brim as the lecture progressed. It was not until 1979 that Professor Ingrid Allen had the opportunity to bring her husband. He did not wear a hat.

The "form" however was well known. There were sundry mutterings from the ladies but it was all taken in reasonable spirit. The only one to have a genuine grievance was Mrs. Myrtle Beattie who was the cleaner in the Anatomy Department left with the mess. She was however tolerant; she shared with the general public an affinity with the medical students knowing they would soon be doctors. Their own doctor was in all likelihood a graduate of Queen's, he was all right and had probably behaved in a similar way. The yearly subscription to the Medical Defence Union was two guineas; now it is £268 and this may be one indicator of the public esteem enjoyed by the profession.

Eventually the venue of the Presidential address was changed to the theatre in the Institute of Clinical Science in the hope that the upholstered seats would be conducive to good behaviour and some improvement was recorded.

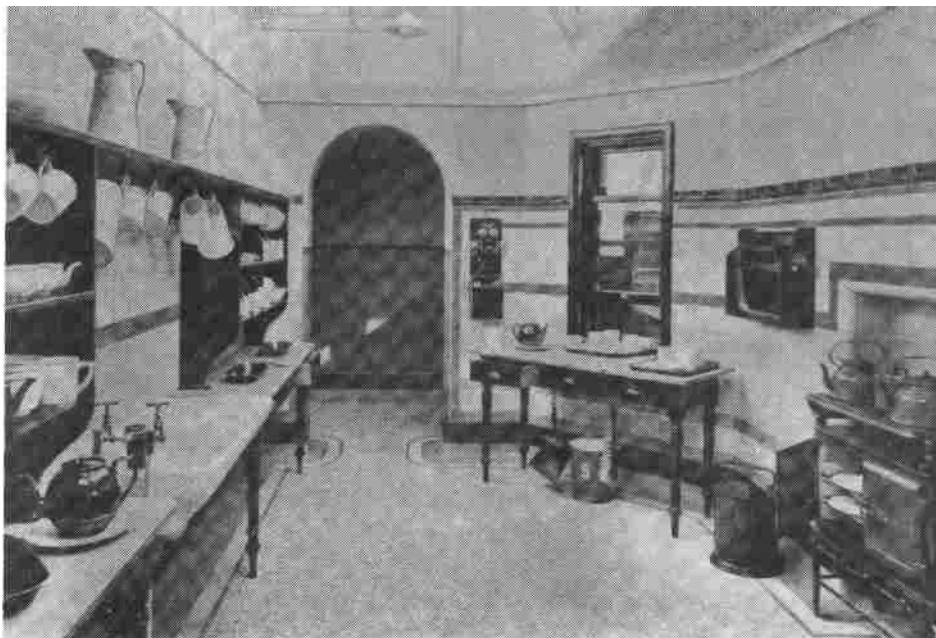
The Front in its turn had a benign, at times irritated, tolerance of the medical students. Its main line of communication was with the now much more powerful Students' Representative Council. A letter from the Secretary of the University insisting there should be no wrecking of the Whitla Hall or its balcony (which was freely available during the dances) and no drinking in cars outside at the Annual Dance stimulated the committee to place a notice in the foyer of the hall "Licentious behaviour at an angle of less than 45° is obscene". At the Royal, Sister Dynes retired after 44 years as Night Sister, often chasing medical students out of the ward kitchens where they invariably were after the nurses' supper.

The Northern Ireland Faculty of the College of General Practitioners quickly established a good relationship with the Association and the students were encouraged to enter their essay competitions and attend their meetings. One year Snakes was in the doldrums, the next year it had a profit of £38.00. Flower shops were asked for flowers to decorate the Whitla Hall in return for an advertisement in Snakes to keep the cash flow liquid.

The Dance had a theme, one year a splendid Eiffel Tower denoted a Parisienne



*"What do you think you are doing nurse?"  
Diana was Night Sister at the Royal for  
44 years.*



*A ward kitchen in 1903. To remain virtually unchanged until the 1960s. Sister's Office was the table at the window overlooking the ward.*

evening, or the Nile or a wild west show. Soup at the end of the Dance was refused as the cost (6d) was considered excessive.

The Management Committee of the Royal wrote regarding behaviour at the Hops in Bostock. The Student Committee wrote to Belfast Corporation to complain that the bus fare of 2 pence to Queen's and to the Royal was excessive. Careful control of money was a virtue with successive committees. They made sure there wasn't too much in the kitty or the ever watchful Games Fund would reduce their grant.

