THE TREASURES OF THE ULSTER MEDICAL SOCIETY

A talk delivered to the Ulster Medical Society in 1978
by
Sir Ian Fraser

It would be impossible to talk about the treasures of the new Whitla Building without mentioning the origin of the Ulster Medical Society and this in turn brings in Sir William Whitla as indeed the society, its treasures and the building itself are all linked together by a common cord.

THE ULSTER MEDICAL SOCIETY

The Ulster Medical Society as it exists today was established in 1862, but there had been in existence for some time before that two societies which were then amalgamated . The first of these, The Belfast Medical Society, had been formed in 1806. It seems to have suffered at times from various differences of opinion among its members. In retrospect it would appear to have been more medico-political than clinical and it catered for Belfast somewhat to the exclusion of the other parts of Ulster. One must also remember that at that time the general hospital had not been built nor was there yet even an embryonic medical school, both of which would have given a focal point and would have stimulated the clinical aspect of the society. The original members at that time were individual men of great importance—there were nineteen in all. They included S.S. Thomson, who did magnificent work in Belfast when typhus fever was at its height; in addition, with his love for music, he will always be remembered as the founder of the Belfast Philharmonic Society. Another member was Dr. William Drennan, for a time a doctor in Newry and Dublin before coming to Belfast; he is perhaps best remembered for his political and literary activities as he was, if not the founder, at least a prominent member of the Society of United Irishmen. He was brought to trial on one occasion for having written 'A wicked and seditious libel' but from this accusation he was acquitted. His grand daughter wrote of him that "he was a reformer but never a conspirator". It is said that he practised vaccination prior even to Edward Jenner. He was involved in the foundation of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, and when it opened its doors in 1815 it was he who gave the inaugural address. Other people involved in the early stage were Dr. Andrew Marshall and his brother-in-law James Drummond. It seems to have been difficult to keep this trio of prima donnas together. Possibly there was a certain amount of snobbery about it as well, as it was said "the society would consider only the most respectable physicians, surgeons and apothecaries". I suppose the apothecaries were lucky to be able to creep in at all.

The society seems, through some differences of opinion among its members, to have almost ceased to function for a time, but after a lapse it resuscitated itself thanks to the influence of a few outstanding men,

One of these was James McDonnel from the Glens of Antrim. He was a graduate of Edinburgh and one of the chief instigators of the idea to start a medical school at Inst, (which in fact did take place in 1835). By some he is still looked on as the pioneer of the Belfast School of Medicine. He was a surgeon and he actually gave the first clinical lecture in 1827—some eight years before the medical faculty was officially opened. He was ably supported by James Drummond who had been teaching anatomy and botany at Inst. since 1818 as well as the basic sciences—he might be looked on as the original Dean of the embryo faculty.

Other names in the early phase were Thomas Andrews and Henry MacCormac, a pioneer in the field of medicine and tuberculosis—both of these men will be remembered in perpetuity as their heads carved in stone have been removed from the front of the old Medical Institute and now adorn the hall of this new Whitla Medical Building.

Whitla always considered that these two men were the chief architects of the first phase of the Belfast Medical School when it was still at Inst. They brought a clinical element into the original society which helped to bind it together.

The other Belfast Medical Society was founded in 1853 and was called The Belfast Clinical and Pathological Society. It had an easier start. There was a young flourishing

medical school and a very active hospital in Frederick Street so that there was a place for the meetings as well as plenty of material—both clinical cases and pathological specimens—to discuss. It was started by three eminent men. The most outstanding of these was Andrew G. Malcolm—the others were T.H. Purdon and Dr. William Halliday. It got immediate support. It started with 49 members but in three years the membership was 109. Malcolm was the founder of modern clinical medicine in Belfast. Dr. Purdon was the first president and he was the beginning of a long dynasty of Purdons who served Ulster very well.

Whether in 1862 there was an amalgamation of these two societies or a take over bid one does not know, and it does not matter, as out of this marriage a new lively body, the Ulster Medical Society, was born which now, over a century later, is in a very flourishing condition.

HEADQUARTERS

In the early period a place in which to hold their meetings was indeed a problem, but after 1817, with the opening of the new hospital, the society was granted the use of a room in the Belfast General Hospital in Frederick Street, Here there was in addition a small library and a small museum with some 400 specimens. Later when Mr. Charters—a wealthy Belfast Linen Marchant—gave some money to the hospital to build a Charters wing as an extension to the hospital proper, he also equipped two rooms specially for the use of the Medical Society.

Charters himself has an additional link with this society as William MacCormac (later Sir William) before he left Belfast in the year I870 to go off to the Franco-Prussian War—the year in fact when he had been elected President of the Ulster Medical Society—eloped with Miss Charters, a marriage which was a very long and happy one. MacCormac never came back to Belfast; he made such a reputation for himself in the Franco-Prussian War that he was elected to the staff of St. Thomas' Hospital, and later was president of the Royal College of Surgeons of England for five years—an unprecedented period.

The keenness of the new society is shown by the fact that it held 39 meetings in its first eight months; these were usually held at 3 p.m. on a Saturday afternoon. To get away from the hospital atmosphere and have greater privacy the society changed its venue to new quarters at No. 33 High Street, consisting of "two rooms with a water closet at a cost of £12.10 per annum". This meeting place did not prove popular and after some time the Society returned to the hospital, but in 1884 it again left the hospital and took rooms in the Museum in College Square North. This was close to Inst, and almost next door to Sir William Whitla's house. The time of the meeting was changed from Saturday afternoon to Thursday evening.

However, after ten years, finding they had no privacy in the museum as other people kept invading the library, they again decided to have their own quarters with the necessary privacy, and so they rented new rooms in 1893, this time in Lombard Street. They only stayed there three or four years as the rooms were up some six flights of stairs—too much for the older men, and so they returned to the museum, this time with a promise of privacy and a key to the library.

In 1900 a discussion arose about the feasibility and advantage of building the Society's medical institute. It was at this stage that Sir William Whitla was elected President for the year 1900–1901 —it should be pointed out that this was indeed his second time in the chair as he had been president some fifteen years before that. At the end of his first term as president he had refused to be re-appointed as he had many projects on hand at that time, but over all the intervening years he had always wished to do something for the society and this came to a head when he was made president for the second time. It would appear that without any discussion he at once said he would like to be personally responsible for the new building. At a sub-committee meeting in October 1901 the idea of a new building was discussed and at this meeting they were told of Sir William's kind offer. Professor Peter Redfern at once proposed that they should accept it. Plans were discussed and the foundation stone was laid in April 1902 by Professor Redfern—he was the éminence grise in medical affairs at that time. He was Professor of Anatomy, virtually Dean of the Faculty, and a man of great power and integrity. He was so much admired by Sir

William that for immortality his head was one of the four to be cut in stone to decorate the front of the new building when it was completed.

