

Ulster Medical Society

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Joint Meeting With The Ulster Society of the History of Medicine

Managing the Heritage of Irish Medicine— Tales From the Archives

Dr Harriet Wheelock
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Professor McMullin:

So good evening, everyone. Welcome to this meeting, which is our joint meeting with the Ulster Society for the History of Medicine, and this is the annual Gary Love lecture, which has become a tradition each year, of having this lecture, and we're very pleased to have Mrs Love and son here tonight, but I'm now going to hand over to the President of the Ulster Society of the History of Medicine, to take us further and do the introduction.

Dr Hawkins:

Thank you, Mary Frances. We've been running this together with the Ulster Medical Society for the last 15 years, and the lecture is in honour of Professor Gary Love, probably one of the most distinguished medics of his generation, and he died, believe it or not, 19 years ago. It seems only like yesterday, but he was a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London, and the Censor of that college, that's a senior examiner. He also was a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, which is appropriate for tonight's talk. He was a very happy and gifted speaker, very relaxed when he was speaking, and he really enjoyed communicating with a receptive audience.

Harriet Wheelock, we're very fortunate to have her here, and I have some cog notes here on a sheet of paper. I haven't memorised them, so you'll forgive me. Harriet has a BA in history from Trinity College, and an MA in historical research from Lancaster University. Prior to working in the Royal College of Physicians, she worked in the Long Room in Trinity College and the National Library of Ireland. She has another MA in archives and records management from UCD, and an article based on her MA thesis was published. Harriet is responsible now for the management and development of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland's Heritage Centre, and the unique library archive and heritage item collections, and she's worked in the RCPI since 2010, first as archivist, and now as keeper of the archives since 2013, and during her time in the RCPI, the Heritage Centre has achieved full museum accreditation from the Heritage Council, and has taken in a number of important new donations, including the archive of the Royal Hospital Donny-

brook, and a unique collection of medical instruments from the old Reads cutlers and instrument makers on Parliament Street. So I have met Harriet several times, I'm not a fellow of the College of Physicians, but the Corrigan Club often meets, or has met in the College of Physicians, and I also have had business conducting penultimate year assessments for the Irish College, which takes me there on a regular basis. So, for those of you who don't know, this is the College of Physicians' building in Kildare Street. There is, I got this from the web, there is a person standing at the door, but I don't think it's Harriet. Harriet's domain really is in the basement. You're allowed out occasionally, I guess?—and you're even allowed out to Belfast, so we're very honoured that you're here today, and we look forward to hearing your lecture, so thank you.

Dr Wheelock:

Thank you, and thank you both very much for the invite to come and speak to you this evening. I'm quite often asked to come and talk about the College's collections, and sort of pick my favourite item, which I always feel is a bit like being asked to pick your favourite child, so rather than just doing the highlights of the collection, I wanted to talk to you a bit about the history of the College's collections, and how they were collected. I find this really interesting, because it sort of shows the thinking behind the doctors who decided that it was important to collect this material, and why they decided it was important to collect this material, and the story of what has been collected is inextricably linked to the history of the college, and also individuals who played important roles in medicine in Ireland. To give you a bit of background to those who don't know, the College of Physicians traces its origin back to 1654, which is the start of medical teaching in Dublin. So Dr John Stearne was appointed the first professor of medicine in Trinity College, but there was no medical school for him to teach in. In 1654, Stearne petitioned the authorities of Trinity College for the use of a building where he could teach medicine, and where he could also have a meeting place for physicians to come together and discuss new ideas, and he offered to restore this building at his own cost, so there would be no cost to Trinity College. The building which, so this is Speed's map from 1610, so you can see Trinity College over here. This building, number 13, is the building that Stearne asked for. It has originally been built by Dublin Corporation as a prison, and they'd then given it to Trinity College to use as a student hall of residence, which I don't know what they think about the comfort for students, but it had fallen into disrepair by the 1650s, and so Stearne asked for the use of this building, which was called Trinity Hall, and he intentionally chose a building away from the main site of Trinity College, because he was intending to teach anatomy to his medical students, and the teaching of anatomy was still quite controversial, and he was worried that if he taught the medical students anatomy in with the other students, they would be attacked and molested by the art students who

wouldn't approve of them studying anatomy. Trinity College thought this was quite a good idea to get their building restored at no cost to themselves, so they agreed to Stearne's proposal. He restored the building, and he established the fraternity of physicians of Trinity Hall, which is where the college traces its origins to. In 1667, King Charles II granted a royal charter to Stearne's fraternity, establishing it as the College of Physicians of Dublin, but it was still part of Trinity College. Under the 1667 charter, anyone who wanted to practise medicine within Dublin, or within a seven-mile radius of the city, was required to apply to the college for a licence to practise medicine. If you graduated from Trinity, you automatically got your licence. The 1667 charter doesn't survive, but we do have one item in the archive from that year, which is our grant of arms, so the arms were granted the same year, given to the College, and they're based on the arms used by the London College of Physicians, and you can see it's the spiritual hand descending to take the pulse of the temporal hand, so a reference to taking the pulse in medicine, and then it's over the harp of Ireland. The motto below is Reason and Experience, and it's still in use by the College today, and in the 1860s, the college decided to alter the arms. They wanted to put a crown on top of the harp to represent the union of Ireland and the British crown, but rather than just making the harp smaller, they decided to take out the hand going across to make room for it, so we now have a coat of arms that makes no sense. We have a disembodied hand hanging from a cloud over the harp of Ireland, with a crown on top. I don't really understand why they decided to do it that way.

