HISTORY OF ORTHOPAEDICS

Great Names in the History of Orthopaedics IX —

John Hunter: Part 1

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ABSTRACT

Born on St Valentine’s Eve or Day (13 or 14 February 1728) on a farm near Glasgow, Scotland, the youngest of 10 children, John Hunter spent his youth among nature. He moved to London in 1748 to join his elder brother William as an assistant in anatomy. With his brother, he made original studies on the lymphatic system and bone physiology. He became a pupil of Percival Pott (St Bartholomew’s Hospital) and William Cheselden (Chelsea and St Thomas’s Hospital). He joined the British Army as staff surgeon on an expedition to Portugal and Spain from 1760 to 1763. He eventually ran a large practice and became interested in all branches of the natural sciences. Famous as a teacher of anatomy as well as for his numerous scientific publications, Hunter established his private school in Leicester Square and Earl’s Court, London, where he amassed a huge and unique collection of biological and scientific specimens. He was elected a Member of the Company of Surgeons and a surgeon at St George’s Hospital in 1768, and Surgeon-Extraordinary to King George III in 1776. He was also appointed Surgeon-General to the British Army and Inspector of Hospitals in 1790. Hunter died of a heart attack on 16 October 1793 at a board meeting at St George’s Hospital. His museum collection was bought by the British Government from his executors for £15,000, and was placed under the care of the Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1799. Hunter’s contributions to orthopaedics were extensive and varied, despite his extremely restricted armamentarium for investigation. He relied on his keen observations, intellect, and reasoning. Although he had basic methods for preserving postmortem materials, he lacked the advantages of histology, biochemistry, microbiology, radiology and imaging, antisepsis, and anaesthesia. Still, he made experimental contributions to the basic science of healing, growth, and remodelling of soft tissue and bone.

Key Words: History, 18th century, History of medicine, Orthopedics

中文摘要

約翰・亨特

盧國泰

亨特出身蘇格蘭一農戶家族。幼時對小動物非常喜愛，所以對比較解剖學很有研究。在1748年，他到倫敦他兄長威廉的解剖學校做助手，開始研究解剖學和外科。亨特畢生收集世界各地的動植物標本，又有興趣對各種奇異病例作深入研究。他本人因意外引致跟腱破裂，促使他探求畸形足與肌腱破裂的修復方法。他有兩項重大貢獻。其一，建立了動物標本室，今天各大城市中的動物博物館多數是模仿他所創立的標本室而設。其二，創立了動脈瘤的手術。他在皇家公園的鹿角做側支循環實驗，為治療動脈瘤提供了依據。在他以前，截肢是治療動脈瘤的唯一方法，否則只能等腫瘤自行破裂。用鹿角做實驗，發現結扎動脈後，鹿角的毛細血管會擴張，使被結扎動脈周圍的血流更豐富。亨特發現結扎血管治療動脈瘤的技術，為病人保全了肢體。他的所有外科工作都滲透了歸納推理的方法，因此後人評價他的貢獻時說“他實習外科時，外科只不過是一種機械的技藝。而他留下来的外科卻變成了一門美好的科學。”因此亨特被譽為‘科學外科之父’。

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