The following timetable shows how quickly affairs could be carried out in those days. In November, 1901 Sir William was told that his offer was accepted with great gratitude. In December a site was mentioned, and a piece of ground was rented from Inst. at £60 per annum. Work was begun in April 1902 when Professor Redfern laid the foundation stone. The Institute was declared open on November 26, 1902. Sir John Campbell had by that time taken over the Presidency and he was then in the Chair. The opening ceremony took place at 12.15 on 26th November, 1902 and this was to be the home of the society for many years. Sir William wished it to be called The Ulster Medical Institute, but it was agreed that after his death the name would be changed to the Whitla Medical Institute, and today the present building, where we now are, continues his name and association with the society by its title the "Whitla Medical Building". The opening ceremony was carried out by Earl Dudley, the new Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, who had come to the North for a few days mainly for this purpose. A further ceremony in the same building was carried out by his wife in the afternoon after they had had lunch with the Harbour Commissioners. Sir William wished that the stained glass windows to commemorate the tragedy at Burton Port should be unveiled as a special event.

Until World War 2 the building was in constant use. There was a billiard room, a card room, a very good library, and a reading room—where people could meet. There was one rule imposed by the donor and that was that there would be no alcohol available except on the night of the annual dinner. There was always a large welcoming fire in the hall, and on the wall the scrolls of the Honorary Fellows, and upstairs in a strategic place over the fireplace was the Smith Window. This could be seen by day with day light and in the evening with suitable artificial light. There was a regular Thursday meeting of the society with the usual cup of tea afterwards.

In 1937 the Whitla Medical Institute was the focal point, the operational centre or headquarters, when the British Medical Association paid its third visit to Belfast under the presidency of Mr. R.J. Johnstone (later Sir Robert) with Professor F.M.B. Allen as honorary secretary. The first meeting had been in 1884 with James Cuming as president, and the second was in 1909 with Sir William Whitla on this occasion in the Chair. At the beginning of the 1939-1945 war it was decided to allow the government, for war purposes, to use part of the building, although the society continued to retain part of it for its own meetings. These were moderately well attended as there were quite a number of extra doctors in the town at that time, both British and American.

After the war the building reverted to the Ulster Medical Society, and with the inauguration of the National Health Service it was again in great demand for meetings when the medico-political problems of the new Act were discussed. However, from 1946, just after the war, problems began to arise. The physical structure of the building now had been damaged. Cracks began to appear in the walls, probably due to the fact that the British Sailors' Society had bought the Police Barracks next door and were building in its place a new Merchant Seaman's Club. Other factors also arose. One of these was a major financial one and that was when the government decided that the society could no longer live rate free. Insurance for the building could not be found and the upper rooms were unsafe. Parking had become almost impossible; in fact the Institute in the area was no longer suitable for members attending meetings, as all medical matters had been moved up with the consultants to the new university area on the Malone Road, and yet withal for sentimental reasons there was a great reluctance to leave the old site, so much so that in 1956 it was decided to make a further and final attempt to salvage it. Accordingly, with some £5,000 compensation from the British Sailors' Society and a whip round among the Fellows and members, a final effort was made in 1957–1958 session, and with all the ladies going to endless trouble to decorate the building, a final delightful evening took place, but it was indeed to be the swan song. The meetings still continued to take place there but the building was otherwise not used—the fabric was deteriorating and so in 1965 the building was sold to R.B.A.I. for a modest sum of £13,000.

The Society was now homeless, and it was fortunate that owing to the kindness of the University, it was to be allowed to use rooms for some time in the Keir building or in the lecture theatre of the clinical science building. Other sites were the Anatomy Theatre and the Pharmacy building in University Street. This state of affairs could not go on, and the society wanted a home of its own. Sir William Whitla in his will insisted that the money of the Institute if not used for a new building would have to revert to the Department of Pharmacology, and so approach was made to the Queen's University and the Senate kindly agreed to reserve an area in the new pre-clinical building on the Lisburn Road to be the new home and to be called the Whitla Medical Building. Although the University gladly accepted the £13,000 we know the new room cost very much more, The treasures of the old Institute had been scattered far and wide in many places, many of them in the homes of different Fellows of the society, and so finally in 1976, with all the treasures now retrieved, the new building was declared open by Professor Owen Wade, who had shortly before left Belfast for Birmingham, He had been professor of pharmacology in Queen's and as such was really the latest incumbent of the Chair which Sir William himself had graced with such dignity for so many years,

Among the treasures we were fortunate to be able to retain were the four sculpted heads from the front of the old building, which, with years of rain and smog, being of sandstone, had suffered somewhat. We now hope that in the new hall they will be in a place free from the dangers of the elements. These four Heads represent the four men, two in the first phase of the medical school when it was at Inst. and two of the second phase after 1849 when the new college had moved to the University Road, who Sir William felt had done more for Belfast than any of the others. They were for the first stage Dr. Henry MacCormac, father of Sir William MacCormac, and Professor Thomas Andrews, FRS., and for the second phase Professor Peter Redfern and Professor Alexander Gordon, the first Professor of Surgery in the New Queen's College.

SIR WILLIAM WHITLA

William Whitla's name has been mentioned so often that I feel we should know something about this interesting man, a man with so many facets to his character, I am astonished that his life has never been written up in all its details, although Dr. Cecil Kidd in his year as President of the Ulster Medical Society gave a very full and useful account of this great man.

William Whitla was born in 1851 and left school at the age of 15. He was apprenticed at first in his brother's chemist shop in Monaghan and later to the leading firm of chemists in Belfast. From these he got his love and knowledge of the value of drugs. He took out his medical lectures in Belfast and at the age of 22 he qualified in Edinburgh.

He was very happily married, his wife Ada—a Miss Bourne,—was said to have been one of the last surviving personal friends of Florence Nightingale. She had trained at St. Thomas' Hospital. She was five years older than he was and she was deeply interested in the Salvation Army. Even in later years when she was a lady of great importance—the then Lady Whitla—she attended a garden party at Buckingham Palace in her Salvation Army outfit.

Sir William's first home was at 41 Gt. Victoria Street. It is said that he used the Toll House at Shaftsbury Square in which to see some of his patients. Later he moved to 8 College Square North, at that time the Harley Street of Belfast. His two staff appointments were in the Ulster Hospital for Children and Women, then in Fisherwick Place, in fact a few hundred yards from his house, and in the old Royal Hospital in Frederick Street. He took much to do with the selection of the site for the new Royal Victoria Hospital when a decision had to be made whether to build it on the Grosvenor Road or in the Ormeau Park. It is said that he disapproved greatly of the format of the new Royal Victoria Hospital as he disliked one storey buildings. On the Chair of Materia Medica becoming vacant due to the retirement of Professor Seaton Reid in 1890 he was appointed to it and he held it for 29 years until 1919. He had a large private consulting practice all over Ulster and he was a man of great importance. His word carried much weight in matters of policy. It was said that the mere sound of his feet on the stairs or on the

corridor gave hope. A man once said "if death was on the one side of the bed it did not matter as long as Whitla was on the other".