The 1667 charter appointed Stearne as president of the new College for his life, but he was only able to enjoy this honour for two years, as he died in 1669 at the age of 45. Following his death, and particularly with the political turmoil in Ireland in the 1670s and '80s, the College failed to really develop, and they had quite a lot of trouble enforcing the charter and the powers that they had, and by the end of the Williamite wars, it was clear that they were going to require a new charter if it was to have any impact, so in 1692, a second royal charter was granted to the College, and this is the first page of it. It's 13 pages of vellum. There's not a single piece of punctuation in the entire document, so it's pretty impossible to read. It remains the governing document of the College to this day. I think I am probably the only person in the College who has read it, so any questions about the governance of the College I'm asked, I could probably say anything and the College would believe that it's in the charter. There's something in there about better pay for the archivists, I think.

The very first paragraph of the charter lays out the purpose of the charter, and why it's being founded, and it says that the King, duly considering the daily abuses of the most laudable and necessary act of physick in the Kingdom of Ireland, by the practise of mountebanks and empirics, and other ignorant and illiterate persons, to be impairing of the health and hazard to the life of his good subjects, and he decides

that for this reason, he will grant a new charter to remedy those and other mischiefs, and for the encouragement of the learned and experienced practitioners of physick on the island of Ireland. So to meet this aim, the new charter extended the licensing power of the College to all medics practising anywhere in Ireland. It also gave the College oversight of apothecaries and midwives. It renamed the College as the King and Queen's College of Physicians, after King William and Queen Mary, and it broke the link with Trinity College, so the College was established as an autonomous body. This was good for the college in terms of giving them power, not so good in that they lost their home, because they had to move out of Trinity Hall, because Trinity College no longer wanted to provide them with a building. The charter did identify a solution to this, and it specifies that the college is to be given one of the houses confiscated from one of the Jacobite supporters in Dublin. However, this never happened, so they didn't actually have a building.

One of the driving forces behind the new charter was Patrick Dun. Dun had been born in Scotland in 1642. He'd been practising in Ireland since the 1670s, and was elected president of the College for the first time in 1681. Importantly, Dun was physician to King William's armies in Ireland, which meant that he was able to use this influence with the King to petition for the new charter, and his reward for this was to be named as president of the new college in the second charter. However, unlike Stearne, he was not given this honour for his life, he was only president for one year and then had to stand for election. Dun seems to have realised the importance of collecting the history of the organisation, and he presented the College with a large book, this is from the title page of it, it says it's the gift of Sir Patrick Dun, the first president of the College, and in it he instructed that the College was to transcribe their most important documents. Luckily someone, presumably Dun, copied down the text of the 1667 charter into this book before they sent it back to London. We had to hand in our first charter to get our new one, and the only surviving text of the charter is in that book, so if Dun hadn't done that, we would never have known what was in the original charter. The text of the 1692 charter is also inscribed into it, and then it's followed by every important by-law or resolution that the College made up to the beginning of the 19th century, so it's essentially all the core records of the College were collected together in this one volume. Dun's development of the college collections didn't stop there. Dun had one son, called Boyle, who had died before him, so at his death in 1713, Dun left his considerable estates in trust. The income from the trust was to go to his widow for her life, or until she remarried, and at her death or remarriage, the income was to go to the College to found professorships. In addition, Dun left his house on the Quays to the College after his wife's death, and it was to be their new home. His final request was his library of books, which he left for the lawful use of the president and fellows of the college.

He stipulated about the care for the books, that one of the fellows was to be in charge of the books, and they must give bond and security to keep and preserve the said library and all and every book and books in it, and if any should be lost or wanting, to pay to purchase another of the same kind, the same paper or edition, or better. So Dun had obviously, as well as creating what became our archive, he also sets up the College library. In the first few years after, this is the Quays from the time, so it's not quite clear where Dun's house was, but it was somewhere on the Quays in Dublin, and in the first few years after Sir Patrick Dun's death, the College continued to hold their meetings in his house, so Lady Dun allowed them to hold the meetings in the house, and she also allowed them to keep the library there. The earliest account books for the college show a payment to Lady Dun's servant, for his trouble in attending to the College, and also half-a-guinea to be given to Lady Dun's maidservants for the same meetings. However, the relationship between the College and Lady Dun broke down fairly quickly, mainly over money. The College were really keen to get their hands on the income from the trust, and tried to encourage Lady Dun to let them have some of it during her life. Lady Dun quite rightly said it was hers, and she had no intention of giving it to the College. I think she eventually got so fed up with the College, that she left Dublin and moved to Bath, shutting up her house, and locking the College out. The house was destroyed by a fire in 1728, and a newspaper report at the time reported that, "so great a loss as was here has not been sustained by any fire in the city these many years, the house being full of exceedingly valuable goods, as well as clothes, plate and linen, little of which was saved for the owner. The part of them that was unconsumed being mostly taken away severally by the barbarous mob who expressed no pity for the loss, besides using such other taunting language, which they used as they ravaged the remains". The fire lost the College another chance at a home. Thankfully, Dun's library had already been removed from the house, so that wasn't destroyed. What exactly was in Dun's bequest is a mystery. In 1726, a note in the College minutes refers to Dr Helsham delivering the library of the College, together with the catalogue, to Dr Cope, to be lodged with him, which suggests that it's a size that is at least portable. About 20 years later, the library is described as containing some 300 volumes, and a catalogue which are held together by Dr Quinn, in a chest of lumber with some old books, which doesn't sound the best way to be storing the library. The first existing catalogue, or surviving catalogue of the library, is from 1794, so nearly 100 years after it was created, and it lists over 1,000 books, but only 100 of those were published before 1713, so only 100 of them could possibly have belonged to Dun. There is one book in the collection today that we can definitely identify as Dun's—this is it. It's quite difficult to see, but under his name, Pat Dun, is written on the title page, and it matches his signature in the minute book, so this is the only book in the College collection

