



THE OSLER LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 109 · 2008

Osler Library of the History of Medicine, McGill University, Montréal (Québec) Canada

IN THIS ISSUE

IN THIS ISSUE, DAVID S. Crawford, Emeritus Librarian, who now has more time to devote to the history of medicine, celebrates the 175th anniversary of McGill University's first graduate and the first medical graduate in Canada, William Logie. As he explains, the process was anything but smooth and ultimately involved an appeal to the Court of King's Bench. (David Crawford's activity in medical history actually began well before his retirement. Among other activities, he was responsible for producing our on-line Canadian Health Obituaries data-base, a hugely popular resource for the obituaries from Canadian medical journals from 1833-2000, <http://www.mcgill.ca/osler-library/collections/links/biographies/>)

Our display area continues to attract attention. We highlight a seminar and exhibition on Johann Caspar Lavater and the tradition of physiognomy, prepared by



Professor Nikola von Merveldt of the Département de Littérature et de Langues Modernes, Université de Montréal. The event began with an interdisciplinary seminar with guest speaker Professor John B. Lyon of the University of Pittsburgh. This delightful exhibition will remain in place until mid-June when another guest curator, Dr. Allister Neher of the Humanities Department of Dawson College, will present an exhibition entitled, *Anatomy and the Representation of Knowledge*, a fascinating topic that focuses on European anatomical prints from our collections from the 16th to the 19th century.

A regular contributor, Dr. Charles Roland, Hannah Professor of the History of Medicine Emeritus, McMaster University inaugurates what will become a regular column entitled, *Roland's Canadian Medical History Miniatures*. In each issue, he will present a miniature history of some of Canada's well-known and less well-known medical figures and events.

Finally, we note here, the passing of Barbara Tunis, nursing historian and the charming and intrepid researcher, who, 25 years ago, did the spadework that resulted in just about everything that we now know about William Logie. ❁

MONTREAL, MEDICINE AND WILLIAM LESLIE LOGIE: MCGILL'S FIRST GRADUATE AND CANADA'S FIRST MEDICAL GRADUATE. 175TH ANNIVERSARY, 1833-2008

by David S. Crawford, Emeritus Librarian, McGill University.

May 24th 2008 is an important anniversary in the history of McGill University, its Faculty of Medicine, and medical education in Canada. On that day, 175 years ago, William Logie, McGill's first graduate and Canada's first medical graduate, received his degree.¹ To appreciate the significance of this achievement, one needs to review the state of medical education and "medical politics" in Montreal in 1833.

Between 1820 and 1840, much was changing in Montreal, including many aspects of medical education and licensure. Major events included the granting of a Royal Charter to McGill College in 1821, and the opening of the Montreal General Hospital (MGH) in the same year.² There was considerable demand for a medical school to be established in the British North American colonies, because the only way to get a medical qualification at that time was to study in either Europe or the United States. Going to

Barbara Tunis and Edward Bensley have explored both Logie's life and career, and medical licensure in Lower Canada in great depth.

References 1 and 12 are essential reading.

Going to Europe was costly and quite dangerous, while going to the United States could expose students to revolutionary ideas.



Europe was costly and quite dangerous, while going to the United States could expose students to revolutionary ideas. To quote Archibald Hall, "On October 20th, 1822, a meeting of the medical officers of the hospital was held, consisting of W. Robertson, W. Caldwell, A.F. Holmes, J. Stephenson, and H.P. Loedel, for the purpose of taking into consideration the expediency of establishing a medical school in this city."³ This school, the Montreal Medical Institution (MMI), was founded in 1823, though Hall reports that the first (twenty-five) students were actually enrolled in the 1824/25 session.

William Robertson and William Caldwell had attended lectures at the University of Edinburgh but had not graduated from there. (Robertson acquired a degree in 1832 — *honoris causa* from the University of Vermont. Caldwell acquired his degree in 1817, by attestation, from Marischal College, Aberdeen). Andrew Fernando Holmes and John Stephenson were both graduates of the University of Edinburgh (their graduation theses are in the Osler Library), and Henry-Pierre Loedel received his degree in England.⁴

The opening of the MMI was not greeted with enthusiasm by all sectors of the community because it had decided to require a knowledge of Latin and English but not French. Certainly the francophone community did not find this satisfactory, and frequently expressed its discontent over the policy. In 1825, at a farewell dinner with his Quebec City medical colleagues before moving to England, Pierre de Sales Laterrière said:

"The rapid improvements which have but lately taken place in the Medical Profession in Canada, and for which the

When the establishment of the Montreal General Hospital was being discussed in 1819, one of its fiercest opponents was the Member of the Legislature for Huntingdon, Michael O'Sullivan. He recommended expanding Hôtel Dieu hospital instead, and also foresaw the opening of a medical school connected to the proposed hospital – which he also opposed. Indeed, as he had predicted, the opening of the Montreal General Hospital led directly to the creation of a medical school.

O'Sullivan had a reasonable point of view but an unreasonable way of expressing it, which led to his famous duel with William Caldwell, one of the founders of the MGH and the MMI.*

* Bensley, E.H and Tunis, B.R. The Caldwell - O'Sullivan duel: a prelude to the founding of the Montreal General Hospital. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 1969 June 21; 100(23): 1092-1095. (A digitised version is freely available at PubMed Central; see <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/picrender.fcgi?artid=1946046&blobtype=pdf>)

*country is indebted to the many sacrifices incurred by heads of families to procure Medical Education to their children out of its limits, ought to impress on the public, and particularly our Legislature, the indispensable (sic) necessity of some Medical School being established among us, where the student might acquire in his native country, that Anatomical and practical knowledge which is the only fundamental basis of Medical Science, and which have to this day, been acquired at such an enormous expense, as must have in some instances precluded entry in the Profession, to many who might have become its ornaments, and contributed to its advancement. I am aware that new establishments have been erected, but which do not appear to answer the purposes intended, nor to meet the views and approbation of the Legislature."*⁵

In January 1827, the *Journal de Médecine du Québec / Quebec Medical Journal* returned to the subject and commented:

"Four Medical Gentlemen, viz: Drs. Caldwell, Robertson, Stephenson and Holmes, have, since a few years, been engaged in giving lectures on various departments of Medical Science, and the success they have encountered, is a

*flattering testimony of their qualifications to the task. We must, however, deplore that some defect complained of by the great majority of the Profession in Montreal, should have given rise to a spirit of division, which we fear is to be referred to political dissensions kept up by national prejudices."*⁶

The authorities were certainly aware of this issue and Charles Ogden, the Solicitor-General of Lower Canada, commenting to the Governor, Lord Aylmer, on the proposed Statutes of McGill College in 1831, noted, "I incline to think that this evil [francophone students needing to go abroad to obtain a medical degree] would be aggravated if the restriction [of language] were suffered to exist."⁷ However, his suggestion to lift the restriction on French was not accepted.

