INTRODUCTION
Hugh Owen Thomas’s wife Elizabeth had a nephew named Robert Jones (1857-1933; Figure 1). Contrary to popular misconception, he had no blood relationship with the Thomas family, as shown in the genealogy table in Figure 2.

Jones’ father was a journalist who had fallen on hard times. Family poverty forced him to be apprenticed to Thomas at the age of 16 years, at the same time as he was studying at the Liverpool School of Medicine. Qualifying as Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians (LRCP) and Member of the Royal College of Surgeons (MRCS) in 1878, Jones rejoined his uncle as an assistant. Eleven years later he was elected Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS) at Edinburgh and appointed as surgeon to the Royal Southern Hospital in Liverpool, where he remained throughout the rest of his professional career.

EARLY CAREER
Jones was appointed as surgical superintendent of the Manchester Ship Canal in 1888. This project took 5 years to complete, and it provided Jones with experience in the first organised accident service in the world. He began writing in an easy and graceful style,

The object of treatment is the restoration of complete function
With the least risk and inconvenience to the patient
And with least anxiety to the surgeon.
Robert Jones, 1913