today that we can definitely identify as coming from Dun's original bequest. Lady Dun continued to enjoy life, one hopes, in Bath, and also the income from the Dun trust, until her death in 1743, nearly 30 years after her husband. The transfer of the income from the trust to the College didn't solve all the problems, it just created more disputes about how they were going to spend it. Dun has intended to found professorships who would teach medicine in the College of Physicians. The College decided to appoint the professors, but have them teach in Trinity College, so that teaching would be centralised in Trinity, but the trust fund was making much more money than Dun had expected, which meant that the one professor was getting extremely well paid, so they decided that they would have three professors, but they were still being pretty well paid. It ended up with three acts of parliament to sort out the bequest from Dun, and one of these acts specifies that any leftover, the surplus of any clear rents and profits of the said Sir Patrick Dun's estates, after the payment of the yearly salaries, shall be applied to the support of the library, for purchasing medical books for the use of the students in physick, so the library was given a clear income to develop the collections, and this happened in about 1785.

At the same time, it was decided that the library would be kept in Trinity College, so it would be nice and convenient for the students to access it, and they would be stored in the room of the medical lecturers in Trinity. The College decided that one of the professors they'd appointed would be responsible for the library. They had to give a bond of security for the books, which was as Dun's will had directed, and the librarian was to be in attendance twice a week to lend books to the College fellows and medical students, and Dun's name was to be stamped on the covers of all the books to aid identification, and there was to be a full catalogue. This has led to no end of confusion in the College. Because the book says Sir Patrick Dun on the front, the assumption is it belonged to Sir Patrick Dun. Unfortunately it just means the library is still called Dun's Library, even though it's not his library, and there's lots of books that are published after Dun's death which have this marking on the front, so we know it doesn't mean it's his, but lots of people assume, they see that and quite naturally think this book belonged to Patrick Dun. In September 1787, Dr Stephen Dickson, Professor of the Institute of Medicine, was appointed as the first librarian of Dun's Library, so nearly 80 years after it was founded as a library. Dickson received quite a lot of money from the Dun's estate to purchase books, and by 1794, there were, as I said, just over 1,000 books in the library. However, it turned out that Dickson was not the wisest appointment, either as professor or librarian. In 1797, he was deprived of his professorship, having been admonished by the College, although it doesn't specify what the College were admonishing him for. He lost his position as librarian the same year, and two years later, the College of Physicians deprived him of his fellowship, as he had been absent from the

meetings of the College for two years without leave. For over 200 years, the College didn't know what had happened to Dr Dickson, other than that he hadn't turned up to meetings, but recently research by Professor Michele Holmgren has shown that Dr Dickson left Ireland, emigrated to Canada, where he published books of prose and poetry, before moving to Carolina where he lectured in chemistry, and died fairly well known. It seemed that on his departure from Ireland, Dr Dickson's luggage may have contained both money and property belonging to the College, as a subsequent enquiry found severe irregularities in the library accounts, and a catalogue of the library dating from 1800, alongside a lot of books, mentions that it has been lost by Dr Dickson. At the beginning of the 19th century, Dun's Library was on the move again. The funds from Dun's estate, as I mentioned, had been getting, more and more money was coming in from the trust fund, and they decided as well as the professorships, that they would build a hospital in Dublin, Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital. It was built between 1800 and 1815. It became the teaching hospital for Trinity College, and a room was to be provided in the new building for the College of Physicians, where they could hold their meetings and store their library.

It's about this time, when the College is moving into Dun's Hospital, that we get a first glimpse into the contents of the archive. This very worn piece of paper details what was in the chest deposited in the library, and essentially it's the core documents of the College that lists the charter, title deeds, diploma plates for printing the diplomas, the minutes of the College, the by-laws and the accounts, so all the kind of core records of the College. Right at the end, there's a list of miscellaneous papers. We can identify everything on this list, and we still have it in the archive today, even the miscellaneous papers. When I started cataloguing the archive in 2011, I found a bundle of papers which were labelled "Miscellaneous papers of no value", in the same hand as that scrap of paper. When I opened up the bundle of miscellaneous papers, they were in fact 18th century records of inspections of apothecary shops carried out by the College, so not of no value at all. It's amazing that they'd survived at all, particularly when, for over 200 years, they'd been labelled as useless, but we'd still held them, so we do have everything. It's possible that the new stability offered by the move to the Hospital encouraged the College to consider expanding their collections from beyond the library, and in 1827, the minutes of the College record that a report from the museum committee, having been read and received, it resolved that a provisional committee (very fond of committees) would be established of three members of the College, to be nominated to conduct the formation of a museum according to the principles outlined in the report just read. Unfortunately the report hasn't survived, so we know they intended to form a museum, but there's no identification of what they were planning to put into this museum. A catalogue of the museum was published in 1864, so about

