



RESUSCITATION GREATS

Dr. William Cullen and Lord Cathcart

David J. Wilkinson

Boyle Department of Anaesthesia, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Barts and The London NHS Trust, London EC1A 7BE, UK

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Introduction

Early attempts at resuscitation of the dead or apparently dead, both animals and humans, have been recorded for centuries. Modern 'interpretation' of anecdotal records suggests successes for Elisha in the *Old Testament*¹ Vesalius and Hooke in the 16th and 17th centuries^{2,3} and Bruhier and Jackson in the early 18th Century.^{4,5}

It is generally accepted that the inception of a Society in Amsterdam for the recovery of drowned persons in 1767⁶ provided the impetus for further research in the UK and Europe and subsequently around the world particularly after the translation and publication of their minutes by Johnson in 1773⁷ and then again by Cogan in the same year.⁸ Although the work of the Amsterdam Society was reported in France in 1768⁹ and in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in London in 1771,¹⁰ it was the creation of a London Society by Hawes and Cogan in 1774¹¹ that was to stimulate further research and the adoption of the continental methods of resuscitation.

Dr. William Cullen

Early career

William Cullen was born in Hamilton, Lanarkshire on 15 April 1710. His father, the factor to the Duke of Hamilton, arranged for his early education

at the local grammar school and then in 1726, he attended Glasgow University for a general studies arts course. He was then apprenticed to an apothecary in Glasgow, John Paisley, and on completion of this apprenticeship he became a ship's surgeon in 1729 to a merchant vessel commanded by a relative sailing between London and the West Indies. After further time as an assistant apothecary in London and following the death of his father and elder brother, he returned to Scotland and started a general practice in Auchinlee, Shotts, Lanarkshire in 1732.

In 1734, he went to Edinburgh to study medicine for 2 years and then set up practice in Hamilton as a physician and surgeon. Between 1737 and 1740, William Hunter was his pupil and they remained lifelong friends. In 1740, Cullen took his MD in Glasgow and after marrying in 1741, Miss. Anna Johnstone, and becoming a town councillor and magistrate he eventually moved to Glasgow and settled there in 1744. He had 11 children.^{12,13}

University life

Cullen had devoted considerable time to the study of natural sciences while in practice in Hamilton and had sufficient a reputation that, on moving to Glasgow, he was able to lecture at the University on botany, material medica and chemistry. He was regarded as a good lecturer and in 1747 he was appointed the first Lecturer in Chemistry to the University. In 1751, he became Professor of Medicine in Glasgow but the Medical school did not develop

E-mail address: davidwilkinson1@compuserve.com.



William Cullen from <http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/detail/id/1219463>.

substantially and he found his private practice limited so in 1756 he moved to Edinburgh to take up a joint chair in chemistry which became his alone the following year. In 1766, he was appointed Professor of Medicine in Edinburgh where his popularity remained undiminished. His lectures were published in 1777 and were considered to be the basic text for medical teaching amongst the student body at that time. His teaching was also highly regarded as he lectured in English instead of Latin.¹³ In his final years, his intellectual prowess and health decreased and he died on February 5th 1790.¹⁴

Lord Cathcart

Charles Schaw Cathcart (21/3/1721–14/8/1776) was the 9th Lord Cathcart, taking the title after the death of his father, Charles, in 1740. A soldier of great distinction, like his father, he commanded the 20th regiment of foot under the Earl of Stair in 1742. He was aide-de-camp to the Duke of Cumberland and accompanied him in Flanders, Scotland and Holland. He was lucky to survive being shot in the face during the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745. He was also wounded at Culloden in 1746. He became a colonel in 1750 and a lieutenant-general in 1760. Highly regarded by the Duke of Cumberland, he was retained in his service as Lord of the Bedchamber. He had married Jean Hamilton in 1753 and had three children. After inheriting his mother's



Lord Cathcart from www.tate.org.uk/britain/exhibitions/reynolds/roomguide2.shtm.

estates he sold the family home of Castle Sundrum in 1758.¹⁵ In 1763, he was created a knight of the Order of the Thistle and between 1768 and 1772 was a special ambassador to the Russian Court of Catherine the Great based in St Petersburg. In 1773, he was elected Rector of Glasgow University, a position he held for 2 years.¹⁶ In addition from 1773 until his death he was Lord High Commissioner in the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland. His other notable achievements were to be 1 of 16 representative peers of his country, its first Lord Commissioner of Police and the lieutenant-general of the forces stationed within its borders. He had two portraits painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds which, at the request of Cathcart, clearly showed the patch with which he covered his facial scar. There is a further portrait of him with the Duke of Cumberland at Culloden. He died in London in 1776.¹⁷

Cathcart and Cullen

Where and when our two protagonists met is purely a matter for conjecture. As can be seen from their brief biographies both were influential men in Scotland who would have mixed in the same social circles. Although Cathcart was based in Glasgow and London while Cullen was resident in Edinburgh there could be little doubt that their paths would cross on occasion.

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