There were frequent dances and dinners in the University. The Students' Representative Council, the Students' Union (until it disappeared), the Women Students' Hall, Literific, Engineers, Dental and Agricultural Societies and the Sporting Clubs all held annual dinners and or dances.

In the sixties the student sitting room was refurbished at a cost of £2,000 and the resident students' room in the East Wing had £750 allocated for the same purpose. A T.V. set was installed and the editor of Snakes had a separate office in the East Wing.

Prepping of patients again raised its razor's head to the committee's annoyance. By now a new set of names filled the minute books. F. Murphy (now in Ottawa), F. Bereen, I. Adair, R.C. Lowry, T. Doak (now in Toronto) and P.J. Taylor (now in Calgary). Dennis Boyle had vacated the Editor's chair to be succeeded by Celia Arnold and then J.P. McKenna who was followed by Mr. D. Jenkins (now in University College Cork). Peter Paisley (now in Australia) was the first occupant of the office in the East Wing and he quickly let it be known it was not for others to sleep in.

The British Students' Tuberculosis Foundation was given £100 from the student body and all but one of the collectors were medical students.

The general content of the evening lectures changed. There was still occasional accounts of "My visit to the Soviet Union" or "Hospitals of Nigeria" which produced the quote that the "hospitals in Nigeria were just like Harley Street; there were always vultures near at hand". Generals from the Royal Army Medical Corps came on several occasions, usually to talk about atomic warfare and to commend the Army as a worthwhile career. Around this time the Medical Sub Unit alone in the Officers Training Corps numbered 130. Students found it a source not only of income but an opportunity to test their high spirits and match their wits against a succession of Army instructors and regular commanding officers. They often wished they were back in the sanity and comfort of their battalions as they endeavoured to clear up some of the situations intelligent and cunning cadets left them to sort out after military exercises. One cadet plunged Ballynahinch into darkness one evening as his truck knocked down a pole carrying the supply. He and his squad proceeded to the exercise, one is now in Niagara Falls, another in Vancouver.

The theme of general meetings were directed more to current medical problems. Abortion was debated with the University Law Society. Dr. Connelly talked about viruses and their possible implication in neoplastic disease. "The use and abuse of drugs", Symposia on Drug Firms, The Houseman's Year and The National Health Service were well attended and useful.

On the sporting side students from British Guyana presented the Guyanese Cup

for inter-year rugby competition (while the Belfast team won the National Medical Schools seven a side competition for the first time in 1964). It was possible then to travel by air to London for two guineas, standby on a plane leaving at 11.15 p.m. The tone of the rest room was to be improved by the provision of a chess set (half the cost from the Dental Students' Association) in the hope the poker players would go elsewhere while chess was played. The Malaysian students provided a cup for inter-year hockey competition. On occasion the dinner was so well supported that some students could not obtain tickets.

Professor P.T. Crymble (President in 1909) presented a Vice-President's chain of office to the Association donated by former presidents in the mid sixties.

The Dean's birthday party had started in 1952 with a loaf of bread with a large candle stuck in it and a chorus of Happy Birthday. The next year it was a proper iced cake with candles and everyone had a drink. This modest beginning has built up to a four hour highly professional show as far as the lighting and the visual effects go; the content has however changed. John Henry, the Dean of the day, supervised the yearly arrangements and the programmes were printed in the Pathology Department. There was quite a to do one year when a professor's induction procession tried to get in to the party without a specific invitation. More recently the bill for lunch-time drinks in the East Wing for the cast has wiped out the emolument (after tax) the Dean receives as little recompense for the slings and arrows of his outraged colleagues when they fail to get everything they could think to ask for in the annual departmental grant. The situation improved at least for the Dean's pocket book when the proceedings were moved to the afternoon.

The Dinner went from strength to strength. The numbers seeking tickets precluded the Great Hall. This was good news for the waitresses who were getting a bit fed up with the proceedings but bad news for the University porters. They were there to guard the Great Hall and the evening always produced some incident or other to be related later with bated breath. In the event the Threepenny Bit was chosen (a coin in use at the time had the same shape). They counted the broken glasses (eight dozen) and said never again. So it was back to the Whitla Hall. After the Dinner it was now post haste for all to discos held usually in the students' huts at the City Hospital, only once to B.M.A. House, the Sports Club at the R.V.H. and now Mulhouse.