He was knighted at the age of 51 in 1902 in the Coronation Honours List, He took a great deal of interest in the affairs of the Ulster Medical Society and was President for the first time in 1886 and again fifteen years later in 1901. It was on the second occasion that he felt the need for the society to have a home of its own, and he generously insisted at his own expense in providing and equipping the necessary building—the new Ulster Medical Institute—which was opened one year later. Every detail of this building and its treasures were decided upon by his wife and himself. He became a wealthy man, his practice was very large, his books brought him in much money, and he was a shrewd investor—oil shares, Consols etc. With his knowledge of drugs his first book—a best seller— was "Elements of Pharmacy, materia medica and therapeutics". It went through twelve editions, was translated into several languages, and was a financial success. This was written in 1885; the last edition written long after his death came out in 1939. In 1891 he wrote "A Dictionary of Treatment", It was sort of encyclopaedia, useful to doctors and laymen, It was an immediate success and became the official book carried in all seagoing ships who had not a doctor on board, and second to the bible was possibly the Captain's best friend. It went through numerous editions—even four of these were in Chinese. In 1908 he published his third main book "A Practice of Medicine" in two large volumes. The following year when the British Medical Association met in Belfast with Sir William as President each doctor received these volumes on the breakfast table on the first day of the meeting. There were 600 doctors attending the meeting in addition to the local doctors in Ulster; it was indeed a generous gift. The book sadly was not the success that the two previous books had been. I still have these two books, given to my father who was present at that meeting.

We must remember that Sir William rather spanned the era between the polypharmacy period and the modern scientific period, so possibly this book was a little bit out of date by the time that it was published.

Sir William had now reached the peak of his career. When he was thanked at any time for any generous act he always said "I owe it to the profession as they gave me the money for my books". He said he always wanted to give something back to them and this he did indeed in a very generous way. His lovely home in Lennoxvale with it garden and lake he gave to the University to be the permanent residence of the vice-chancellor of Queen's. The university was to be his residuary legatee and it was from this sum of £35,000 that the university was able to build the Whitla Hall to be a conference or an assembly hall. The foundation stone of this building was laid in 1939 before the war by Lord Londonderry, and it was opened in 1945 just after the war by Sir Henry Dale.

A strong Methodist and a man of deeply religious beliefs Sir William gave to Methodist College in 1935 £10,000 for the building of an Assembly Hall, This was opened by Lord Craigavon the Prime Minister and was later called the Sir William Whitla Hall. It should be mentioned that he had been on the Board of Governors of Methodist College for some 27 years.

To the old Royal Hospital in Frederick Street he gave in 1887, following his year as President for the first time of the Ulster Medical Society, a delightful stained glass window showing the Biblical story of the Good Samaritan with the Coats of Arms of the various Irish Medical Colleges around it. This was transferred to the new Royal Victoria Hospital in 1903 and stands today at one end of the long main corridor of the hospital.

We have already mentioned his gift to the profession of the Ulster Medical Institute—one can see his finger guiding the architect to ensure that the four heads were correctly sited on the front of the building, and also to ensure that the Smith Window would be visible both by day and by night. He was a lover of detail. Everything had to be "just right". The overall cost of the Institute was £8,000.

In 1909 when the British Medical Association paid its second visit to Belfast with Sir William as President, the Ulster doctors to show their appreciation that Sir William had been so honoured, presented him with a suitable badge of office which pleased him greatly, but this he later returned to the Ulster

Medical Society on the understanding that it would become the Presidential badge for the President of that Society, which indeed with slight modification it still is today.

He was a much travelled man with visits abroad to places such as Palestine, Italy, Canada, America and even Russia. He brought back treasures from all of his visits so that Lennoxvale House was filled with many valuable pictures as well as a good deal of bric-a-brac. He was a generous host and many enjoyed the garden parties or the evening soirées in his house. He could entertain with equal ease Sir Frank Benson and his touring Shakespearean Company or General Booth of the Salvation Army. He was a close friend of the General and often presided at his meetings, and as far as Shakespeare was concerned it was said that he was the leading expert in Ireland.

There is so much to say about this man that we must only give the highlights. In 1919 he became the University's first Member of Parliament at Westminster, a post which he enjoyed and which he filled with distinction. Any good cause never failed to get his help. He took a great interest in the Y.M.C.A. and was known for his many kindnesses to the Jewish Fraternity in Belfast, in fact much of his generosity was known to only a few. In 1917 he was made an Honorary physician to King George V and when on the following day the students wrote on the Blackboard "God Save the King" he could enjoy the joke and gave them a holiday.

Sadly for the last four years of his life he was housebound and mostly chair bound, but he still had the same alert mind, still had the open Bible before him, still studying his favourite book 'The Prophet Daniel', and smoking his pipe, he still could entertain many of his colleagues on the staff.

An interest in the Book of Daniel at the turn of the century was part of a popular cult called Eschatology (a study of the last things) which was an attempt to find from the prophecies something about the future life. It even dealt with the restoration of Israel to its own land. Sir William loved to quizz his visitors on religious matters—a not infrequent question was "What use were the Gadarene Swine in a Jewish community"—when one said they did not know—as he always hoped they would—he would explain it was for the upkeep of the Roman soldiers.

In his garden in his later years, when he was more or less chairbound, he had on the table five whistles each with a different note to call each of his five servants—a precursor of the modern 'bleep'.

Full of years, he died at the age of 83, and for the last eighteen months of this time he had been a lonely man following the death of his wife. Sadly there were no children to brighten up the household.

THE BUST OF SIR WILLIAM WHITLA AND THE PORTRAIT OF DR. EDWARD JENNER

At an Ulster Medical Society dinner on December 3rd, 1904 the Council decided to present Sir William with his bust. The work had been done by a very well known Ulster sculptor Miss Kathleen Shaw. To perform the actual presentation Sir Lauder Brunton, MD LLD FRS—the world famous pharmacologist—had come over to Belfast for the occasion. Present at the dinner as chief guest was the Lord Mayor of Belfast—Sir Otto Jaffé; he was then in his second year of office. A discussion on public health arose and it was considered by all that Edward Jenner probably had done more for the health of mankind than any other known person. At this dinner Sir Otto, possibly stimulated at seeing Sir William's bust, said that he would like to present the society with a bust of Dr. Jenner. There may have been difficulties in obtaining one of a man so long dead, and so instead some months later the portrait now on view was presented to the society by Sir Otto; it remains today one of our treasures.