As today, medical education was linked with medical licensure, which in Quebec began on 30 April 1788, when the governor, Lord Dorchester, proclaimed "An Act or Ordinance to prevent persons practicing physic and surgery within the Province of Quebec, or

Midwifery in the towns of Quebec or Montreal, without Licence."⁸ This Act created Boards of Medical Examiners in both Quebec City and Montreal; all Board members were appointed by the Governor. By 1822, the Montreal Board had only three active members: Henry Loedel (father of Henry-Pierre), Daniel Arnoldi (former teacher and partner of Andrew Holmes), and William Robertson (one of the founders of the MGH and the MMI).⁹

In 1823, at the rather self-serving suggestion of the medical officers of the MGH, the Governor, Lord Dalhousie, modified the composition of the Montreal Board, ruling that in future this Board was to consist of "persons holding diplomas or testimonials from Medical Institutions in Great Britain, of those who are at present Medical Officers of the Montreal General Hospital."¹⁰ Drs. Robertson, Stephenson, Caldwell, Holmes and H-P Loedel were appointed, while the appointments of all former members were terminated.¹¹ To quote Tunis, "This created an uneasy situation in the profession. But more serious was the fact that those who already conducted the only medical school in Montreal or Quebec were now the sole possessors of the power to license practitioners."¹²

It was also seen as a blatantly anglo-centric move, since the MGH regulations (Chapter 8, Article 3) stated that one had to possess a degree or professional qualification from a university or college "within the British dominions" in order to be granted an appointment at the MGH — which excluded physicians who had obtained their medical degrees in the USA or Europe (many francophone students preferred to study medicine in

France). Dissatisfaction with the medical registration Act of 1788 had been widespread prior to 1823 (efforts had been made to repeal it in 1820 and 1822) but now both Drs. Arnoldi and Loedel Sr. (whose appointments to the Montreal Board had just been terminated) joined the chorus of complaints and petitions. Finally, in 1831, the 1788 Act was repealed and a new Act passed by the legislature in Quebec: "An Act to repeal a certain Act or Ordinance therein mentioned, and to provide effectual Regulations covering the Practice of Physic, Surgery and Midwifery."¹³

This 1831 Act retained separate Boards in Montreal and Quebec City but completely changed the situation by calling for the medical practitioners themselves to select the members

of both Boards. At the initial election meeting for the Montreal Board, the four surviving members of the 1823 Board (Robertson, Stephenson, Caldwell, and Holmes; H-P Loedel had died in 1825) were not elected — in fact, all had been nominated and seconded but were defeated by a "decided majority."¹⁴

The new Montreal Board consisted of twelve members, with Daniel Arnoldi (from the pre-1823 Board) as Chairman. Not only was the new Board different in composition, it was also different in its political views, and included several supporters of Louis-Joseph Papineau, leader of the Reform Party. Papineau was one of those who had accused Robertson of indirectly causing three deaths during the 1832 riots.

Papineau was one of those who had accused Robertson of indirectly causing three deaths during the 1832 riots.

It is worth commenting briefly on the impact of local politics. The fact that the participants knew each other is not surprising in a city with a population of about 20,000 and probably not over 60 physicians. It was a very inbred community where personal and political differences could easily influence professional actions.

Until 1833, Montreal was under the control of appointed local magistrates rather than a mayor and council. In 1832 an election riot occurred: William Robertson, one of the magistrates on duty, read the Riot Act and was accused of ordering the troops to fire into the crowd and of allowing them to shelter in the Faculty's lecture rooms (whose windows were "shivered to atoms").¹⁵ After an enquiry, both Robertson and the troops were exonerated but in October 1832 the *Courant* noted, "We believe that the feelings of some individuals in this city, relative to the medical school, are not to be considered as altogether unconnected to this outrage."¹⁶

Montreal's first City Council, elected in June 1833, included Robert Nelson, whose brother Wolfred was vice-chair of the Board of Medical Examiners. Both Nelson brothers were members of the 1831 Board, and Wolfred presided at the meeting at which Logie's candidacy was rejected. In 1848, both Wolfred Nelson and Daniel Arnoldi were awarded honorary degrees by the McGill Faculty of Medicine — clearly an effort to "mend some fences."

¹² Tunis, B.R. Medical licensing in Lower Canada: the dispute over Canada's first medical degree. *Canadian Historical Review*. 1974, Dec; 55 (4): 489-504.

¹³ *Canadian Courant and Montreal Advertiser*, 1832, Oct. 10.