The Irish Medical Students' Association came on the scene in 1965 and the Belfast branch had no difficulty in co-existing with the British Association as well. The former embraced 800 students at University College Dublin, 650 at the Royal College of Surgeons, 550 at Queen's, 400 at Trinity College Dublin, Cork and Galway had 200 each. (The size of each year in Queen's was then about eighty).

In the late sixties and early seventies delegates travelled to the regional and national meetings of the British Medical Students' Association. The national seven a side rugby competition brought 130 players and supporters to Belfast in its turn and was a great success.

The hospitals had now made the wearing of white coats compulsory so that five years of negotiation ended with the students having to buy their own. There was now an International Federation of Medical Students' Associations which met in Edinburgh



*The Dean's birthday party during the mid 1950s.*





and both the Belfast and Irish Associations sent delegates. The O'Mally cup for seven a side rugby between Irish Medical Schools appeared.

White coats were purchased and given out but the money for them didn't come back as some mysteriously vanished. The disappearing white coats, the eight dozen glasses put a strain on finances but delegates still attended the seven a side competition in Liverpool and the Annual General Meeting in London. The proposal that the Vice-President of the Belfast Medical Students' Association should have a sabbatical year was passed but not implemented by the University. This practice was now the norm for officers in the Students' Representative Council. The unique situation in Belfast not having a Staff Student Committee was noted once more but the official line was it wasn't needed. The new Queen's Elms Halls of Residence eased the problems of having the Annual General Meeting of the British Medical Students' Association in Belfast.

In the sixties the general meetings were still concerned with issues of medical practice although the travelogue type of lecture still persisted. One presidential address covered 12,000 miles of travel. Subsequently the professor in question was described as holding his chair "in absentia" at the Annual Dinner. An account of his meeting with the Vice-Chancellor when he asked for yet more leave elicited the answer to the question "Professor, who does your work when you're away?" "Vice-Chancellor, the same people who do it when I'm here".

The Association kept its links with both the British Medical Students' Association and the active Irish Medical Students' Association. It provided student officers for both associations. The British Medical Students' Association came to Belfast and Sir Ian Fraser presided as he did when the British Medical Association came to Belfast some years later.

The Gibson Cup appeared for Irish inter-medical school debate. The Irish Medical Students' Association now organised successful Clinico Pathological Conferences. Trinity won the first one.

Snakes got into debt; at one time to the tune of £395. Symposia were held on Therapeutic Abortion (with the Law Society), Medical education, Deficiencies in finance should not impede the development of the R.V.H. as a teaching hospital. The secretary recorded the poor attendance of staff at the latter by noting apologies were received from the entire preclinical and clinical staff with two exceptions.

The developing permissive society stimulated a suggestion that pre-marital intercourse should be debated with the Nurses Association. The title was changed to "Women's place in medicine is in nursing", later to be changed to "This house disapproves of women doctors", to be changed back to that "This house considers that women can best serve the Medical Profession under the auspices of the Nursing Profession". The four speakers, two nurses and two students, all turned up to oppose the motion. The quick readjustments in prepared speeches reading yes for no were persuasive enough to carry the motion by 55 votes to 35.

The Irish medical students now produced a journal to add to Snakes Alive and a British Medical Students' journal.

The Dinner came back to the Great Hall. The Dance still provided enjoyment for huge crowds; on one occasion recorded as 1050 but this seems an overestimate. Records of financial profit or loss were not specific as to exact amounts. There were complaints that the men were smoking while dancing but the description that the darkened Whitla Hall with the glowing cigarette ends resembled Blackpool Illuminations was deemed an exaggeration.

Damage to Mortuary Mansions amounted to £350 on one bizarre night. The students found it hard to rally around the culprits. The Dean persuaded the Management Committee of the Royal not to take the matter to court and presented the local committee with the bill. They in turn were less than happy with this, but suggested all resident pupils should pay an addition 5s to their residential fee. In one session five new professors were ragged. Police and newspapers were both informed in advance.

The Belfast Association threatened to take the Editor of Gown to court for libel if an article critical of medical students was not retracted. The Editor of Gown failed to tremble and the medical students were out-bluffed. On the other hand the Editor of Snakes had to go and square things with a consultant in the corridor as his feelings were aggrieved over an article in Snakes. Nowadays many are aggrieved but few are visited.