30 years after they planned to establish a museum, and the contents basically fall into two parts. There's materia medica specimens, and there's artworks. The materia medica specimens were presumably for teaching purposes, because they still had the right to examine apothecary shops. Also doctors would have needed to have some pharmaceutical knowledge. In 1800, the College had printed its first pharmacopoeia. It printed a second edition in 1826. I think that the museum was formed the following year, probably means there is a link between the two, and then a final edition was published in the 1850s. The artwork is mainly medallions. So these are some of the materia medica specimens, we still have in the labelled jars. I can't find the key, so the jars all have numbers on them, but I don't have the key that tells you what's in the jar with that number, and then this kind of sort of brass medallion celebrating great men in medicine. And again nearly all the material listed in that catalogue from 1864 still exists, we still have it. 1864, the year the catalogue was published, is a really important date in the history of the College, because it's the year we moved into our building on Kildare Street. Despite the move to Dun's Hospital at the beginning of the 19th century, the College was still unhappy about their accommodation, and they felt that the location was too far from the city centre, and they wanted to be closer to Trinity College. They also unfortunately complained about sharing the entrance of the Hospital with the common poor of Dublin, who were coming for their medical treatment in the Hospital. There was also a bit of professional jealousy—the College of Surgeons had recently opened a very lovely building on Stephen's Green, and the physicians thought that they probably ought to have one as well. In 1824, the physicians petitioned the state for a grant of £100,000 towards the construction of a hall, library and museum. They stated their own income, which largely came from exam fees and their subscriptions, was insufficient to raise the sum needed to build such a hall themselves, and they pointed out the College of Surgeons had recently been given £30,000 to build a similar building. The petition was turned down by the government. Widdes, who was one of the earliest historians of the College, suggests that the reason for it being turned down, that surgeons were far more valuable to the government, particularly during the Napoleonic Wars, they needed them for the Army. They also needed them in the hospitals, whereas the physicians were generally private practice and so were less valuable to the government, so no, that was the case.

Over the next three decades, the College continued to struggle to find finance for a new building. Finally in 1860, the College received a letter from the Kildare Street club, offering them their old premises on Kildare Street for the sum of £6,000. The club, if you know Kildare Street, had just built the red brick building at the bottom, which is now the Alliance Française, and part of the Natural Library is in there, and a lot of the College fellows would have been members of the Kildare Street club. They must have

known the College were going to want to buy this building. The deal was struck, but before the club moved out and the College moved in, there was a fire on the site. The buildings that stood there were completely destroyed, and the College of Physicians, as the owners, collected the insurance money. We did very well out of this. It was a very well-insured building, so suddenly, after years of struggling, the physicians found themselves with a prime city centre location, and large pot of insurance money to build themselves a new building. They hadn't expected to need to build something, so they hadn't really thought about what they wanted. They were expecting to move into something that was already there. They set up yet another committee to discuss what they wanted in their building, and they eventually came up with the following criteria, so the building was to cost no more than £5,000, although this might be stretched to £8,000, which seems quite a big range. The building was to be two-storeys over basement level. It was to contain a grand college hall, a museum and a library, as well as a reading room, registrar's office, committee room and beadle's room. The front was to be of cut stone, either limestone, granite, or a mix of the two, and the style was to be anything but Gothic. There is no explanation of why they didn't want Gothic architecture. It's the only style stipulation they gave. The traditional view is that probably they were looking to build a building that sort of represented the history and the traditions, and something rather more classical, than going for a Gothic sort of modern architecture, and a little bit frivolous, and there's a lot of comments about it looking too much like a club, if they went for Gothic architecture. Six architects were invited to submit designs, and William Murray Junior was the design they liked best. His design was accepted. It cost more than £8,000, and it opened late in 1864. So the move to Kildare Street meant the College could really start to develop their collections, because they had a permanent space where they could keep things. They had built a purpose-built library. It was bigger than the collection they had, so there was space to develop the collections. They'd specified that there was going to be a museum, so there was space to put their museum collections as well, and there was essentially a lot of room to keep all those miscellaneous bits of paper that they didn't really know what to do with.

At the same time as the College keeping their own records, from the 1860s they start taking in the records of other medical institutions who used their building as a meeting place, so the Royal Academy of Medicine in Ireland has always met in the College, and we have their archive because they hold their meetings here, so it makes sense. The Cowpox Institute donated their records to the archive, the British Medical Association Dublin branch records are in the archive, because all those institutions used the building, so they just tended to leave their records there.

As well as all this, there were a lot of walls that needed decorating, so a lot of the paintings which are now in the College came in in the 1860s, either com-

missioned by the College or donated, and also, for those of you who know the building, the four statues in the main hall, so there's two in this picture and two at the other end of the building, were commissioned in the 1860s. They were all commissioned from John Foley, who was kind of the most famous sculptor at the time, and he died before finishing the fourth statue, so we have three-and-a-half early statues and the fourth was finished by one of his pupils.

In 1900, the College passed a resolution that they would record the items held in the collections and described them and where they came from, and they put them down in this very raggedy book. Anyone working in libraries or archives will recognise this as an accessions register, and it is an extremely valuable volume for me. I use it all the time, because it essentially tells us where everything we have come from. In 1900, they went back to try and identify the things that they currently owned, where they'd come from, and they put in 84 items that they could identify as having been given to them before 1900, and then they continued to record everything until the 1960s. There's over 250 accessions recorded in the book. An accession could be just one item, or it could be a whole collection of things, so it's a really useful record for us of what we have, and in some cases what we've lost, because there are things recorded in this book that we no longer have. Sometimes it says, there's a couple of statues that have been broken, and it says in the books that they have been broken, and there's a couple of things that just say they have been lost.