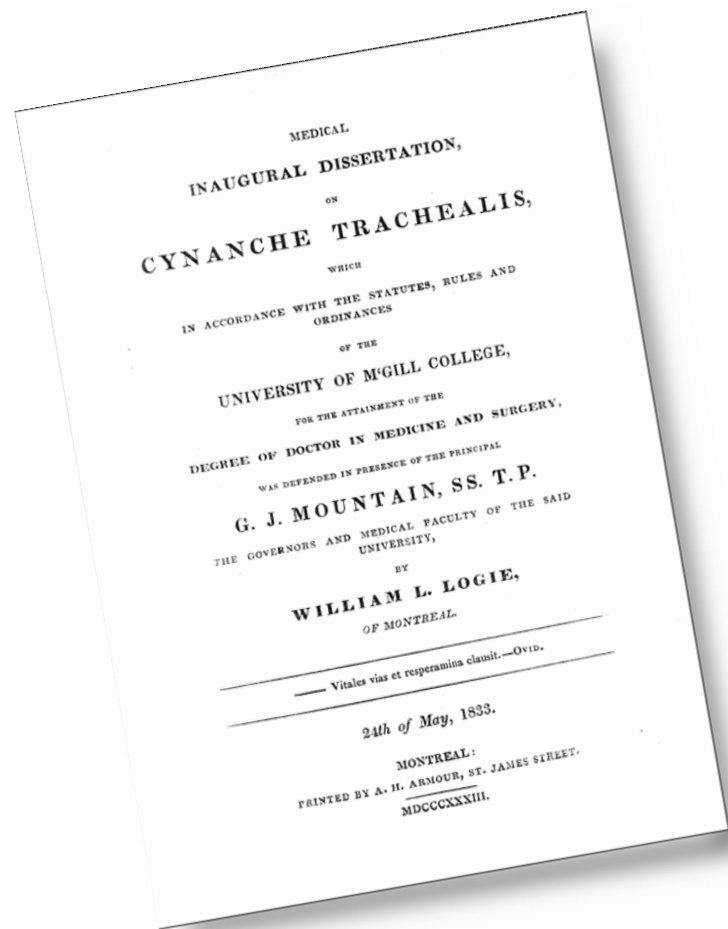
In 1833 as now, McGill had no building suitable for a convocation; the ceremony took place at the Museum of the Natural History Society on St James Street, attended by members of the clergy (both Protestant and Roman Catholic), the Legislature and the Bar.



Meanwhile, the Montreal Medical Institution had been training students, but was unable to get authorisation from the Governor to grant degrees. In contrast, McGill College had received a Royal Charter in 1821 that allowed it to grant degrees, but was involved in a legal dispute with James McGill's estate and had neither money nor students. For legal reasons, the College had appointed five professors in 1823 including a professor of medicine, Thomas Fargues (yet another Edinburgh graduate), who lived in Quebec City and never taught in Montreal.¹⁵ The solution for both institutions was clear: in 1828 the MMI suggested that its members should be appointed professors of the College. Though initially only one of them could hold the title of Professor, pending changes to the Statutes, this suggestion was approved by the Governors of McGill at their meeting of June 29, 1829, when "the Members of the Montreal Medical Institution were engrafted upon the College as its medical faculty."¹⁶ Doctors Caldwell, Robertson, Holmes and Stephenson became the Medical Faculty of the University of McGill College. Stephenson was both Secretary of the MMI and Registrar of McGill, while Robertson became the head of the Faculty.

The students who had been enrolled in the MMI thus became students of the new Faculty, and on May 24, 1833, William Leslie Logie became its first graduate, awarded the degree of Doctor in Medicine and Surgery. In fact, Logie was McGill's first graduate in any subject, and was the first person to receive a medical degree in Canada.¹⁷

Logie was born in late 1810 or early 1811, in or near Montreal. He enrolled at the MMI in 1828

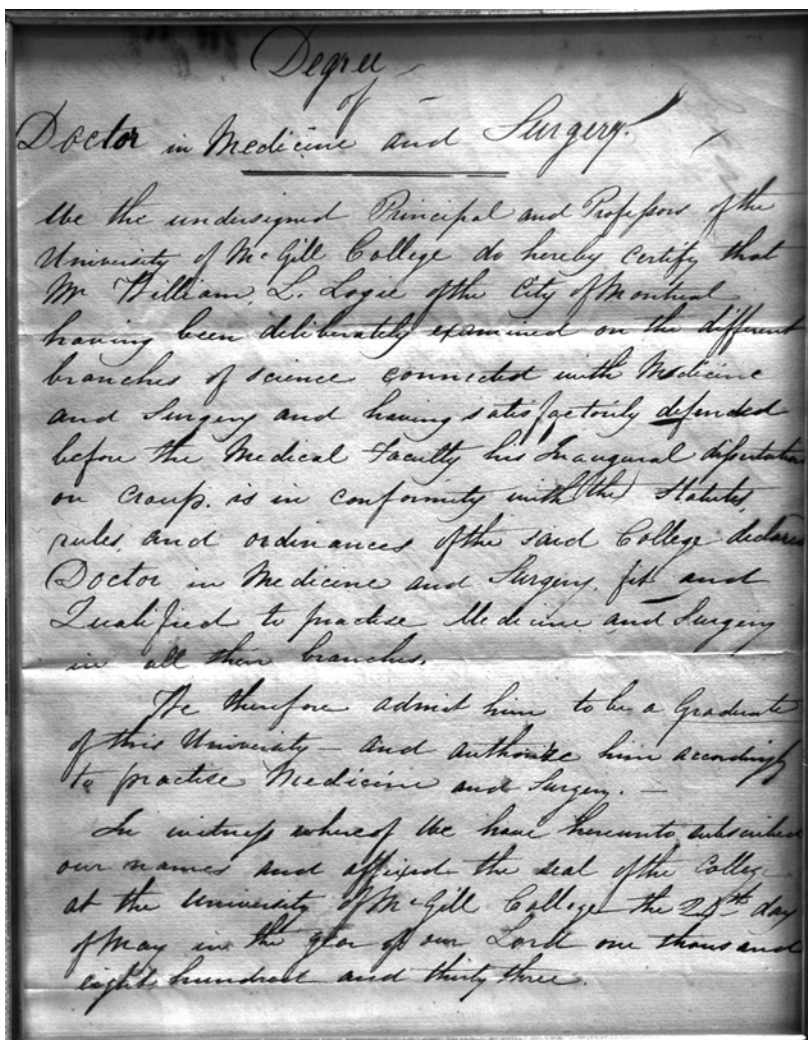


LOGIE'S GRADUATION THESIS "MEDICAL INAUGURAL DISSERTATION on Cynanche trachaealis" (croup). The Latin quotation («and it blocked the ways which brought her life and breath») is from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. (Book 2 Line 828.) Unfortunately most of McGill's early medical theses were lost in a fire in the early 20th century and no original copy of this thesis has been found in Canada — the Osler Library has a photocopy. Originals are held at the US National Library of Medicine, the Wellcome Library and the libraries of the University of Edinburgh and the Royal College of Surgeons. The Early Canadiana Online project has recently made a digitised version available; see reference 17.