The proliferation of cups continued with one for the winners of the Irish Medical Students' Association versus the London Hospitals XV. A demonstrators' cup was bought in the old Smithfield. It had been awarded for pigeon racing in Yorkshire, but now was for competition between the senior and junior years in the dissecting room. Ernie and George tried to buff it up, most of the plating came off and it looked suitably ancient. Eventually while the games provided good sport, someone tramped on the cup; it crumpled and later disappeared. The Boots Cup appeared for the winners of Clinical Pathological Conferences within the British Medical Students' Association.



## IX

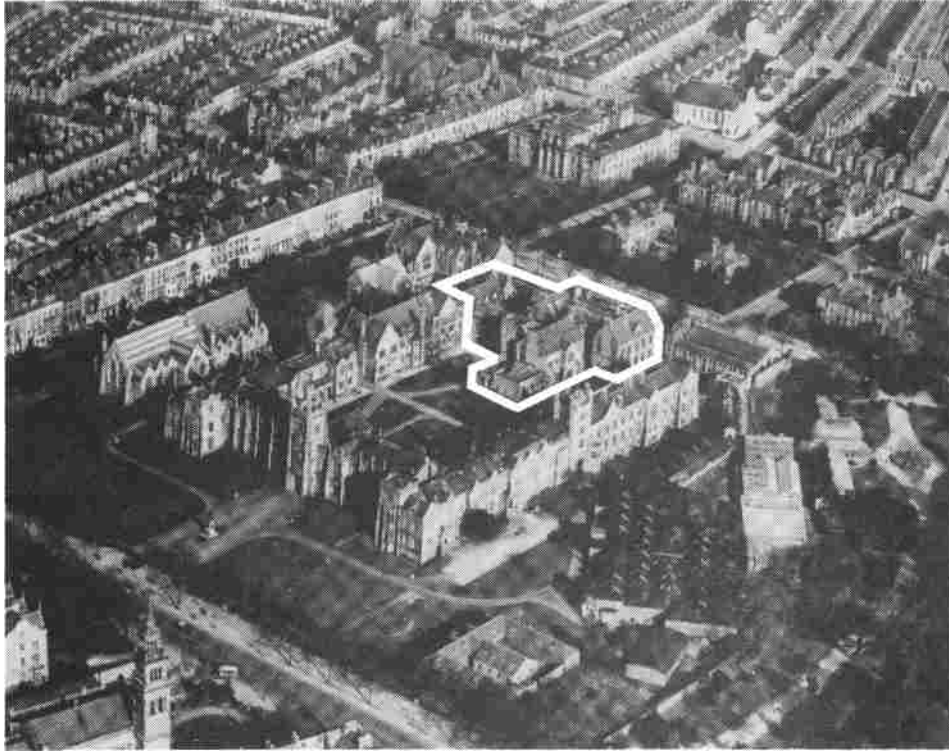
A medical student in the late sixties would be going to lectures in the new Medical Centre on the Lisburn Road. The final link with teaching with the Queen's quadrangle was severed when the preclinical departments moved a century after the old medical buildings were put up. The splendid new Medical Biology Centre was built



*Professors Douglas Harrison (right) and Henry Barcroft ragged in 1935.*

*Off to the Demonstrators' Cup. Professors Jack Pritchard (left) and David Greenfield are in a landing craft borrowed from the Officers Training Corps.*





*An aerial view of The Queen's University of Belfast (1938). The medical buildings are clustered at the eastern end of the quadrangle.*

on the site of the old Institute for the Deaf, the Dumb and the Blind and designed to provide for classes of one hundred and sixty medical students. The Medical Biology Centre was the forerunner of other Queen's buildings adjacent to the City Hospital. The Whitla Medical Building, the Dunluce Health Centre were opened as the rumours grew stronger that there was to be a new City Hospital to cost the enormous total of seven million pounds. Some years later the University Grants Committee recommended two additional floors were added to accommodate clinical teaching, the present brown band near the base of the tower. Its foundation stone was laid in 1971 and it is now in the process of opening (1985).

The space left vacant at Queen's was filled by the Social Science Building and the Administration Building. The latter's silhouette has the appearance of a paddle-less Mississippi steam boat to those leaving the Great Hall from the Medical Dinner with half-closed eyes.

At the Royal, Biggart House was opened across Broadway and housed resident medical students. The building itself being designated part of the hospital so that the regulations that pupils were resident within the hospital could still be fulfilled.