No history of the college collections is complete without reference to Dr Kirkpatrick, who is my personal hero. He was born in Dublin in 1869, educated in the Foyle College, and then at Trinity College. He was elected registrar of the College in 1910, and would hold the post until his death in 1954, so he put in a pretty long stint. When I was cataloguing the archive of the College, the period that Kirkpatrick is in charge, there is meticulous record-keeping and filing. He could have been an archivist, like he kept absolutely everything. It was all detailed, who sent it, what, where it came from, everything. The rest of the archive was in chaos, but his 40 years were perfect. He sort of held the post of honorary librarian, so following Dr Dickson's departure, several college fellows had cared more successfully for the library. When the library moved to Kildare Street in 1864, it was decided to employ, there were no qualified librarians at the time, but they employed someone as a librarian for the day-to-day management, and then there was a fellow of the College who sort of oversaw the running of the library, and they were initially called an honorary librarian. Dr Belcher was the first honorary librarian, from 1864 to 1869, but when he finished, nobody else seems to have taken over. Kirkpatrick never held the title of honorary librarian, but he did the work of an honorary librarian. He was a bibliophile, he had studied history before he undertook his medical degree. He was a medical historian, he published numerous biographies of Irish medical men, he published histories of a lot of the Dublin hospitals,

and he collected a huge amount of material. He had his own personal collection, but he also collected on behalf of the College, so during the years that he was registrar, he was going out to his colleagues asking them, did they know where things were, did they have their own personal collections, were there things they would give to the college? Lots of bequests came in during his period, including some of our most famous items. I forgot to put in a slide of this, we have Napoleon's toothbrush, it's the oddest item in our collection. It was probably donated to us as an act of spite against the College of Surgeons, but we're happy to have it. Napoleon's doctor, when he was on St Helena, was an Irish naval surgeon, Barry O'Mara. O'Mara happened to be on the Bellerophon, which was the boat taking Napoleon to St Helena. He spoke French, which meant he and Napoleon could talk to each other. They got on pretty well, and Napoleon requested that O'Mara would act as his personal physician while he was in captivity. The British Navy agreed, but requested that O'Mara would spy on Napoleon for them. O'Mara said, I'm quite happy to be his doctor, but I am not being a spy for you. The two got on very well, and Napoleon, who'd always given gifts to people that he liked, gave gifts to O'Mara. Because he was in captivity, he didn't have much to give him, so he gave him the snuff boxes, the toothbrush, there's a soap which has Napoleon's image on one side, and Josephine's on the other, and we also have a lancet that O'Mara used to bleed Napoleon. O'Mara was quite outspoken about the conditions Napoleon was being kept in in captivity. He didn't outright say the British were doing it on purpose to kill Napoleon, but he pretty much hinted that, and he wrote letters to the newspapers pretty much saying that. The British Navy eventually got so cross with him, that they removed him from his position, kicked him out of the Navy, and tried to prevent him practising medicine when he went back to the UK. Undaunted, he went back to London. He set himself up as a dentist. He displayed Napoleon's wisdom tooth which he'd removed, in his shop window, with a letter from Napoleon saying, great guy, great dentist, go and have your teeth done here!

When Napoleon died, O'Mara published an account of the time that they'd spent together. Napoleon, he says in the account, Napoleon had told him to keep a diary, and O'Mara said why? He said, "Doctor, when I'm dead, it will make your fortune." He said, "Don't publish it during my lifetime. As soon as I'm dead, you can publish it." He published it, it was an overnight best-seller, he ended up extremely wealthy as a result of having been Napoleon's doctor. O'Mara's collection passed through several Irish surgeons' hands, and in the 1930s, it belonged to Sir Frederick Conway-Dwyer, who was a surgeon and had been present at the College of Surgeons. On Conway-Dwyer's death, he left everything, including the Napoleonic collection, to a lady who was not his wife, but was somebody else's wife, I think considerably younger than him as well. There was a certain amount of speculation in the newspapers about their relation-

ship. One of them came out and said she was his mistress, and she took an act for defamation of character and she won, and she inherited everything, including the toothbrush, and the story I was told, when I started in the College, was that she gave the Napoleonic collection to the College of Physicians, because the College of Surgeons would not let her go to parties with Conway-Dwyer during his life, because they weren't married, so after his death, she gave the collection to the physicians to spite the College of Surgeons. I don't know if it's true, but I think it's a lovely story, so I intend to continue telling it. At his own death, Kirkpatrick bequeathed his own library and archive to the College. It included in it research he'd done into his own family history, and it is, I use this story a lot, but when I'm asked, what is my favourite item in the collection, so if I don't choose Napoleon's toothbrush, it's always Kirkpatrick's family history research, because I found out from that that he is my fourth cousin three times removed! I like that, I hope that he would be pleased that I'm there looking after the collections. Following Kirkpatrick's death in 1954, the collections entered a period of decline. Without his driving force to promote them, and with financial problems in the College, there was little time or money devoted to them. There was still a librarian, so this is the library from about the 1960s. Gladys Gardner, who is sitting in the middle of the picture, is a name that is still well known by a lot of the senior fellows in the College. She pretty much ran the entire College, so didn't have much time to devote just to looking after the library, and without someone within the college kind of pushing the library and the collections, they really entered into a decline.

In the 1960s, the College decided they would no longer purchase new medical textbooks, and that the library, instead of being a current medical library for the members and fellows, would just be a historical medical library. Whether this decision was taken, the reason given is that the members and fellows were not using the library because they had their hospital and their university libraries. Whether this was really the case, or it was more of a financial decision, I'm not entirely clear. Ten years later, Mr Gaskell, who was the head librarian for the Wellcome Library in London, was invited over, and asked to give a report on the College's library. It doesn't make good reading. He says, "One's impression is that the books are rarely examined. They contain treasures of which the College is only faintly, if at all, aware. In effect, the collection so far describe is a historic one, though it cannot be properly used as such in the absence of a separately arranged adequate body of reference material. The overwhelming impression made by the Sir Patrick Dun's library is that it's well on its way to being choked as a useful entity by its failure to adapt to modern conditions. This is now a historic library which, to speak frankly, masquerades as a current one." Thankfully Mr Gaskell's gloomy prophecy did not come true. The report seems to have jolted the College into action. The first professional librarian was appointed in 1976, and the post of honorary librarian