EDWARD JENNER—1749–1823

So much has been written about Jenner in the way of biographies that a short sketch of his life will be sufficient .

He was born in 1749 in the Vicarage at Berkeley in Gloucestershire. His father had been a wealthy landowner but he died when young Edward was five years old so the boy was dependant very much for help both from his eldest brother, Rev. Stephen Jenner as well as the Lord of the Manor the Earl of Berkeley. On leaving school he was first of all apprenticed to a well known local doctor, but

after that he went up to London to join John Hunter's famous medical school. John Hunter was then, and I suppose remains so today, the greatest anatomical surgeon that England has ever had. Although Hunter was working at that time as a surgeon on the staff of St. George's Hospital at Hydepark Corner yet he still had his enormous menagerie at Brompton with literally hundreds of animals in it.

This was paid for at that time by himself, but it later became the cause of his financial downfall. Hunter was still a relatively young man of 42 and Jenner was 21. A close friendship sprang up between these two men which produced a regular correspondence between the two until Hunter's death in 1793. His death was caused by a stroke the result of a disagreement at a staff meeting when he lost his temper. He knew this might happen As he said to a colleague on one occasion "my life is in the hands of anyone who cares to cross me". It was said some years ago that a member of the Royal Victoria Hospital also had a stroke following a rather stormy staff meeting.

Fortunately much of Hunter's and Jenner's correspondence still exists. To be a successful man one needs luck as well as ability and hard work. Jenner's first piece of luck was to be taken up by John Hunter and to be made his favourite pupil and a lasting friend.

He had the manners of a gentleman as well as being a man with a knowledge of science. He was amusing, a very welcome guest at most parties. He was just under medium size, robust, and very active, doing regularly some 20–30 miles on horseback each day. He dressed well—a blue coat, yellow buttons, buckskin boots always well polished. He wore a broad brimmed hat, carrying a smart whip with a silver handle and handsome silver spurs. It was said he had the generosity of a good man and the simplicity of a great man. He could have been a poet, and his famous poem on the robin could not be excelled. He also wrote songs and could play on the violin and flute, singing his own poetry to it. He said on one occasion that he was afraid of getting too fond of writing at the expense of his medical practice. At this time smallpox was rampant. It had been said it was the greatest scourge of mankind. Jenner was still a young man when a young country girl said to him "I cannot take smallpox for I have had cowpox". He stored this away in his brain; he tried to fill in the facts and prove the truth of it. He did know of the existence of cowpox, a very mild harmless disease that milkmaids got on the hands from milking cows. We know that later he gave his own son of 1½ years cowpox and then put him in contact with smallpox, to which the boy was quite immune. I think it is interesting that this brilliant man was nearly fifty years of age before he had the facts sufficiently secure to put forward his theory. He must have realised that there was going to be opposition and jealousy so he wanted to be in an unassailable position. He had confided in one friend a Dr. Gardiner in the early stages but 1798, when he was then 49, is the date that we must remember, when he went up to London with his wife to lay before the Royal Society his "Enquiry into the vaccination against smallpox".

We can nearly divide Jenner's life into two periods; the first or early one before 1798 and the second or later period when he had to sustain his thesis and prove that vaccination should become an obligatory part of British life.

In the early stages he was a busy general practitioner yet all the time the words of that girl kept ringing in his ears. He kept trying to amass the facts to prove his theory, but at this time, owing to his friendship with Hunter and with his own love for the fauna and flora of the countryside he was constantly involved in many natural history problems. His work on the cuckoo, for which he was made an FRS. was every bit as up to date as what one sees today 200 years later, on the B.B.C.

He followed, in fact, the result of two different cuckoos each depositing an egg in the same nest. He saw the ejection first of the rightful owners and then the final battle between two cuckoo fledglings until one eventually pushed the other overboard.

Hunter kept plying him with problems such as "what is the temperature of the young hedgehog when active and when hibernating?" "plunge a thermometer into it" and requests such as "send me up some bats". On one occasion Hunter told him that no one had been able to differentiate the sexes of the eel and he was asked to notice the difference between the males and females. He was to find out how the contents of the stomach of the hedgehog varied before and after hibernation.

Hibernation he called actually 'living death'. He was asked to note the rate of the flow of sap of the trees and how it varied in the spring, summer and the winter. "Please to send up some toads to London as soon as possible". He was asked to try to mate a dog to a bitch fox. I wonder how many of our NHS doctors would be willing to co-operate today if asked to do this simple procedure?

Jenner could not get Hunter interested in his smallpox theory—all that Hunter would say was "but why think, why not try the experiment". Hunter seemed to be insatiable in his demands—more birds nests, more eels, more hedgehogs. On one occasion Jenner wrote to Hunter to tell him that he had been slighted in love. The reply from Hunter made no comment on this problem but asked urgently for more hedgehogs. We do know that later Jenner had a very happy marriage with Miss Kathleen Kingscote; at one time later both he and his wife were very ill with typhus fever and they both nearly died. Hunter also had typhus fever later which shows how universal it was.

Naturally only a man with country interests could or indeed would have taken on such a job. On one occasion he did a post mortem on a man who had had a sudden death and he described for the first time the disease of the coronary vessels, antedating by many years the official diagnosis of this disease.

It is interesting to see that two country doctors, Edward Jenner and James Mackenzie, were the pioneers of heart diseases. We can see this man with his busy country practice, his natural history interests, and also the nagging problem of smallpox waiting for an answer. In 1798 he presented his thesis and at once there was a mixed reception. He got great opposition from, as one would expect, much of the medical profession. Lister's invention of antisepsis was accepted on the continent with much greater warmth than in Britain; in fact in 25 years it was said some fifteen million people had died from smallpox.

Vienna, which before vaccination had had a very bad record, had in fact in 1804 only two deaths, and this applied to many other centres as well. While praise came from certain places with some saying it was the greatest discovery ever made, yet some of his own colleagues were saying "He has shot above the heads of his brethren". Sadly at times he ran out of the necessary vaccine material. Certain articles appeared in the press against him and there were many interesting cartoons printed showing that people who had been vaccinated with cowpox were growing cow's horns from their head or producing cow's udders at other parts of their body. He got great help from the laity. English ladies in high society were very helpful with their support; in fact it is interesting that the portraits of that period of the ladies of the court were often of the milkmaid type, in fact the nursery rhyme "where are you going to my pretty maid, I am going a'milking, sir, she said" refers to this very problem. Great help came from the King who got the Royal household vaccinated, and his two sons were able to organise that the army and navy were also vaccinated and this was a great feather in his cap. In one church the vicar was anxious that each child should be vaccinated at the same time as he was baptized, but this was not acceptable. There was one area that was very resistant to the idea of vaccination and stood out for a long time. There was great delight, however, when they finally asked that the whole parish should now be vaccinated which turned out that the reason was that the price of coffins had gone up greatly—I suppose we must look on this as a backhanded sort of compliment. He was fêted in many parts of Europe with in some places his portrait having flowers hung around it. He was given a service of silver plate from the nobility and gentry of Gloucestershire. One parson in St. Helen's said "a few years ago I was in the habit of burying two or three children every evening in the spring and autumn for smallpox and now I bury none". Another parson gave every child that he baptized a form to go and get vaccinated at once, and he was baptizing some twenty children per week, yet with all this success there was still much resistance in certain quarters.

