Thomas Parke's Student Life in England and Scotland, 1771-1773*

Thomas Parke was the only medical graduate of the College of Philadelphia in 1770. Four years before, a shy Quaker youth of sixteen, encouraged by his brother-in-law Owen Biddle, he had come up to Philadelphia from his native Chester County to enter the classical school of Robert Proud and to begin the study of medicine under Dr. Cadwalader Evans. In the fall of 1767 he supplemented his work in Evans' shop with the anatomy lectures of Dr. William Shippen, Jr., in the newly established medical school; and in the next two years he attended courses in chemistry with Dr. John Morgan and Dr. Benjamin Rush, in the theory and practice of medicine with Morgan, in botany and materia medica with Dr. Adam Kuhn, and in midwifery under Dr. Thomas Bond in the Pennsylvania Hospital. Remaining in Philadelphia the year after his graduation he probably assisted Evans, and he attended Rush's lectures on chemistry again and Bond's clinical lectures at the Hospital. Parke thus acquired about as sound a medical education as

* In the summer of 1950 the author received a grant from the Penrose Fund of the American Philosophical Society. Although this grant was for another purpose, the author took the opportunity of residence in London and Edinburgh to find some materials which provide background for Dr. Parke's journal.
it was possible to get in America in 1771, and even in Philadelphia he
might have entered practice with confidence and profit.¹

But it was from London and Edinburgh at this time that the
ultimate in medical knowledge and reputation could be obtained.
The great hospitals of the metropolis offered extended opportunities
for clinical study and observation beyond anything known in the
colonies, while an Edinburgh degree was becoming a requisite in a
city whose youngest physicians had graduated from the Scots
university with credit and even with distinction. Already thirty-
three Americans had taken the doctorate at Edinburgh alone: of
these, nine were Pennsylvanians, while probably as many more
studied there for a season or more.² Parke's preceptor and his teachers
urged him to go abroad, and his brother-in-law was willing to assist
him financially in such an undertaking. In April and May of 1771,
accordingly, he was busy making preparations for a year or two of
foreign study.

Parke left Philadelphia on Saturday, May 25. Early that morning
he collected the last of his letters of introduction. He was, Dr.
Morgan wrote Dr. William Hewson in London, "modest, ingenuous,
diligent in Study, & burns with desire to distinguish himself in his
Profession."³ His trunk was already safely stowed aboard. He said
his last farewells and, accompanied by a few friends, rode out of
the city toward Chester, where, a little below the town, at four o'clock
that afternoon, he boarded the ship Chalkley, Captain Montgomery,
bound for Bristol. The voyage was swift and uneventful. The ship
sighted the English coast twenty-five days after leaving the Dela-
ware Capes. To Parke, however, the voyage was not enjoyable, and
he could not use his enforced leisure to read and study, for as soon as
the vessel reached the open sea he "got sick & kept my Bed for

¹ For a sketch of Parke's life, which was long and full, with references to the principal
sources of information, see Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., "Thomas Parke, M.B., Physician and Friend,"
William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series, VI (1949), 569-595.
² Samuel Lewis, comp., "List of the American Graduates in Medicine in the University of
Edinburgh, From 1705 to 1866, with their Theses," New-England Historical and Genealogical
Register, XLII (1888), 159-165; Whitfield J. Bell, Jr., "Philadelphia Medical Students in
Europe, 1750-1800," The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LXVII (1943),
1-29.
³ Morgan to William Hewson, Philadelphia, May 24, 1771, Copies of recommendations of
Thomas Parke, Pemberton Papers, Parrish Collection, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania
(HSP).
several Days & continued unwell for several weeks, so that I cou’d
not keep a Journal.” In the Channel strong headwinds delayed the
Chalkley. On July 1 the captain put in at the Cornish fishing port of
St. Ives to purchase fresh provisions of lamb, chickens, peas, beans,
egg and milk. Sailing slowly now along the North Devon coast, on
July 5 they made King Road at the mouth of the Avon. Here the
vessel anchored to await the tide, but Captain Montgomery ordered
a small boat to row him up to Bristol. Parke accompanied him and
reached the city about noon.