was reactivated in 1980 as the Dun's librarian. The Dun's librarian is elected after the fellows to oversee the Heritage Centre. Paul Darragh is the current Dun's librarian, and has been since I've been in the college, and has been a great support for me, and before him, Michael Scott, another northern-based Dun's librarian. A programme of book-cleaning and conservation began in the 1980s, and a catalogue following in the 1990s. However, the library has always had the main focus of the College. Even when I started, everything was described as the library, even though it was an archive and there were objects, it was just "the library", but it was still seen by the College as a resource for their members and fellows only. They didn't sort of think there was a wider interest, or they weren't sort of prepared to engage in this, but the growth of academic interest in the history of medicine in Ireland really changed this, so from the 1990s, a growing number of academic historians were looking at the history of medicine specifically. Ulster University's professor Greta Jones, published a co-edited collection, "Medicine, Disease and the State in Ireland", in 1999. In it, she expressed the hope that the light shone in this book will give courage to others to continue the exploration of this largely unknown territory, meaning the history of medicine, but it could also have meant the College's collections. The College didn't know what was in them, so how on earth were historians supposed to know what was in them? With the help of Professor Jones, and also Professor Mary Daly from UCD, led by Paul Darragh, the College received grant funding from the Wellcome Trust to catalogue the archive collection for the first time. There was no catalogue. I was appointed under that Wellcome Trust funding in 2010, so I was the College's first archivist, and I was presented with a collection, there were 200 boxes, and we had a rough idea of what's in them, but you know, knock yourself out. It was quite exciting to kind of be in that position, and there are very few completely uncatalogued collections like that. In 2013, on completion of the Wellcome Trust project and the retirement of the librarian, the post of keeper of collections was created, which brought all the historic collections together under one person, and I now have that post.

So what is actually in these collections? Since 2010, we've brought the collections together under the umbrella of the Heritage Centre, so as I said, we wanted to move away from just calling it a library, because it was really underselling that—the library is very important—there was a lot more than just a library there. It's divided into four sections, so there is Dun's Library, which contains probably 30,000 books, pamphlets and journals. We say probably 30,000, we're in the process of cataloguing the library. We have 15,000 records in the electronic catalogue. We think we're about halfway through, so we should probably get to 30,000. The earliest book dates from 1541. The medical books really stop in the 1950s, and the only new books by now are history of medicine books, not medical books. There was a review of the library done in 2012 to identify the core strength in

the collections, and they're listed here, so the core collection is really Irish medicine from about 1700 to 1950. We have about 20 special collections, which are the libraries of individual doctors that have been given to the College, and they are identified separately, because several of them write notes in their books, so you can tell quite a lot, not just about what a doctor's reading, but about what they're thinking and how they're responding to what they're reading. Then we also have a history of Irish medicine reference collection, which is the only place where we're adding new material to.

The archive, again it's really difficult to estimate how much is in there. One archive catalogue record could be for one piece of paper, or it could be for an entire folder this size. There's probably about 40,000 items in there. They tend to be unpublished documents, so letters, minute books, photographs, hand-drawn medical illustrations. We also have glass plate negative slides, that kind of thing. There's RCPI's own records in there, and they are a large proportion of the archive, but we also have 39 other collections. These include the papers of mainly Dublin hospitals that are largely hospitals that closed, and have transferred their records to us; the papers of other medical organisations or societies—they can be both professional and social. There were a lot of 19th century medical dining clubs. We have lots of lovely photograph albums of 19th century doctors having nice days out and nice dinners. We have some papers of individual physicians, so we have Sir Dominic Corrikan's papers, his medical papers, and then we also have the papers of medical historians, so Kirkpatrick, John Fleetwood, we have his research papers as well, and Eoin O'Brien, who published a biography of Corrikan, we have his research notes, so they can be a really useful resource as well. The genealogy collections, Kirkpatrick, as well as all the other things he did, collected any information he could find on any Irish-born doctor, and put it into a file. We have 12,000 of these files. Many of them contain details from records that Kirkpatrick studied in the Four Courts before the fire in 1922, so there's copies of wills, of Irish medical doctors, which have since, the original will has been destroyed and we still have a copy. We get a lot of questions about family history research, and if the person they're looking for is in the genealogical collection, that solves all our problems, there's a lot less research that needs to be done. We also have copies of the medical directories and registers every year from the 1850s, so again you can trace careers through those, where doctors worked, where they trained.

Probably the least well-known part of the collections is still the items. We don't have a catalogue of it. I don't know exactly what's in there, so how anyone else is supposed to is difficult. They're still really divided into two sections. There's items relating to the history of the College and Irish medicine, so portraits. Obviously we can see the portraits, the medals, things that doctors, lots of silverware presented to doctors as thank you presents, things like that, and

then we have medical instruments and the *materia medica* that I mentioned earlier. The medical instruments is probably the area where we're getting most donations at the moment. When I started in the College, there was a wall of display cases in the building, and when I started, they had the kind of presentation items you get from visiting universities, and they were fine, but they weren't particularly exciting, and we had cupboards full of beautiful 19th century medical instruments, so I swapped them round and put the instruments into these display cases, and immediately doctors who'd been coming into the College for years went, oh, do you collect those? There's lots in the cupboard in the hospital, or I've got some in the attic that I don't really know what to do with, so we've received a lot of donations like that recently, which is great, and partly because we don't know what we have, we tend to say yes to everything, in case we don't already have one. As a result, I have more pairs of old forceps than we could ever need, because every doctor owns one, but with the bag with those, there's nearly always something that we don't have, so it's better to take everything and sort it out later. Just in terms of, I was doing some research, and I put this graph together, so I went through the accessions registers, and this shows how many accessions we got every decade, from the 1860s, when we moved into the building, 1910s through to the 1940s, you can see there's a big spike, because Kirkpatrick is actively collecting. The numbers drop off. The 1960s and the 1990s, it's the 300th anniversary of the awarding of both royal charters, and we got lots of gifts from our sister colleges, which is why there's spikes in those years, and then from the 2010s, the numbers have massively shot up as the College has started to actively go out and seek things rather than just taking things in if people tried really hard to give them to us.