The campus unrest of the American universities did not spill over the Atlantic to Queen's in any physical form. Students wanted more say in any proposed curriculum

changes and in control of their day to day activities. In the Medical Faculty there was a change in Dean. Professor, now Sir Peter Froggatt succeeded Sir John Henry Biggart. The Faculty agreed the number of medical students in each year should be increased to 160. The staff of Botany, Zoology, Physics and Chemistry still retained membership as the course remained six years long and they could have a major, if not dominant, role if they had attended Faculty or voted in the Dean's election. In the event they did neither. The teaching circle centred on the Royal with the Medical Biology Complex and the Mater Infirmorum on its geographical circumference became trapezoid as successive departments moved to the City Hospital site and then stellate as the students (now 160 per year) were taught in increasing numbers at the Ulster Hospital, Musgrave Park Hospital and country hospitals. The Northern Ireland Hospitals Authority was replaced by Boards. It was fair that these hospitals should have an input into decisions on clinical teaching through the forum of the Faculty as should Craigavon, the Waveney and Altnagelvin. They assumed an increasing role not only in undergraduate teaching but became centres for postgraduate education under the aegis of the Northern Ireland Council for Postgraduate Medical Education.

There was an increasing lobby to abolish first year even though the content of the courses taught had changed greatly over the years. Routine teaching of Physics, Chemistry and Biology disappeared in the late seventies. This allowed a reorganisation of the membership of Faculty with more hospitals staff represented. The decision to increase the student numbers was welcomed by the University Grants Committee who recommended the injection of greatly increased government funding into Queen's Medical Faculty for staff and buildings. The number of medical teaching staff was increased and new departments like Medical Genetics, Otorhinolaryngology, Geriatrics and Ophthalmics were set up about this time.

The Belfast Medical Students' Association continued with its general meetings. A Mrs. McHenry came to the Medical Biology Centre to give a talk with her husband on antiques. She is remembered for "her gold-sequined trouser suit, the like of which the Medical Biology Centre had never seen". The students did their bit for the swinging sixties by the males growing their hair long and the girls ruining the textile industry by wearing mini skirts. This presented no great problems in the preclinical years but consultants at the hospitals told them to get their hair cut and the girls, in spite of the alleviating effects of tights, to lengthen their skirts.

The odd bit of sand got into the lubricating oil of the machinery of communication between the Belfast Medical Students' Association and the Students' Representative Council in their large new Union Building with its huge halls and several full-time sabbatical officers. In 1970 the medical students felt they were getting little in the way of creature comfort or amenity out of their enrolment fees. The Chief Administrator of the Royal (they were now many) offered £500 to refurbish the students' room if the Students' Representative Council would do likewise, remarking that wards 10-20 would be demolished along with the rest room in 1980 anyway.

Snakes Alive asked for gossip from each year. The seventies saw better relations with Students' Representative Council. The increased interest taken by the medicals was reciprocated and many students were recorded "as having intercourse with the President of Students' Representative Council".

In the late sixties Snakes Alive rose again like a phoenix due to the energy of a new editor (P. Curran). The Association elected a psychiatrist as President, the first of that speciality in its history. It was also the first Presidential address to have the services of a golden labrador gun dog. The President had rehearsed the dog in the afternoon in the North Theatre of the Medical Biology Centre to retrieve a bean bag. In the evening after he had explained at length why he had embraced his speciality, the dog was sent to recover the bag. It got very annoyed to find the bag which had been hidden under a certain seat had disappeared. It growled loudly with convincing menace at the deception. In the subsequent confusion it tried to bite the psychiatrist. The appearance of the bean bag from another part of the theatre further added to the dog's annoyance, while its owner became perplexed. This was the last occasion a not so dumb animal appeared to assist the speaker with his address. The dog got, and enjoyed, a sustained burst of applause.

The sexual habits of female undergraduates in Aberdeen were laid bare at a general meeting. A subsequent Presidential address dealt with "The breast in four continents" while a failure of the projector to project "left the audience groping in the dark for several enjoyable minutes".

The main course "Coq au vin" at a Dinner elicited the minute that the "Coq" was in abundance but not so the "au vin". The attendance at one Dinner was as low as 45.