and became a student of McGill College when the MMI became the Faculty of Medicine in 1829. He seems to have been both a good and a popular student, apprenticed to Dr William Robertson during his studies, and invited to dinner by his fellow students at "Mr Rasco's splendid establishment at Varennes" (a suburb of Montreal) just after he graduated.¹⁸

Then as now, a degree alone was not enough; medical graduates also had to be licensed

in order to practice. In this regard, Logie had two problems to contend with: firstly, the Act of 1831 was rather unclear about the exact requirements for licencing; and secondly, many of the recently elected members of the Montreal Board of Medical Examiners were very opposed, for several reasons, to McGill's new Faculty of Medicine. Article 5 of the Act of 1831 stipulated that to be licenced, one required a "regular and continued apprenticeship of at least five years,



THIS DRAFT OF WILLIAM LOGIE'S DEGREE CERTIFICATE IS IN THE hand of Dr William Robertson, then head of the Medical Faculty — the term Dean was not used at this time. This document and drafts of two additional certificates dated two months earlier signed by J. Stephenson, Registrar of the Faculty, and Robertson, who was also Logie's apprentice master, were presented to the Faculty of Medicine by Dr Robertson's grandson, Mr Angus Hooper. They are in the Osler Library of the History of Medicine at McGill.

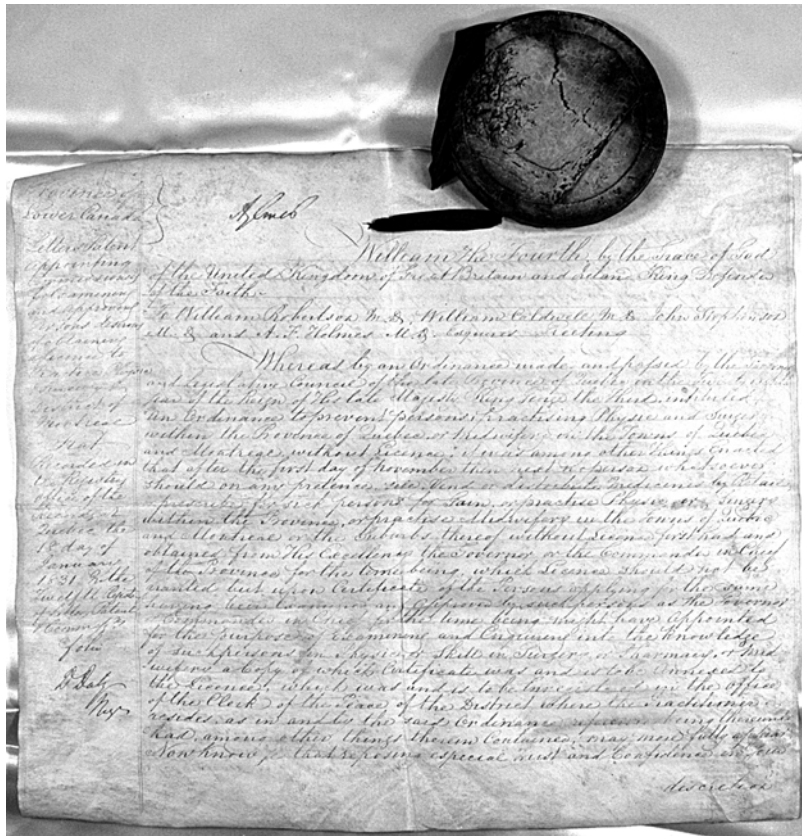
Note that this certificate states, "We therefore admit him to be a Graduate of this University — and authorise him accordingly to practice medicine and surgery" (my emphasis). Interestingly, the 1841 degree certificate for Terrence Sparham, Charles Decelles and Samuel MacMurray — reproduced in Hanaway and Cruess² — states "...that their Literary and Professional qualifications render them fit and qualified to be admitted to the Degree of Doctor in Medicine and Surgery". Stephenson and Holmes, who both signed this certificate, seem to admit that permission to practice was not actually theirs to bestow.

with some licenced Physician or Surgeon . . . or in some Medical School or Institution teaching publicly," but Article 6 allowed for applicants to be licenced if they held a degree, diploma or license which had been obtained "after a course of Medical study, performed in such University, College or Medical Institution, in conformity to the rules therof, and after five years' study at least, and not otherwise."¹³ Though the MMI and McGill were clearly connected, Logie had technically attended two institutions. The Board chose to be difficult, had some precedent on its side¹⁹, and rejected Logie's application for a license.

He would doubtless have been licenced if he had agreed to be examined by the Board, but he refused this option, also strongly opposed by McGill, which wanted to ensure that it alone could determine its graduates' eligibility to practice. If graduates of other universities, such as Edinburgh, could be licenced without further examination, then those from McGill should be treated in the same way. Logie's application for a licence was heard in July 1833 and *La Minerve* reported, "M Logie présenta un Diplôme de M.D. de l'Université du Collège McGill. Ce Diplôme fut rejeté unanimement. En ayant été informé, on lui offrit d'examiner, ce qu'il refuse."²⁰ Logie decided to appeal to the Court of King's Bench in October 1833; in October 1834, the Court ruled that the Board should have accepted his McGill degree as satisfactory for the issuing of a licence to practice. In May 1835, after a few months of foot-dragging, the Board recognised (by licencing Patrick McNaughton, one of the three 1834 McGill graduates) that McGill's medical degrees met the licencing conditions. Though

He would doubtless have been licenced if he had agreed to be examined by the Board, but he refused this option, also strongly opposed by McGill,...

None of this mattered to Logie, as he had become not only Canada's first medical graduate but also its first medical export!



LETTERS PATENT OF 18 JANUARY 1831 RE-APPOINTING CALDWELL, HOLMES, ROBERTSON AND Stephenson as the Medical Board of Montreal under the Act of 1788. This act was repealed when the 1831 Act was assented to on March 31 so these were short-lived appointments. A new Board was elected in July 1831 and none of these MGH/McGill physicians were elected. These Letters Patent were donated to the Osler Library in 1969 by Elliott Frosst.

commanded by the Court to grant a certificate, the Board never explicitly issued a licence to William Logie.