It will be remembered that William Harvey had the same opposition when he produced his ideas on the circulation of the blood.

France even brought up the idea that the original invention and suggestion had been stolen from them.

Suggestion was made to Parliament that Jenner should be given a money award both for his invention and to compensate him for the

loss that he had sustained in his practice due to his many visits to London, The petition finally went to London and the sum suggested was £10,000—some said it was a paltry sum and others said it was much too much. In Parliament a vote was taken—there were 59 for and 56 against. The ayes had it by three votes. The medical press was furious—"it represents only 1p per person" but it should be said that five years later he was made a further grant of £20,000. Oxford gave him an Honorary degree, but the R.C.S. refused, even when he brought his Oxford diploma with him. It was said by many that smallpox was not a disease; it was a nightmare.

Very late in life he was made physician extraordinary to George IV, Sadly he was almost dying at the time. Towards the end he was a sad and lonely man, particularly after his wife's death. His eldest son, who was somewhat mentally retarded, had also died, and so indeed had his daughter Catherine. He was survived by his other son Robert, who went to Oxford and then into the army. Robert lived to a ripe old age, a rather gay military bachelor.

Edward Jenner was much loved in Berkeley, He was Mayor there in 1815 a year when it was said that there was very serious poaching everywhere. He died in 1823 when he fell off his couch just after breakfast one morning. It is said he could have been buried in Westminster Abbey, but he asked to be buried in his own church in Berkeley. There still can be seen in the grounds of his home that famous rather beehive looking house which he called "The Temple of Vaccinia" where he had done much research: in fact it is said that on occasions he did as many as 300 vaccinations there in one day.

THE SMITH WINDOW

The stained glass window which in the old building was cleverly placed over the mantlepiece so that it could be seen by either daylight or nightlight was one of Sir William's favourite treasures. It illustrated an incident of great courage and tragedy which caught the public eye and created a great wave of sympathy for the doctor's widow and children. Things of this sort made a great impression on Sir William. On the morning of November 26, 1902 when the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Earl of Dudley, officially opened the new Medical Institute it was arranged that his wife, the Countess of Dudley, would unveil this window in the afternoon after she and the Earl had returned from lunch with the Harbour Commissioners. The incident itself depicted in the window took place in October, 1901 when an outbreak of typhus fever swept the small island of Arranmore off the west coast of Ireland just offshore from the small town of Burton Port, No one except the local doctor would go near the island and he rowed over each day to bring food and the necessary drugs to the stricken islanders. He did this with great personal discomfort as he was suffering from a poisoned wound at the time. After some time it was decided that the islanders should be brought back to the mainland and so with the help of another doctor, Dr. Brendan McCarthy, a large boat that had not been in the water for two years, was found, and the two doctors rowed over to the island, collected all the available sick and brought them to the mainland. The boat, leaking badly all the time, was just able to make the journey and, in fact, did sink shortly after arrival. Dr. Smith himself shortly afterwards took Typhus fever and died some days later, November l6th, 1901. Dr. Brendan McCarthy, however, lived and was actually able to be present at the unveiling of the window some twelve months or so after the incident.

The window, in three panes of stained glass, shows the islanders being helped ashore, and there is a portrait of each of the doctors. The window, Sir William said, was to be a constant reminder of devotion to duty, self sacrifice, and love of one's fellow man:

"And while the billows break on Arranmore
Men still shall wondring tell and wondring hear
How in a wave-worn barge of yester-year
They piloted the sick from shore to shore."

from a poem for the occasion
by Professor F.S. BOAS

PROFESSOR ALEXANDER GORDON

All Sir William Whitla's geese were swans, and on one occasion he spoke of Professor Gordon as "the most illustrious of Irish surgeons, a man of world wide fame, an original genius, a man with an inventive, creative mind". When Gordon died someone

said “he belonged to a past generation which we hope will never become extinct”.

Whitla saw a great deal of Gordon as he was the professor’s assistant in many private surgical operations; in fact Whitla at one time had the idea of becoming a surgeon. It must have given him great pleasure when Gordon’s daughter in 1904 bequeathed this painting of her father to the Ulster Medical Society. She had just come back from America after the death of her husband Dr. Stallard who had been a professor of medicine in the University of California.

Alexander Gordon was certainly an interesting man. He was the first professor of surgery in Queen’s and had held the chair in the Inst. Medical School for a short time. He held the post for 37 years from I849 retiring only a short time before he died, at the age of 59. We may note that his successor Professor Thomas Sinclair filled the position of Professor of Surgery for exactly the same number of years—37.

Gordon had a great knowledge of anatomy: in fact he was appointed professor of surgery while still a demonstrator of anatomy. It is said that even to the very end he would go to the Anatomy Department for one hour before giving a lecture. During his time in the anatomy department he made a collection of healed fractures, These mounted specimens are quite unique and are equal to any collection in any part of the world. In an era when there was no radiology the expert bone setter was a valuable person and Gordon of Belfast had just as great a reputation at that time as H.O. Thomas of Liverpool.

Although he did his main undergraduate studies in Belfast he finally qualified in Edinburgh. He quickly amassed a large private practice; he was known for the smallness of his fees—it was said that this represented his humility rather than his merit. He rather glorified in being untidy and his famous hat was well known. On one occasion he was asked by the senior physician to see in consultation an important member of the aristocracy. When the physician called to collect Professor Gordon the latter appeared at the door in his usual disreputable hat, the physician suggested that he should put on a better one. Gordon went back into the house, and after considerable delay, a top hat was brought out on a tray by the butler with a note which said “I see it is the hat you want and not the man” .

Although normally gentle in nature he could when roused be very irascible, and on such occasions his language could have graced any sergeant’s mess, The students loved him and called him Old Alick, although the less reverent on account of his beard called him “Jasus”—he knew about this and on one occasion when he was opening a deep and painful abscess in the arm of a rough farmer the latter used this word as an expletive, to which Gordon at once replied “you are not allowed to say that; it it only the students who are allowed to call me that”.