Parke spent the next ten days very pleasantly in Bristol. There was
nothing he had to do there and no reason why he must hurry away.
The Bristol Friends to whom he bore letters of introduction all made
him welcome. With one of these, Robert Peters, he made his home,
while others had him in to breakfast, dinner, tea or supper, took him
to Friends meetings both on First-day and at midweek, and showed
him the “many Elegancies” of their city. He had dinner in Wine
Street at the home of Joseph Fry, first of the name in Bristol, and he
was asked to tea at William Fry’s, whose “two beautifull & amiable
Daughters, . . . plain, neat & sensible,” he found particularly at-
tractive. Thomas Franks, another Quaker, took him on a tour of his
family’s china factory, “the produce of which,” Parke opined, “I
think equals any in the Kingdom.” Sometimes alone, more often with
one or more of his Quaker hosts, Parke viewed the principal sights of
Bristol. He visited the Infirmary, whose regulations, he noted, were
similar to those in force in the Pennsylvania Hospital, and he went
to St. Mary Redcliffe, which Queen Elizabeth called the fairest and
goodliest parish church in England, where William Penn’s father was
buried. He climbed Brandon Hill and early one morning witnessed a
military review on King’s Down. One day, with Robert Peters, he
traveled most agreeably to Bath. “It certainly exceeds any place I
have seen yet, for high Life & Grandeur,” he wrote that night of this
center of fashion and splendor. There was no trade there, he noted,
“except an unconcionable Run in y*e Milinery way,” and he con-
cluded that although Bath was well worth going to see, it was not a

4 This article is based on the journal that Thomas Parke kept while abroad. Three note-
books, covering the period from May 25, 1771 to Nov. 26, 1772, are preserved in the Pemberton
Papers, LVII, 93-98, HSP; the fourth notebook is missing. Except when noted otherwise, all
quotations in this article are from the journal. The journal was carefully transcribed for my
use by Mrs. Jean Daugherty Carr, to whom I here return thanks.
place he should want to live in. He saw grandeur again, "blended very plentifully" with pride and haughtiness, in the audience at a performance of Cumberland's new comedy *The West Indian*. Another afternoon he went to Clifton, where he had a noble prospect of the city and its environs, and on his return he stopped at Goldney's Grotto, a romantic pleasure ground kept by a prominent Bristol Quaker, who made Parke especially welcome because he was a Philadelphia Friend.

At nine o'clock on the evening of July 14, having taken leave of his Bristol friends, Parke took his seat in the London stage at the White Lion and, after a rapid journey of a night and a day over the Great West Road, reached London at five o'clock the next afternoon. As he descended from the stage, such a scene opened on his sight as he "was before a stranger to. the largeness of the place, the hurry in ye Streets, & ye multiplicity of business that is carried on is prodigious & immense to one y^t is a stranger to it." Staring, and perhaps a little frightened, he went at once to Grace Church Street, to the house of James Freeman, a Friend to whom he was recommended, where he lodged.

For the next ten weeks London was Parke's home. Much of the city he saw, of course, only as a sight-seer, visiting churches, palaces, parks and monuments. With the London of politics and empire, of the army and the church, of ancient families and latest fashions, this Chester County Friend had no contact at all, and, bringing his rural standards to the city, he judged the manners of even some English Friends as gay and un-Quakerly. He gazed upon works of art without appreciating them, and the long history of Britain, bound up in London, was a book he seems never to have opened. His world was the close-knit Quaker society of London which converged on Grace Church Street and the Devonshire Meeting—a society of constant and regular attendance at meeting, of earnest moral exercises and earnest moral judgments, and of endless rounds of social visiting.

Parke's attendance at Friends meetings was regular; usually he went twice or three times on First-days and several times during the week. He went most often to the meeting in Grace Church Street and within a few weeks was calling it his own. There, the second Sunday after his coming to London, he was invited home to dinner by Timothy Bevan and his sons, the Quaker druggists of Plough
Court who were the principal purveyors to the Pennsylvania Hospital. Parke returned to Plough Court several times, and once they all went out in Bevan's coach to Hackney, spending the afternoon pleasantly at Bevan's lovely country house. "They must be very Rich," Parke observed frankly, "if we may Judge from their furniture &c." He saw a great deal, too, of Lindley Murray and his wife, and after they returned to New York he continued to visit Murray's father in London. Wherever he went Parke met other Americans, especially at the Pennsylvania Coffee House, where he went regularly for his letters and the latest news from Philadelphia; once he dined with the American Club there, but it was very expensive and the conversation was ill-suited to Friendly ears and he did not return.