None of this mattered to Logie, as he had become not only Canada's first medical graduate but also its first medical export! It is unknown whether his decision to move was directly connected to his difficulty in obtaining a licence but, whatever the motivation, he moved to the United States in late 1833 or early 1834, becoming a licenced medical practitioner in the State of Louisiana in January 1834. He returned to Montreal to marry Frances Matilda Ford in December 1834, but never practiced in his native country. He died in

New York City on October 4, 1879, following what may have been a nervous breakdown, and was buried in Geneva, New York, where he had previously practiced.

Despite efforts by Barbara Tunis and Edward Bensley, Canada's first medical graduate has been virtually ignored in his homeland. In 1980, Tunis published a letter in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, drawing attention to the 150th anniversary of the opening of McGill's medical faculty. In this she said, "It seems a pity that there is no official commemoration of Canada's first medical graduate. This might be a project of interest to McGill University, the

medical profession and the country in which he was born and educated."²¹

Although the CMAJ did offer the William Logie Prize for an essay on medical ethics between 1981 and 1999, neither McGill University nor the country of his birth seem to have made much effort to commemorate Logie. It's not too late! ❁

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This article would never have been written without the support of Pamela Miller, who suggested the topic, and the extraordinary editing prowess of Deanna Cowan, who polished my prose and checked the references. My gratitude to both; any remaining errors are mine alone.

Notes and references

- Early Canadiana Online: <http://www.canadiana.org/ECO/>
 - PubMed Central: <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/>
1. Tunis B.R and Bensley E. H. William Leslie Logie: McGill University's first graduate and Canada's first medical graduate. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 1971 Dec 4; 105(11):1259-63. A digitised version of this article is freely available at PubMed Central. See <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/picrender.fcgi?artid=1931389&blobtype=pdf>
 2. Hanaway, J and Cruess, R. *McGill Medicine: v.1. The first half century, 1829-1885*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996.
 3. Hall, A. *On the past, present, and future of the Faculty of Medicine of McGill University: An Introductory Lecture delivered at the opening of the Session 1866-67*. Montreal, Dawson Brothers, 1867. This was reprinted in *Canada Medical Journal*, 1867 Jan, 3(7):289-302. A digitised version of this article is freely available at Early Canadiana Online. Search for "8_05176_31" and go to pp.289-302.
 4. Crawford, D S. Edinburgh University medical theses at the Osler Library. *Osler Library Newsletter*, 2004, No. 101:1-6. A digitised version of the Newsletter is freely available at the [Osler Library website](http://www.mcgill.ca/files/osler-library/Osln101.pdf). See <http://www.mcgill.ca/files/osler-library/Osln101.pdf>
 5. *Journal de médecine de Québec = The Quebec Medical Journal*, 1826 Oct, Tome 1:257-261. A digitised version of this article is freely available at [Early Canadiana Online](http://www.canadiana.org/). Search for "8_05171_4" and go to pp.257-261.
 6. *ibid*, 1827 Jan, Tome 2(1):117. A digitised version of this article is freely available at [Early Canadiana Online](http://www.canadiana.org/). Search for "8_05171_5" and go to page 117.
 7. C.R. Ogden to Lord Aylmer, 11 November 1831. *Civil and Provincial Secretaries' Offices, 'S' series, RG 4, A1, Vol. 271:64*. Held at Library and Archives Canada.
 8. An Act or Ordinance to prevent persons practicing physic and surgery within the Province of Quebec, or Midwifery in the towns of Quebec or Montreal, without Licence. 1788, 28 Geo III, c8. A digitised version is available at [Early Canadiana Online](http://www.canadiana.org/). Search for "42695" and go to pp.130-133.
 9. The senior Loedel was the first physician to be registered under the 1788 Act, and served on the Board for over 30 years; Arnoldi had been a member since 1812 and Robertson since 1816. (Information on Loedel, Arnoldi, Robertson and most of the other protagonists of this story, though not Logie himself, appears in the [Dictionary of Canadian Biography](http://www.biographi.ca/) — freely available online.)
 10. *Canadian Courant and Montreal Advertiser (Montreal)*, May 25, 1833 and *The Gazette (Montreal)*, May 25, 1833.
 11. Abbott, M.E. An historical sketch of the Medical Faculty of McGill University. *Montreal Medical Journal*, 1902 Aug, 31(8):561-672. This lengthy article reprints a series of letters about the Faculty and its founders. A digitised version is freely available at [Early Canadiana Online](http://www.canadiana.org/). Search for "8_05178_170" and go to pp.561-672.
 12. Tunis, B.R. Medical licensing in Lower Canada: the dispute over Canada's first medical degree. *Canadian Historical Review*, 1974 Dec, 55(4):489-504. A digitised version of this journal will be available soon.
 13. An Act to repeal a certain Act or Ordinance therein mentioned, and to provide effectual Regulations covering the Practice of Physic, Surgery and Midwifery 1834; 1 William IV, c27. A digitised version is available at [Early Canadiana Online](http://www.canadiana.org/). Search for "9_00926_41" and go to pp.164-179 (subscription required for this item).
 14. Election of members of the Medical Board, 11 July 1831. Held at Library and Archives Canada.
 15. Thomas Fargues graduated from University of Edinburgh in 1811; his thesis (*Dissertatio medica inauguralis de chorea*) is in the Osler Library.
 16. Hanaway, *McGill Medicine: v.1, p.16*.
 17. Logie, William Leslie. *Medical inaugural dissertation on Cynanche trachealis*. Montreal, A.H. Armour, 1833. A digitised version of this thesis is freely available at [Early Canadiana Online](http://www.canadiana.org/). Search for "9_08208."
 18. *Canadian Courant*, June 12, 1833
 19. Of course, Logie's was not the first application the Board had received since its reconstitution in 1831. At its first meeting, it had granted a licence to James Robertson (son of William), on the presentation of his 1830 degree from the University of Edinburgh, but had refused to issue certificates to two other students, Cyrille Cote and Seraphim Viger, who had started their education at the MMI but had in fact graduated from the University of Vermont, after three months of study.
 20. *La Minerve*, 4 juil. 1833. Tunis reports that this was an almost verbatim extract from the minutes of the Board.
 21. Tunis, B.R. Tribute to William Leslie Logie. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 1980 Feb. 9; 122(3): 273. A digitised version of this journal is freely available at PubMed Central. See <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/picrender.fcgi?artid=1801817&blobtype=pdf>.