The Irish Medical Students' Association had greater staying power than its British counterpart. Its Clinical Pathological Conferences persisted and were successful. Its journal survived but like the local Snakes appealed for contributions. The National Health Students' Association appeared on the scene as the National Union of Students grew in strength. The European Economic Community Medical Student Liaison Committee met in Dublin and no doubt there was a world congress somewhere as well, but Belfast was not represented at the world forum.

The British Medical Students' Association however were in trouble evidenced by the cancellation of its seven a side rugby tournament in Cardiff. This apathy culminated in its dissolution in 1974 and submersion into the National Association of Health Students of the National Union of Students. All was not well with the finances of the Belfast branch. The Annual Dance was cancelled due to "financial implications". Snakes Alive now cost 15p. The Belfast Association made £29 from the sale of stethoscopes in spite of the same instrument being on sale down town at a cheaper price and repeated the exercise a few years later.

The enforced cancellation of a meeting, to be addressed by an Army Medical Officer on a medical subject, due to protests from other organisations resulted in the Association re-asserting its apolitical nature and resenting the interference of an outside body. This was the only occasion in the Association's history that anything of a political nature came within its sphere of influence.

The first joint meeting with the local British Medical Association branch took place and was successful and this liaison continued when the Annual Dinner adjourned for further refreshment and a disco to B.M.A. House. Fifteen pounds worth of damage there was reported to the Committee happily without a request for payment. In subsequent years however the invitation was not renewed. The

subsequent post dinner discos reverted to the City Huts.

International Women's Year brought with it not only the first woman President, Professor Florence McKeown, but also a debate "A woman's place is in the bed and not beside it" (Society benefits more from the male in medicine than from the female). Only one female medical student supported her obviously chauvinistic daddy, a Consultant Physician from the Royal, by voting for the motion he had proposed.

A folk evening in the Sports Centre at the Royal costing 50p provoked a letter signed by twenty students who attended "that the supposed musicians babbled nonsense".

Blood rag week and a collection of toys for the patients in the Children's Hospitals were well supported.

The most successful meeting of the decade however was held in the Medical Biology Centre. The motion was that "biochemistry needs medicine more than medicine needs the biochemist". A biochemist referred to only as Max drew thunderous applause every time he paused in a half hour speech, only because the audience thought his speech was finished. One speaker with alcohol induced dysphonia took five minutes to say absolutely nothing, and a senior biochemist is recorded as looking as if his job was at stake on the result. All ended well with a majority of over 170 in favour of Max's proposition in an audience of over 200.

The liaison with the Northern Ireland Faculty of the Royal College of General Practitioners was maintained in a healthy state. The main Clinico Pathological Conference was now locally organised and embraced the General Practitioners, the British Medical Association, the Women's Medical Federation, the Community Physicians and the medical students. This still remains one of the best and most enjoyable events in the medical calendar. The Belfast Medical Students' Association kept up its affiliation with the Irish Medical Students' Association but didn't send the £50 asked for as an affiliation fee for several successive years at the end of that decade, no doubt hoping their book keeping left something to be desired.

Today the Association quietly goes on. Now the students' first contact with the University is in the Medical Biology Centre where a crowded curriculum ensures their only release is to the Union for lunch. There is now little sense of identification with the Students' Union or with the Students' Representative Council. The committee of the Belfast Medical Students' Association still considers its grant (now £800) inadequate. The dominant position of the medical students within the total student population is no more. Staff student relations are vested in the Clinical and Preclinical Board.

In the first half of this century medical students held the presidency of the Students' Representative Council over twenty times. Three years in succession when the Council was set up, 1900-1903, then 1906-1913, 1925-1928, 1930-1932, and then sporadically until 1951. The number of medical students who have presided over the Council since then could be counted on the fingers of one hand. The geographical spread of the clinical years in various hospitals, the provision of the Mulhouse and Biggart facilities at the Royal have further stretched the link.

It is now however a fact of life that the Union is no longer the centre of their

undergraduate universe for medical students. The facilities available to them in the hospitals — restaurants, recreation and accommodation, grows yearly. However a few years ago the Association was generous in its support of the University's Development Appeal, contributing over £500 towards the cost of a new accommodation block to be built at the Queen's Elms.

In some ways the wheel has come a full circle from the turn of the century. Then S.T. Irwin, B.A., later Sir S.T. Irwin, surgeon at the Royal Victoria Hospital, remembered today by the theatre named in his memory, deplored the lack of Halls of Residence as a factor militating against the average student's full enjoyment of and participation in University life. He was giving evidence to the Robertson Commission on the Irish Universities in 1902. Now their success seems to have a similar effect.