His name became internationally known owing to the invention of the Gordon splint. This splint was said to set and hold the common Colies fracture of the wrist at a time when radiology did not exist to show the true position of the bones, He is remembered in the Whitla Medical Building not only by his portrait but also by the sculpted head which, with the other three heads, is now in the entrance hall of our new building.

He had two children, a boy who became rather a neer do weel, and a daughter who in his later years when he was almost blind, became his amanuensis. Sadly he and his wife did not get on well.

To get away from the hurly burly of town life he bought a country home on the edge of Strangford Lough near Comber where he spent many happy days. In a secluded spot it was used later on one occasion in April, 1914 when guns were brought from Germany to equip the U.V.F. in the famous gun running incident. The house was used as a temporary hiding place for these weapons until they were finally distributed. It remains today much as it was in his time. It is told that on one occasion, looking like a tramp, he stopped to speak to a man breaking stones who told him among other things that he had a very painful shoulder. Gordon had a look at it, did something to it and gave him some advice. Some months later on his way to town in his gig and well dressed for a special occasion he saw the stone breaker and stopped to ask him how he was. The man did not recognise him and said he was very well thanks to the help that he had got from an old tinker some

months before. Gordon was always delighted to tell this story against himself.

TWO PORTRAITS—SIR WILLIAM WHITLA—SIR HANS SLOANE

At the annual dinner of the society in 1938 Professor W.W.D. Thomson, the President, was in the Chair. Professor Thomson started by saying that fifteen years before on a rather similar social occasion his return to health had been marked by a presentation from his colleagues. In the years between he had always wanted to repay this kindness and it was suddenly as he was walking through the National Portrait Gallery in London that he saw the portrait of Sir Hans Sloane, and there and then he decided that he would have a copy made for the Ulster Medical Society.

His second idea was that the Ulster Medical Society should have a portrait of the donor Sir William Whitla. This would be an everlasting contact with this personality long after he had gone. He went on to say that Sir William Whitla when he had originally presented the Institute had said that such a gift had been a daydream of his for many years. Sir William said "I am leaving this as a help and encouragement to those who come after—something that a weary brother seeing might take heart again".

The portrait of Hans Sloane is a copy done by Mr. Clifford Hall of London of the original which was painted in 1736 by the Irish painter Stephen Slaughter. The portrait of Sir William was done long after his death by Mr. Frank McKelvey from Ulster. It was done from photographs and it is acknowledged by all who knew Sir William to be indeed a very perfect likeness of him.

The chief guest at the dinner on that particular evening was Sir Humphrey Rolleston from London, who was being made an Honorary Fellow of the Society on that occasion and it was decided that he would unveil the Hans Sloane portrait, and at the same time Sir Thomas Houston, Trustee of the Society, unveiled the McKelvey portrait of Sir William.

Professor Thomson in an interesting speech showed how the careers of these two great men had run along rather parallel lines even though one hundred years had elapsed between Hans Sloane's death and William Whitla's birth. He also said that he tonight had realised his dream in giving something to the medical Institute just indeed as Whitla had given the Institute to the Society many years before.

Speaking of both Hans Sloane and Whitla we find that they both were mere boys when attracted to the study of medicine; both were country bred and strangers to the big city. Both had a religious background and both by coincidence took a deep interest in the Book of Daniel. Sir Hans chose from the book of Daniel the foreword to his book on Jamaica "Many shall run to and fro, knowledge shall be increased". When a tablet to Sir William's memory was erected Robert Marshall chose a quotation from the book of Daniel "Skilful in all wisdom and cunning in knowledge and understanding in Science".

It was interesting that both had considerable suffering but both lived to a ripe old age and both left very generous benefactions.

SIR HANS SLOANE BART.

Hans Sloane was born in Killyleagh, Co. Down on l6th April, l660 just below the walls of Killyleagh Castle. A tablet on one of the houses indicates the exact spot. The Lord of the Manor at that time was Viscount Clandeboye who was resident in the castle, and Hans' father was his agent. Bordering on Strangford Lough this young man had every chance of being interested in nature—the plants—the seaweed—the wild fowl—particularly the geese, the barnacles, the widgeon, the teal. It was thought that dulse from the seaweed had an especial value for scurvy. He apparently at an early age set his sights on medicine as his future career, and he was fortunate in having the free run of the well stocked library in the castle.

His education was halted from age 16–19 by an illness; the diagnosis being tuberculosis. Possibly this was a blessing in disguise as at the end of that time he went off to London where he was a student for four years. He entered a London full of giants—Sydenham in medicine, Wren in architecture, Boyle in chemistry, Locke in philosophy, and many others. In London he formed a close connection with the physic garden in Chelsea with its special plants and herbs—this was a great interest to the young man as practically

all drugs at that time had herbs as their main ingredient. In 1683 at the age of 23 he went to Paris to study in the botanical gardens, and in the anatomy department of the medical school as well as to visit the hospitals. When in Paris he was told about Montpellier with its treasures of books and alpine flowers. This so tempted him that he went down to Montpellier to study, but at the end of the course he had to take his degree at the University of Orange—then under the control of Prince William of Orange. It was here that he got his MD. He had to go to Orange for the final examination as Protestants were not allowed to sit for a degree in Paris or Montpellier at that time. As soon as he got back to London he made a fortunate contact with Sydenham who was ill with the gout and "stone" at that time, and so a friendship started that would give him great help in the future. Although he was now basically employed in clinical medicine he still retained his great interest in botany. At the age of 26 we see that he has been made an FRS and a FRCP. In the midst of all this we find he went off for 20 months to Jamaica as private doctor to the Duke of Albemarle who was governor of the island at that time. The by-product of that visit was that he wrote two books and brought home with him some 800 new plants. Thanks to the Duchess of Albermarle he became the fashionable doctor in London with an aristocratic practice as well as several hospital attachments.

His practice at that time was in Gt. Russell Street near Bloomsbury Square, close to the site of the present British Museum. He married Elizabeth Langley the daughter of a wealthy sugar planter in Jamaica. He collected a mass of honorary degrees—Oxford, Dublin, Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Madrid, etc. He was doctor to Samuel Pepys and he saw Queen Anne on her death bed. He was created a Baronet by George I, the second doctor to be so honoured. He was President of the Royal College of Physicians for sixteen years and he also succeeded Sir Isaac Newton as President of the Royal Society. One of his main objects in life was to rationalise the Pharmacopoeia getting rid of much of the old wives' treatment that it contained such as cobwebs etc.