Despite efforts by Barbara Tunis and Edward Bensley, Canada's first medical graduate has been virtually ignored in his homeland.



Early Canadiana Online is digitising all Canadian journals published up to 1920 — most medical titles are already freely available at <http://www.canadiana.org>. In addition, the US National Library of Medicine has digitised the complete set of the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, now freely available on PubMed Central, <http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/>.

The Dictionary of Canadian Biography is freely available at <http://www.biographi.ca>.

True to the spirit of Sir William Osler, the event brought together students and scholars from both sides of the mountain and from various disciplines.



READING THE BODY: JOHANN CASPAR LAVATER AND THE TRADITION OF PHYSIOGNOMY

by Nikola von Merveldt

On March 27, the Osler Library hosted an interdisciplinary seminar organized by the Interacting with Print research group on Johann Caspar Lavater and physiognomics. True to the spirit of Sir William Osler, the event brought together students and scholars from both sides of the mountain and from various disciplines. Based on his recent article "The Science of Sciences: Replication and Reproduction in Lavater's Physiognomics," the invited speaker John B. Lyon, professor of German at Pittsburgh University, showed how the Swiss pastor used the medium of the illustrated book to re-establish physiognomy as an artful science. Hundreds of plates with silhouettes of contemporaries and portraits by great artists including Holbein and Hogarth were to serve both as scientific evidence and as aesthetic arguments for Lavater's practice of deciphering the divine alphabet imprinted on the human face.

With more than 800 engravings, Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* was in fact one of the most lavishly illustrated and costly works available on the late eighteenth-century European book market. The Osler Library boasts several editions in German, French, and English of this landmark in the history of science and the history of the book, among them a magnificently restored English three-



Lavater, Caspard. *L'Art de Connaitre les Hommes*, v. 9 (Paris, 1820) B.O. 3180, Plate 586.



Saunders, Richard. *Physiognomie...* (London, [1670-] 1671) B.O. 3917.

volume folio edition published between 1789 and 1810 by John Murray with engravings by William Blake, and the rare second German edition from 1775-1778, on which Johann Wolfgang von Goethe collaborated.

Given these riches, the Interacting with Print research group put together an exhibition on Lavater's work within the context of the early history of physiognomics and the later popularization of physiognomic knowledge through caricature and parlour games. The exhibition "Reading the Body. Johann Caspar Lavater and the Tradition of Physiognomy" shows how manuscripts and printed texts and especially images were called upon to render the body legible by illustrating the hidden relations between human physical features, character, moral disposition, animal traits, ethnicity, cosmic order, and divine providence. Condemned in Diderot's and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie* as an "imaginary science" and praised by Lavater as the "science of sciences," the history of physiognomy — and its deployment through the medium of the illustrated book — has much to tell us about the intersecting fields of science and art in the eighteenth century and their mutual quest for a universal legibility, whether of books, bodies, or images.

The exhibition was curated by Nikola von Merveldt (Département de littératures et langues modernes, Université de Montréal) and will be on display until mid-June. For more information on the exhibition and other activities of the Interacting with Print research group, please go to: <http://interactingwithprint.mcgill.ca/index.html> 🌟

NEW EXHIBITION AT THE OSLER LIBRARY

by Allister Neher

At the end of June the Osler Library will open an exhibition devoted to anatomical illustrations and how they convey theoretical content. The exhibition will focus on European anatomical prints from the 16th century to the 19th century, especially in the English-speaking world. The images found in the great anatomical atlases and treatises of this fertile period are often more than illustrations. Frequently, they are striking examples of visual thinking and analysis. The central aim of this exhibition will be to reveal to specialized and non-specialized viewers some of the factors that influence and mediate the representation of the body.

Allister Neher of the Humanities Department of Dawson College will curate the exhibition. Allister has an interdisciplinary doctorate in Philosophy and Art History and for the past five years he has been broadening his research program to include the history of

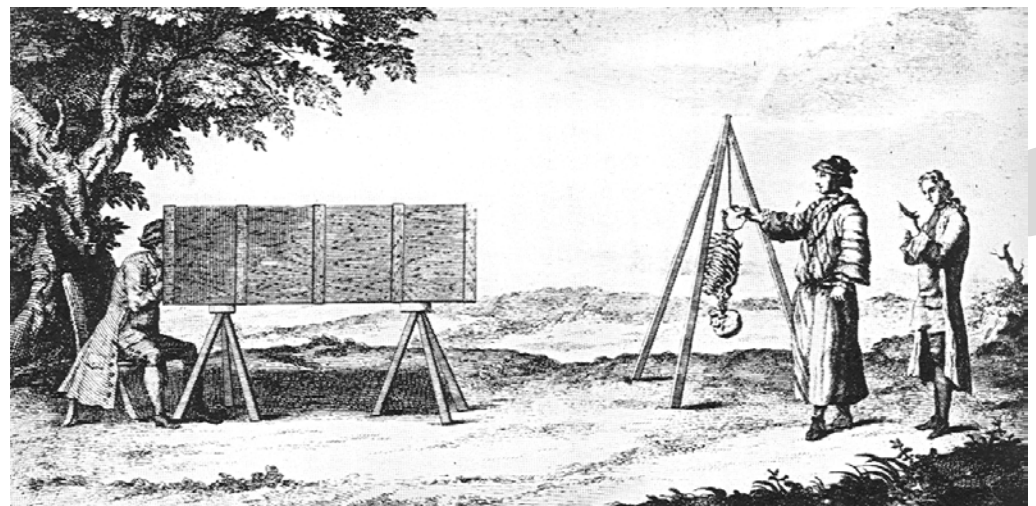


Bell, Charles, Sir. *The Anatomy and Philosophy of Expression as Connected to the Fine Arts* (London, 1844). Bell instructs artists on the subtleties and limits of expression.