Another legacy of the medical president's representations is the membership of Senate available to the Student President of the Students' Representative Council (if a graduate), after Queen's received its charter. It was the first University in the Kingdom to do so. Since 1982 two students are in membership.

Mr W.W.D. Thomson, B.A. from Co. Down unusually educated at Campbell, but later Professor Sir W.W.D. Thomson who held the Chair of Medicine in Queen's for over a quarter of a century, was the first Student President to take his seat on Senate.

Today the general meetings of the Association are few and far between, the boisterous but usually harmless evenings of the Presidential address of years gone by are now no more. Recently sporadic attempts to revive them have floundered. The distance (about a mile) from the Royal to the Medical Biology Centre and from the latter to the Elms Halls of Residence seem much longer on a wet winter's night. The curriculum gets evermore crowded. The plea of the editorial in the first issue of *Snakes Alive* for a new subject, "Spare Time", to be added has gone unheeded. As ladies can outnumber men in each year, the recurring debate "a woman's place in medicine" has now expired. The ragging of Professors stopped in the early seventies when the Committee rightly deemed such displays of exuberance were inappropriate in view of the sadnesses of everyday life in Belfast.

We no longer see the elaborate rag, the donkey and cart which greeted a Professor of Therapeutics in the lecture theatre of the Institute of Clinical Science twenty years ago. The Professor of Anatomy no longer staggers home under the influence of a live 20lb turkey at Christmas, presented by his students. The Vice-Chancellor no longer sits bemused like his predecessor who sat in his car at the front of Queen's when the chauffeur found engaging first gear difficult to induce forward locomotion. Today the president of a large company in Calgary still chuckles at the effect of a few bricks under the back axle.

Today the steam is let off at the Year Dinners which are well attended to the detriment and even cancellation of the Association Dinner, the Dance however swings on.

In contrast the Dental Students' Association now has a Presidential lecture and all the old criticisms of its counterpart in the medical society are yearly coming to the fore.





*The girl with the tambourine has just emerged from a birthday cake at a Year Dinner in a Belfast hotel. She is serenading Professors Douglas Roy (left) and Jack Pritchard. Nobody (including the girl) knew what to do next so she went home soon afterwards.*

The Dental School was founded in 1920 with the appointment of four lecturers. Before this time the resident medical student pulled painful teeth in extern, thankfully for all concerned the hospital appointed two honorary dental surgeons in 1920. The department was expanded into the King Edward Building and the Working Men's Committee bought nineteen Dental Chairs for it. Students collected £1000 at a Rag towards the cost of its equipment in 1921.

As a pupil and houseman on the Royal the neatly dressed men who would occasionally walk down the corridor in a group were a mystery to me even after I was told they were the Working Men's Committee. However, in the fifty years from 1903-1953 they collected over £1,000,000 for the Royal funds. This was originally in the form of a penny a week deducted from the wages of workmen in the shipyard and the factories in the early part of the century. Such was their pride in the Royal - similar groups helped the Mater and City Hospitals - they felt the National Health Service could not provide everything for patient comfort. The 1948 Act forbade Hospitals Committee to appeal to the public for funds. Nevertheless, the Working Men's Committee still collects and still provides money for patient comfort and care, a quite remarkable group of men.

Today the new City Hospital has cost over seventy million pounds provided from government funds. Government funds however provided little or nothing to build the Frederick Street Hospital or the Royal Victoria Hospital, or the Mater Infirmerum or the Royal Maternity Hospitals and they were maintained largely by voluntary subscriptions. They stand as monuments to the generosity of the Ulster people.



*The new Belfast City Hospital, opened in 1985.  
The Medical School accommodation is arrowed.*

The Working Men's Committee of the Royal epitomises the affection and gratitude of the community at large for its doctors, nurses and hospitals. The wealthy benefactors also played a major role as well in the College, in the University and in the hospitals. The onus of educating medical students still lies within Queen's. The goodwill of hospital staffs and general practitioners across the province ensures the tradition of excellence can be maintained.

Today's student is tomorrow's doctor but he or she should occasionally glance at the visible evidence of past generosity to, and achievement of this Medical School which are found all around. They should enjoy being part of a continuum which has stretched over one hundred and fifty years and accept the responsibility and with it the infinite pleasure of being a medical student in Belfast.

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