In appearance he was tall with a ruddy complexion, blue eyed, his fingers were long and tapering and his nails were well kept. He wore an auburn periwig. He was well known for his hospitality. He kept an open table and dined each evening at 5 p.m. He ate moderately and enjoyed his glass of wine. He occasionally did have an haematemesis, perhaps the result of the unresolved illness that he had when he was sixteen.

His house with its treasures was a minor museum and he was delighted after dinner to take his guests and explain the various objects in a tour of the house. He had many illustrious visitors to his home: they included Pepys, Linnaeus, and Handel (the musician) The latter caused him some displeasure when he put his hot buttered toasted muffin down on a rather valuable manuscript. Sloane later moved to the Manor House, Chelsea. This was then a small village by the Thames, and he lived there for the last eleven years of his life. It was close to the physic garden of the Apothecaries where he used to go regularly and in it there stands today a statue to his memory.

In later years he remained mentally alert but he became increasingly deaf and finally, due to his age, he had to take to a wheel chair. At the age of 88 he was visited by the then Prince of Wales, and had great pleasure in showing him his museum with its 20,000 exhibits. He considered that these had cost him perhaps £50,000 but that their value was perhaps £80,000. This was too valuable to be given away without wronging his family and yet it was too expensive to be purchased, and so he finally bequeathed them to the country on terms not hurtful to the estate of his family. He died a few years later on 11th January, 1753.

Parliament proceeded to buy the mansion of the Duke of Montague in Gt. Russell Street, and so the British Museum took shape and was opened in 1759, six years after Hans Sloane's death. Parliament by lottery raised £100,000 to buy the mansion and the Hans Sloane collection, and so from a simple origin in a humble house in Killyleagh, Co. Down, one of London's important buildings is derived.

In Knightsbridge, London, many streets and squares are named Sloane or Hans in memory of this famous Ulster man.

SIR ROBERT JOHNSTONE

This is almost modern history. R.J. Johnstone was born in 1872. He was the son of

Charles Johnstone of Greenisland. His early education was at Inst., a school to which he was loyal all his life. Later he became Chairman of the Board of Governors. He studied at the old Queen's College and he graduated in the Royal University of Ireland in 1896. He followed this with post-graduate study, in London and Vienna. He came back to Belfast after that as the most up to date gynaecologist then in Ireland.

He was a man born with many advantages—money—a stylish appearance—a good speaker—a fluent writer and a dextrous surgeon. I knew no one who could operate with such ease using so few instruments. On one occasion he was operating before a group of eminent visiting surgeons from America, and at the end of the operation one of them said "Sir, you certainly go light on the ironmongery".

He could write poetry, light and serious. He gave great service to his two hospitals, The Royal Victoria Hospital and the Royal Maternity Hospital. His connection with the latter is perpetuated by calling the private wing Johnstone House after him.

As one who sat under him for many years when he was Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, I can testify to his personal charm, as well as his clear leadership as a Chairman.

He was elected to the Chair of Gynaecology in 1921 and he gave great loyalty to the university until he retired in 1937.

Many honours came his way. In the year that he retired he was elected President of the British Medical Association when it came to Belfast for its third visit, and he was knighted in the following year. He died in October 1938 at the age of 66 just one year after he retired.

With the formation of the Northern Ireland Parliament in 1921 he was elected a Member of Parliament for Queen's and he served for many years.

JOSEPH NELSON

Joseph Nelson was born in 1840 in Downpatrick. His father and grandfather had both been Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Ministers. He was educated first at home, later going on to Inst. His first indication of eccentricity was when at school he wrote an essay supporting "Cock Fighting".

His medical education was firstly in Belfast, later in Dublin and finally in Vienna. Although he mainly studied in Belfast he finally qualified in Dublin in 1863 at the age of 23. However, in the middle of his medical training he heard that Garibaldi had commenced his struggle for the liberation of Italy. Nelson discarded his gown and with another friend—Alexander Blakeley Patterson, a Co. Tyrone man, who later became a judge in India, he sailed for Genoa. He fought through the Sicilian campaign, having left Genoa in a tramp steamer. After one week at sea on May 11, 1860, he entered and captured Marsaala. He was also on the march to Palermo and fought at Catalafimi where Garibaldi's Red Shirts and a motley crowd of poets, journalists, and artists, utterly routed King Bombas' 15,000 so called regulars. Although beaten back on three occasions they finally routed the foe in hand to hand bayonet fighting. Twelve days later they marched into Palermo, later crossed the Straits of Messina and reached Naples.

After the battle of Voltourno they were joined by King Victor Emmanuel whom Garibaldi proclaimed as King of a united Italy. Joseph Nelson had got a commission as a Lieutenant in the Regimento Inglese. This was under the command of Colonel Dunne and there were other English, Scottish and Irish Officers.

As we said, Nelson took part in all the battles, he was presented with a sword by Garibaldi and later was decorated by the King with two medals. For ever afterwards, and through his life, he was always known as Garibaldi Nelson.

After the two years absence he quickly got down to his studies and in 1863 got his M.D. of the Old Queen's University and also in the same year his LRCSI. He still, however, had his fever for travelling, and so he went to India firstly as a doctor to a tea plantation, but later he actually became himself a successful tea planter. We find that even when in India that he was again involved in a war, this time against the Manipuris. However, after fifteen years in India he came home and decided to devote himself to the speciality of diseases of the eye—he had gained a large practical experience of this in India and he decided to perfect himself in the modern techniques and so he went to Vienna to study under the two

leading masters of their craft in Europe. He stayed there for two years. He returned to Belfast in 1880 at the age of 40. It was then that he began his career in real earnest as an eye specialist and for the next 27 years he was to be Ulster's leading consultant.

He was a man of the world, a good business man, much travelled and with a strong personality, a man much in demand for his social graces, his name became a household word. He died in 1910 at the age of 70 after a short illness just three years after retiring. He had given great service to the Belfast Medical School both in the old Royal Hospital in Frederick Street and in the Royal Victoria Hospital, as well as in the Belfast Hospital for Sick Children.

Before leaving the Garibaldi and Joseph Nelson relationship I should mention that a member of one of our oldest and best known Roman Catholic families in Ulster fought on the side of the Pope against Garibaldi. In recognition of his services the Pope has allowed their family the privilege, ever since of being permitted to hold Mass in their private house—something which his grandson tells me exists even up to the present time.

GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI 1807–1882

To be able to draw Joseph Nelson away from his studies to fight for an unknown man for a country that he had never visited, shows that Garibaldi was indeed an incredible man. He was a non-conformist in every facet of his life—whether it be religion—married life—personal habits—clothes or politics. Until he was aged 50 no one took him seriously. He was born in Nice (then part of Italy). His language was mainly French although later it was Italian. His forbears were sailors and traders—humble but not poor. Until he was 40 years of age the sea was his livelihood—trawling for oysters and sardines, but from early life he was an avid student of history.