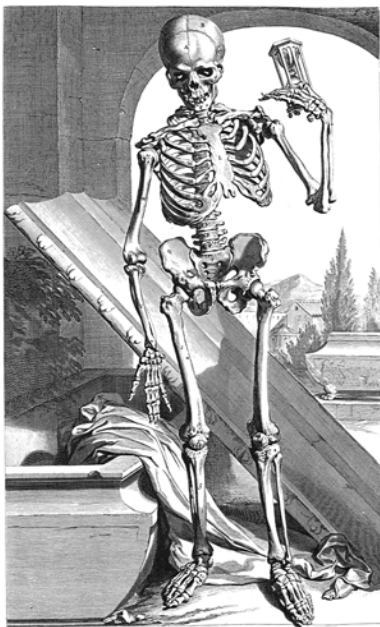
medicine. At the moment Allister's interests are squarely focused on artistic anatomy in the English Enlightenment. It is a subject through which he can bring together all three disciplines and chart their interaction in the creation of the modern idea of the self.

The general theme of the exhibition — factors that influence and mediate the representation of the body — will be explored under four sub-headings. The first will concern how the artistic style of the artist affects the representation of the anatomical specimen. The second will be about the nature and limits of representational

Cheselden, William. *Osteographia...* (London, 1733). Cheselden and his students using a camera obscura to avoid distortions caused by foreshortening.

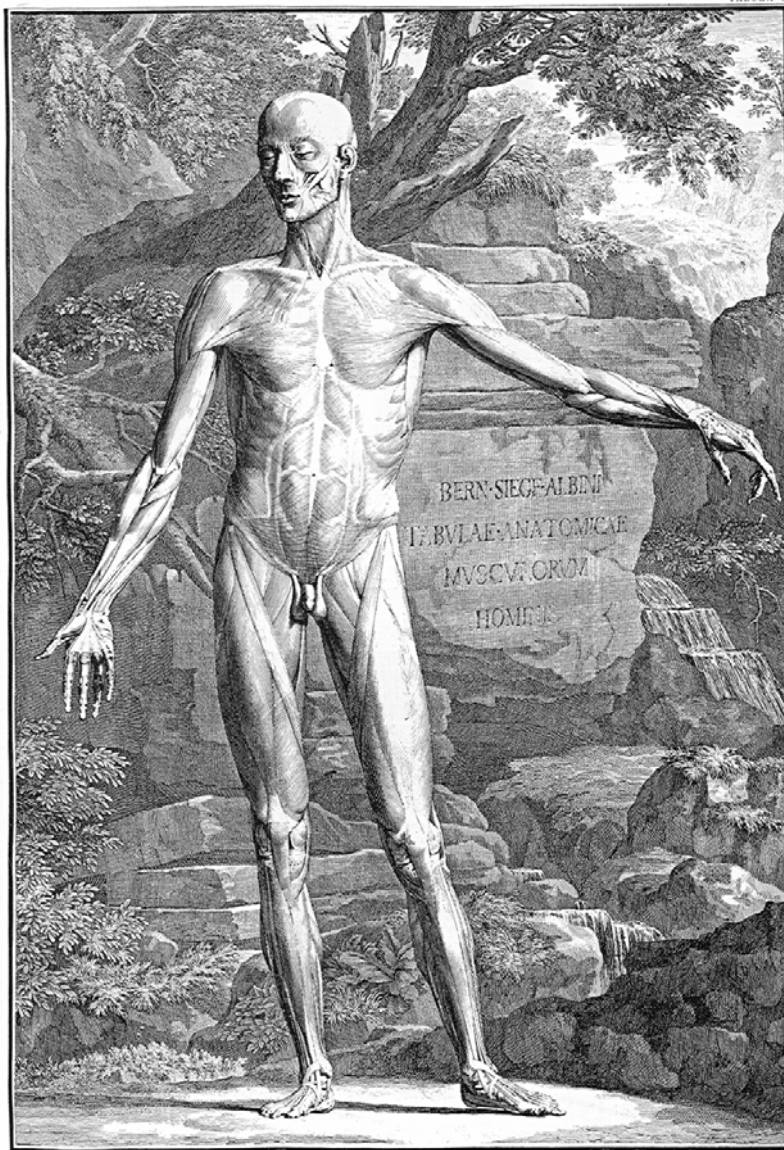


The general theme of the exhibition — factors that influence and mediate the representation of the body — will be explored under four sub-headings.



Cowper, William. *The Anatomy of Humane Bodies...* (Oxford, 1698). This anatomically and morally instructive skeleton, and all the other engravings in this book, were “borrowed” by Cowper from Govert Bidloo’s *Anatomia humani corporis* of 1685, surely the most outrageous case of plagiarism in the history of medicine.

Albinus, Bernhard Siegfried. *Tables of the Skeleton and Muscles of the Human Body* (London, 1749). A complete philosophy of beauty and nature in one picture.



media (woodcut, engraving, lithograph, etc.) and how they determine what an image can communicate. The third will examine approaches that have been taken to measuring the body and how they existed in tension with artistic canons of beauty that governed the depiction of the human form. The fourth and final sub-heading will be on representational strategies, for instance, how the task of illustrating a physical quality — or a structure or a system — determines which visual resources are enlisted and why. While the four headings will provide the basic structure for the organization of the exhibition, other issues from the history of art and the history of philosophy will make cameo appearances. ❁

ROLAND’S CANADIAN MEDICAL HISTORY MINIATURES

by Charles Roland

An Early French Surgeon

Jean Demosny (1643-1687) can be seen as representative, if not typical, of the large numbers of French medical practitioners who made their way to New France in the 17th and 18th centuries. He was born in Normandy. Nothing is known of his early years, nor of his medical training. He enters Canada’s history in January, 1673, when he married Catherine Fol, also Normandy-born. Theirs was the only marriage to be consecrated in Québec City that month.

At this time, Demosny had only fourteen years of life remaining — news of which he was blissfully unaware — yet he and his wife produced seven

children, two boys and five girls. The oldest child, a son, was Jean Junior, and he also became a physician.

Most of what we know about Demosny and his many medical colleagues stems from legal records of one kind or another. Marriages, births, and deaths were recorded by the Catholic parishes of New France. Through the court system, land dealings, criminal records, court cases of all kinds, indentures, and similar matters were recorded and the records carefully preserved.