Recent accessions, as has been mentioned, we've just taken in the records of the Royal Hospital Donnybrook. Last year, or the year before now, we took in the records of the Irish Family Planning Association, which is a very modern series of records for us, but really important. Reads, which was the main instrument-maker in Dublin, we didn't have a single Reads instrument until the beginning of last year, when the gentleman who bought the old building that Reads used to be in found all their unsold 19th century stock in the basement, and donated them to the College, so I now have over 1,000 Reads-branded items. The apothecaries register in the top corner is from the 1740s. Someone actually put a picture of this up on Twitter, and said that their uncle had it in his attic, and didn't know what to do with it, and could they recommend where it should go?—and very nicely, everyone said they should give it to the College of Physicians, and they did, so again we weren't expecting that, but it's nice that people recognise that we are a suitable place for it to be placed as well.

What is the point in collecting all this material, other than to give me something to do? There is a growing interest in the collections, so in 2010, when I started, we had 64 researchers that year. 2017, the

slide is slightly out-of-date, we had 245 researchers, so we've had a huge increase in the number of people coming in to use the collections. It's partly because there is a growing interest in the material, but also, as we catalogue it more, it's much easier for people to find out that we have something that is of interest to them. Since 2008, over 50 books have been published which have, at least part of them have been researched using our collections, so there is a lot of material in there, there is a lot of interest. It isn't just a little project for me to work on down in the basement, as Stanley suggested. The College is also, I think, in the last ten years, I think, under Paul's direction, really understood that there is a value in protecting this material, and that there's a value in promoting Ireland's medical heritage, that there's an interest to the medics, but there's an interest to the wider public as well, so in 2018, we received museum accreditation from the Heritage Council, which recognises that we're caring for the collections to best practice in the sector. Hopefully this encourages people to give donations to us, because we're showing that we're looking after it properly, and it also, I think the College have really bought into ... they really like the idea of a museum, and we are hoping that we're going to be able to build or create a more publicly accessible museum space in our building, because at the moment we don't really have anywhere to publicly, allow the public to come in and engage with the collections. You can make an appointment as a researcher, and come in and spend time in the reading room, but there's a whole group of people who'd like to just, when they're in Dublin, come in and have a look, and we don't have that space at the moment, and it's what I hope we're going to be able to get towards in the next few years, so that some of the really beautiful things we have can be on display and can be accessible for people to view. So I hope that's given you a bit of an idea of what we have in the collections. I hope you found it interesting, and if anyone has any questions, I will do my best to answer them. Thank you.

Dr Hawkins:

That was wonderful. You should point out the lady standing on your left, is Mary Horgan.

Dr Wheelock:

Is the first female president of the College in 350 years. I am waiting for her portrait to go up in the building, because every time I do a tour, I am asked why we have no women on the walls, but it is currently being painted.

Dr Hawkins:

Well, I'm happy to say that I was in the College of Physicians about 18 months ago, and there was a photographic portrait of her hanging there.

Dr Wheelock:

Yes, we have put that up.

Dr Hawkins:

Yes, so there you are. So, that was a tour de force, thank you, and a very entertaining delivery, so thank you very much. I'm sure you're all persuaded about the value of what you have, and how important it is, so Angela, you have a question?

Miss Angela Carragher:

Are you familiar with the Dr Clarke photographic collection, that's in the National Photographic Archive?

Dr Wheelock:

No.

Miss Carragher:

He took photographs, and he was the son of a general practitioner, also called Dr Clarke, and he graduated in 1904, and he acquired a camera, and took lots of photographs, and the photographs tend to be of people in and around Stephen's Green. Automobiles were brand new on the streets, so there are photographs of automobiles, some of which have been identified as specific cars, but a grouping of his photographs show lots of physicians in and around that area of Dublin, and I just wonder if anybody has come to you and asked you to try and collate his photographs, which tend to be streetscapes, but including many doctors with perhaps some of the photographs that you may already have identified the physicians.

Dr Wheelock:

No, they haven't—that's really interesting. I didn't know that that collection was there, because we do have a lot of like late 19th/early 20th century photographs of the physicians who were involved in the College, so if they are, we would probably be able to help identify some of them, but I didn't realise that was there to kind of know to go and look for it. That's really interesting.

Dr Hawkins:

Mark?

Dr Mark Gormley:

Thanks very much for offering me the first instance I can think of, where Twitter had a positive role in society. Thinking of, you touched at the end, the importance of engaging with the public, it's what gives life to this, and its real potential, and I think the Crumlin Road Prison in Belfast is a very good example of something that we wouldn't have perceived as a tourist attraction 30 years ago. I think something of a museum could get fitted into the tourist network, possibly one way that, explaining what are these things and how they existed, and to bring a new relevance to what happens today, seems to be one way of engaging with the public.

Dr Wheelock:

Yeah, it's something we, so the building on Kildare Street is used for our own events, but we also use it

for, as an external event centre, so we open to the public for Heritage Week, which is a week in August when lots of places are encouraged to hold events, and we do tours two times a day for a week, so I can't speak by the end of the week because I've normally lost my voice, but people love coming into the building, because it is a beautiful building, and we normally try to put some exhibition together around an aspect of medical history, and there is a lot of interest, and it's finding how we can let people into the building in a way that doesn't impact on the other uses of the building, which is quite challenging. But where we're based, we are in the centre of Dublin's museum district, so footfall is not a problem for us. The tourists, during the summer we have one row of exhibition cases in the building, and we change the exhibition once a year, and during the summer, if there's nothing on in the building, we put a sign outside saying, "Free exhibition open ten till four", and that's all the advertising we need to do, because people are walking past it, so there's definitely an appetite there, it's just working out how we can engage it.