He saw other places getting independence and this gave him a strong feeling that Italy—then a fragmented country of eight states—should be unified and get its independence, and this became his one idea in life.

One of the states most opposed to unification was the Vatican, and this meant that the young Garibaldi from an early age became strongly anti-Pope and he remained so all his life. There were other revolutionary organisations in existence at that time and Garibaldi linked up with them only to be caught, captured and condemned to death, but he was fortunately able to escape. This meant that at the age of 28 he now was not able to stay in Europe and so he went off to Brazil by boat and he stayed there for some thirteen years. He led the life of a bandit, a privateer, a soldier, an adventurer, a corsair, in fact a sort of Robin Hood of the High Seas. During this time on one occasion he felt more than usually lonely and decided to marry. He says in his autobiography "I had never considered matrimony, but one day I scanned the shore from the deck of my ship with my telescope, I saw a suitable one so I went straight down, went up to her and said 'You must be mine'" and so he married Anita his first wife. Sadly she died tragically later in Italy.

It was in Buenos Aires that he got the idea of the Red Shirt and the Sombrero Hat—red for him was for revolution. In 1848 he got tired of South America and its intrigues but all this time he had kept in touch with the Italians and his exploits and reputation were well known in Italy. He tried to make friends with many people in Italy but without success and so he decided he must 'go it alone'. In about 1848 he set out on a two months passage to Italy. Sadly many of his companions did not come with him. They landed at Nice and had hoped to be able to join King Charles Albert of Piedmont who had declared war on Austria which was the main enemy, but the King would have nothing to do with him. From 1848 we find him fighting battles, winning and losing, unable to get unity due to jealousies, and yet withal there was always a strong feeling for him from the ordinary folk although they were mostly unwilling to come into the open and join him. This went on for some six years but again he was beaten and had to escape and go into exile. On one occasion he wrote to his wife Anita "you will despise these Italians, they are treacherous and dishonourable. The name of Italy is a laughing stock—they are a group of cowards". Anita, poor woman, when she was five months pregnant, cut off her hair and rode on horseback beside him. He went into exile, at first to the island of Maddalena. Britain at that

time was asked to give him shelter at Gibraltar but was not allowed to do so. In exile he again became a hunter and a fisherman. He made his own cigars—he had learnt this in South America and he had now time to write his memoirs.

In 1854 he arrived in London for a short visit. Anita was dead and he made a disastrous wedding with a society woman, a Mrs Roberts, and in London he met the other International revolutionaries. In the meantime he had been left some money and he bought a farmstead on the Island of Caprera between Corsica and Sardinia and this was to be for ever his home. He now wanted to settle down, he wanted solitude. The island was almost deserted except for eagles and goats (hence its name) in fact in time he owned half of the island—the other half belonged to an Englishman, a Mr. Collins, a very unsociable character. Garibaldi was a vegetarian, very anti-alcohol, but he always had a cigar. However, in 1859–1860 we now find a new Garibaldi. His fervour had got a hold on him again. He had collected a large following of Garibaldians—some were idealists, some were charlatans, some were chivalrous, some were enthusiasts—some of course were the outcasts of society—in fact he had produced a new cult. They were badly trained but enthusiastic and loyal. He was a born leader and a commander.

He was fearless and his followers had full confidence in him. He would be called a commando today—blowing up bridges, cutting telegraph wires, burning stores, food, fodder and clothing. At this time some of the northern states had joined together but the south was still fragmented—Naples, Rome, Sicily, Venice, were still independent. It was at this stage that the two boats set out from Genoa with the famous thousand men, a mixed bunch including among them Joseph Nelson. En route they collected Garibaldi from his island home. They were dressed in the red shirts, grey trousers, white ponches, black felt hat, and silk neckerchief. They reached Sicily with battles at Marsola, then Calatafimi, then Palermo, and then finally across the straits of Messina into Italy and then up the west coast via Salerno past Anzio to be halted by the river Volturno. The capture of this river, like the Rhine, opened the gates to Rome. It is interesting that this was a rather similar route to that taken by many of the British troops of the First Army when it will be remembered they were ordered by Winston Churchill “to attack the soft under belly of the Axis”.

Although finally success had come his way only a very small part of Italy was left unconquered and this took place some years later when Garibaldi returned, a disappointed, dispirited man, back to the obscurity and poverty of his cottage on the island of Caprera. This island had become a tourist attraction although his abdication back to the simple life was quite a fantastic story yet he was still a public hero. People gave large sums of money for his hair combings; his daughter sold his nail clippings at a great price (I hope they were all genuine). In Britain he had reached such popularity that there were seventeen different Staffordshire figures made of him, probably almost as many as were made of Queen Victoria or Shakespeare. Although a very ordinary humble little man he was greatly feted. Lord Shaftsbury thought he was an excellent adversary to the Pope. In London he visited Florence Nightingale, and Edward VII went to see him, apparently against his mother’s wishes. He got, it is said, one of the greatest welcomes in London that had ever been seen, although this was greatly disapproved of by the Queen herself and also by Disraeli. His welcome chiefly came from the working classes—although there was in London also, in Hydepark, an Irish demonstration with placards which said “No Garibaldi—Pope for Ever”.

He later became very crippled. He had a very badly injured ankle and the question of amputation arose. Dr. Partridge from London was paid £1,000 to go out and visit him twice. His leg took years to heal and he had to be wheeled about Caprera in a rather elegant bath chair supplied by his fans. He kept wearing his red shirts to the end. These were supplied regularly by his lady admirers although towards the end he refused to have more than two red shirts at any time—one to wash and one to wear.

He wrote in his leisure time three novels, a little poetry, and his memoirs which are completely unreadable.

He went to Rome in 1875 and got a great reception there but he said certainly that the Italy indeed was a very different country from

the one he had dreamed of. He became very anti-King and anti-government. His mind thought always of ancient Rome rather than of modern times.

He was married three times and he had great trouble to legitimise the third marriage. However, he was finally able to get his second marriage annulled and so he was able to marry the woman who was the mother of his two children. He died in 1882. Towards the end he had been living in great austerity—he drank water rather than wine, he ate raw shrimps, the daily papers were his table cloths. He enjoyed his cigars and strong coffee and honey in it to sweeten it.

Knowing that he was coming to his end he made his own funeral pyre. He wanted to be buried on a high pyre like Homer's Heroes. The pyre was to be made of aromatic wood aloes and myrtle. He wished his ashes to be put into a bottle and be planted under his favourite Juniper tree, but Rome would have none of it. They wanted a big funeral and so he was buried in the presence of Dukes, Ministers and deputies—survivors of "The Thousand" carried the pyre and thus ended possibly one of the most interesting and enigmatic men of the last century.