Thus we know that Demosny was surgeon to l'Hôtel Dieu du Précieux Sang, in Québec, for many years. Indeed, a note surviving in the hospital records states that Demosny served the institution 30 years. If not exaggerated, this means that he must have begun there in some capacity at the age of 14, since he died at 44. By 1684, Demosny had earned the title of "Lieutenant of the King's First Surgeon."

A contract is extant between Demosny and a student, one Ignace Pellerin. There were no medical schools in New France at that time — nor anywhere in North America — so one could only obtain medical training via apprenticeship. Pellerin was 17 when the indenture was signed; it was to be in effect for three years. Demosny promised "...to show and teach as best he can, the said art and profession of surgery as well as anything else he involves himself in, to furnish him with board, a warm lodging, and a bed, to treat him kindly and humanely as befitting."

The student undertook to serve his master in the art of surgery, "and in everything licit and honest which he might request," to obey and work for him faithfully, not absenting himself nor working elsewhere. A sum of 200 livres was Demosny's fee for

undertaking this educational effort, half of which was paid when the indenture was signed, the other half at its successful completion. This document was signed 4 March 1676.

A common reason for the survival of such documents is that legal records must be conserved. In Demosny's case, some of his patients neglected to pay their accounts and eventually this became a matter for the courts to settle. In 1676, the surgeon felt obligated to sue one family for an outstanding debt of 73 livres. Because repeated requests for payment were fruitless, the doctor had two bulls seized that belonged to the family. The Sovereign Council declared the seizure illegal, but "sentenced the appealing party to pay the amount claimed." On another occasion, Demosny seized taxes, rent, and other monies, to cancel one of his bills. Obviously, bill-collecting was an active process in those pre-insurance days.

Demosny was also churchwarden in the parish of Notre-Dame de Québec, late in his life. In his accounting, presented after his year in office, we find that pew rentals amounted to more than 273 livres per year.

Obviously, much information is available about our early

professional ancestors in Canada. However, the kinds of information are limited, and Demosny's records provide a typical example of these limitations. We can discover a few things about his personal life, but only in terms of events such as marriage. Had he been more contentious we would find more lawsuits and more data. Unfortunately, we know nothing about how he practised medicine, nor how his patients and his colleagues viewed him. ❁

Because repeated requests for payment were fruitless, the doctor had two bulls seized that belonged to the family.

SPECIAL VISITS TO THE OSLER LIBRARY

On January 19th, Dr. André Turmel of Quebec City's Hôpital de l'Enfant-Jésus held a day long talk on the history of neurosurgery at the Osler Library. The 24 neurosurgeons and residents who attended from the Montreal area and other parts of Quebec also saw a number of treasures in Dr. Turmel's and the Osler's collections. The event carries on Osler's particular wish to make his collection available to his French speaking colleagues.



Dr. André Turmel of Quebec City's Hôpital de l'Enfant-Jésus and 24 neurosurgeons and residents



Photo by Professor Jaclyn Duffin of Queen's University History of Medicine students with Pam Miller.

The event carries on Osler's particular wish to make his collection available to his French speaking colleagues.



Members of The Queen's University History of Medicine annual field trip visited the Osler Library at the end of an exciting visit to Montreal. Professor Jaclyn Duffin a member of our Board of Curators and Hannah Professor of the History of Medicine at Queen's kept them busy with visits to the Oratoire de St. Joseph, the Hopital General des Sœurs Grises and the Musée de l'Hôtel Dieu. ❀

NOTES FROM THE OSLER LIBRARY

On Tuesday, the 29th of April, the Sir William Osler Elementary School in Dundas, Ontario held its formal Opening Ceremony. (The school opened to pupils, K-8, last autumn.) The name was selected by a naming committee (students, parents, teachers, Board personnel, and community members), which invited suggestions — and received more than 120! "Based on predetermined criteria, Sir William Osler was selected and later

approved by the Board's Committee of the Whole." Dr. Chuck Roland was the invited speaker on that occasion.

Recent Publications

Building on Osler's much-publicized address, "The Fixed Period", Dr. Bill Gibson has just published a volume, dear to his heart entitled, *Old Endeavour, Scientific and Humanitarian Contributions by Physicians Over Age 65*. It includes 129 biographies of retired physicians and surgeons from around the world who have significantly enriched medical, scientific and social progress following retirement. Information about ordering this work may be obtained by writing to: contact@iahm.org or by sending a fax to the International Association for Humanitarian Medicine in Palermo at + 39 091-59-64-04 or by writing to IAHM, Ospedale Civico, chirurgia Plastica, Via C. Lazzaro, 90127 Palermo, Italy.

Dr. Terence Ryan would like to announce that historian Dr. Alistair Robb-Smith's papers are now accessible through Green

College's web page containing much information about Sir William Osler. The address is: <http://www.green.ox.ac.uk/about-the-college/13-Norham-gardens.html>

Following the publication of the biography of H. Rocke Robertson entitled, *Rocke Robertson, Surgeon and Shepherd of Change*, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008, by Dick Pound, Stuart Robertson wrote to inform us that his brother Ian had just published a book entitled, *While Bullets Fly*, Trafford Press, Victoria, about the development and operation of the field surgical unit during World War II. Their father (Dr. H. Rock Robertson) commanded the No. 2 Canadian Field Surgical Unit in Sicily in 1943-44. The concept behind the field surgical unit inspired the post-war development of trauma care and intensive care units in today's hospitals. ❀

Editorial Committee for the Newsletter: Faith Wallis, Editor; Pamela Miller, History of Medicine Librarian and Assistant Editor; Lily Szczygiel, Editorial Assistant.

Address: Osler Library of the History of Medicine, McGill University, McIntyre Medical Sciences Building, 3655 Promenade Sir-William-Osler, Montréal, Québec, Canada, H3G 1Y6.

Tel: (514) 398-4475 ext. 09873

Fax: (514) 398-5747

E-mail: osler.library@mcgill.ca

URL: <http://www.mcgill.ca/osler-library/>

Legal Deposit 1/2008 ISSN 0085-4557

Legal Deposit 1/2008 ISSN 1712-7955