Dr Hawkins:

And for those who don't know, the College have other buildings in the vicinity. There's Setanta House, where there are administrative buildings, and also Frederick Street South, so are there others?

Dr Wheelock:

No, we're three buildings on three adjoining streets.

Dr Hawkins:

So where you work and operate is the historic part, and in the basement you have a wide range, and my wife, Fiona, visited your apothecaries archives, because she was tracing the history of some of her family ancestors who were apothecaries in Skibbereen, so you were very helpful to us on that occasion.

Dr Colin Mathews:

May I ask, is the title of the College still King and Queen's?

Dr Wheelock:

No, so in the 1890s, it was changed to the Royal College of Physicians. There were letters patent passed, and the only thing that ... because the royal charter says what our name is, so to change our name, it requires, well it did require letters patent, it now requires an act of parliament, so we are still the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, and there's never been, as far as I'm aware, any discussion about dropping the Royal, because the College, there was an act, in 1921, they had to put an act through the new Dáil to bring the royal charter into the new Irish legal system, and in the 1970s the College paid for a private act of parliament to tidy up some of the more outdated parts of the charter. For example, until 1972, we were entitled the bodies of six executed criminals

every year for dissection. Now, we hadn't asked for them in quite a long time, but it was still a like a valid clause in our charter, so the 1972 act, essentially it took out nearly 60% of the original charter. It removed all these clauses that no longer made sense, but at neither point, there doesn't seem to be any discussion about dropping the Royal bit.

Dr Hawkins:

There was a time when giving over a body of a hanged criminal to the anatomists was part of the punishment, so that the body was taken apart, and was less likely to be, to enjoy resurrection.

Dr Wheelock:

If you go on the Ghost Bus tour of Dublin, they tell you entirely inaccurate stories about dissections taking place in the building—don't believe a word of it.

Dr Hawkins:

So, Randal?

Professor Randal Hayes:

This in a way is really of remarks. A few years ago, I went to an exhibition in [?] and some of the medical books that they had, it was absolutely fantastic. One memorable one was a book which related to the work of [?] who was a physician in Baghdad about 1100, and there it said that his love of medicine was almost as much as his love of wine and women!

Dr Wheelock:

Words to live by!

Dr Hawkins:

And I think anyone who's heard Harriet speak with great enthusiasm this evening about her job will realise that for you, this is more than a job?

Dr Wheelock:

Yes!

Dr Hawkins:

Yes, so when you enjoy your work, suddenly it isn't work anymore, I guess? Any more questions?—one final question?—Ursula?

Ms Ursula Mitchel:

[The mention?] of the apothecaries part, because I'm the university archivist at Queen's, and some students, I get queries from, students, medical students especially, for, in the 19th century, maybe didn't finish their medical degrees, for whatever reason, maybe they didn't have the finance, and maybe moved into the apothecaries? Would there be many records about the north of Ireland at that time, for apothecaries?

Dr Wheelock:

So the Apothecaries Hall, which was based in Dublin, awarded the LAH, the Licentiate of Apothecaries Hall, which from the 1850s was confusingly a

medical degree. My understanding is that, I was told by one of the doctors in the college, if you failed the medical degree in Trinity, you went to RCSI, and if you failed RCSI, you went to the Apothecaries Hall, and nobody failed Apothecaries Hall. I know you're an apothecary, Stanley.

Dr Hawkins:

Well, I didn't have to sit any exams.

Dr Wheelock:

So, Apothecaries Hall still exists. The licence stopped being a recognised licence in the 1970s. They have since, they've actually, their archive is now with us, and essentially the Apothecaries Hall have moved into the Heritage Centre, and their secretary, and hosts their meetings. Like the College, all apothecaries were supposed to register with Apothecaries Hall, but they didn't have any real way of enforcing that, so not all apothecaries do, so we do, I have the lists of anyone who registered their apprenticeship, or their master apothecary or journeyman apothecary, but not everybody had to do it, and then in the 1880s, the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland was set up to register the pharmacists, but I understand that they haven't really kept any of their historical records, and they're just, as far as I can see, not interested in that, so we might have them, but it really depends on them having chosen to register.

Ms Mitchel:

Yeah, I know, it's just that I get queries sometimes.

Dr Hawkins:

The last.

Mr Eugene Mackle:

I have a comment. My recollection is that in terms of fire, three maids died in the roof space. However one survived due to the bedroom of the accountant.

Dr Wheelock:

Yes, that is true. I don't like to mention that, because it slightly ruins the funny story, but yes. The Kildare Street club still had staff in the building, and three maids were killed in the fire, but the fourth maid did survive because she was in someone else's bedroom.

Dr John Logan:

Just in regard to the, not finishing Queen's, I think the reason for doing that was financial, because once you had your class certificates, you could go somewhere else to get a medical licence, and if you stayed at Queen's, you had to pay more, in other words you could start six months earlier.

Dr Wheelock:

There was until recently an American doctor who was still practising on his LAH, because they used, I used to get every year the letter for his revalidation, that I had to say yes, he qualified in the '60s, and is

the only person that I have ever been asked to validate, but their qualification is still what it was.

Professor McMullin:

Harriet, I'd like to thank you again for what was an absolutely wonderful Gary Love lecture, and a little token of our appreciation—thank you very much indeed.