The second day he was in London, as he wanted to see St. Thomas' Hospital and Guy's Hospital, Parke crossed London Bridge, "which is famous beyond every thing I ever saw in my Life of the Kind," and walked all around the hospital buildings, but entered neither, as he had no proper introduction. Returning at ten in the morning, he went to the midweek meeting of Grace Church Street Meeting, then had dinner at Thomas Wagstaff's with Captains Sparks and Loxley of Philadelphia. After dinner he went to the Coffee House, where he met Billy White, the future bishop, who greeted him warmly. At five in the afternoon he was back in Grace Church Street for the Six Weeks Meeting, where he delivered in his certificate from Philadelphia Monthly Meeting.

In the next week Parke met several men who, each in his own way, helped him become acquainted with London and advised him on the proper course of his medical studies. One of these was William Curtis, a young Quaker physician and botanist, who had just published a little work on how to collect and preserve moths and butterflies. Curtis liked the American, often had him in for tea and as often accepted Parke's invitations to tea at the Freemans'. With the authority of a contemporary, Curtis could tell Parke about the medical work at London and Edinburgh and could give him valuable hints, such as the one that he should learn shorthand. (Curtis recommended a manual and even gave Parke some lessons himself.)

5 Ernest C. Cripps, Plough Court: The Story of a Notable Pharmacy (London, 1927).
6 Lindley Murray, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Lindley Murray . . . (New York, 1827), 40.
second helpful guide and friend was John Coakley Lettsom, another Quaker physician, who was just establishing himself in practice in London. James Freeman introduced Parke, and Lettsom, who delighted to call himself an American because he was born in the West Indies, got acquainted with Parke at once by inviting him to breakfast and a long day's excursion down the Thames to Woolwich to pick up some curious plants and animals which had just come in an East Indiaman for Dr. Fothergill. This was the beginning of a friendship which, growing warmer through the years, lasted until Lettsom's death in 1815. In the next few weeks Parke saw Lettsom often and he learned much from him. Lettsom, for example, lent Parke the first volume of William Cullen's lectures on the institutes; he carefully explained on another occasion the Cullenian concept of medicine; and he promised to let Parke copy a set of Cullen's latest lectures which he had just received from Edinburgh.

Benjamin Franklin and Dr. John Fothergill, however, were almost the first persons Parke called on in London. When he first went to Franklin's house in Craven Street, just off the Strand, the older man "very politely received me & promised me any civility that lay in his way. he is vastly clever." A week later Parke called again and was "still more charmed wth him. he is certainly as great a Man as America has produced. he treated me wth much more civility than I had any reason to expect." Franklin advised the young man to attend the medical lectures at Edinburgh, but when Parke indicated that Dr. Evans had recommended that he confine himself to the hospital work at London, Franklin agreed that he should follow Evans' advice. In this matter, however, the recommendation of Dr. Fothergill was decisive. Hardly an American came to London to study medicine while Fothergill lived who did not carry an introduction to him, for he was the leader of his profession in London and the particular friend of America and of Pennsylvania. Parke had a special claim on Fothergill as a Philadelphia Quaker and as a student of Morgan and Shippen, whom Fothergill had formerly advised. As soon as his engagements permitted, he had Parke to breakfast, thoughtfully inviting both Lettsom and his nephew James Freeman, Parke's landlord, to be of the company. The two physicians discussed Parke's plans, and the older man "gave me very friendly advice in what manner to pursue my Studies." Parke was to begin to attend
the practice of St. Thomas’ Hospital at once. Fothergill further advised that he should go to Edinburgh in the fall, but when he saw that Parke was not yet prepared for this, he did not press the matter. That same morning Lettsom took Parke to St. Thomas’, introduced him to the physicians, and asked Dr. Richard Huck to show him through the house. Huck invited the Philadelphian to dine with him at his house at Spring Garden, where, Parke noted, he lived “very Elegantly having many servants and Waiters.” On July 23 Parke entered the Hospital as a physician-pupil under Huck, paying twenty-one guineas for the privilege of walking the wards and seeing the hospital physicians prescribe and the hospital surgeons operate. Thereafter at eleven o’clock, almost daily, Parke was at St. Thomas’.7

Of his work at the Hospital Parke said very little, and that little was usually about the surgical work he saw. On August 13, for example, he watched “the Dressers apply their Applications to ye different Ulcers & at which I think they do not surpass ye Pennsylvania Dressers neither in neatness nor simplicity.” On August 19 he saw “Surgeon Warner Couch 2 patients (both Women) and Castrat one & Surgeon Way extracted a diseased Testicle—whose performances were nothing extraordinary, being excessive slow & tedious.” Parke’s comments on the medical work at St. Thomas’ were even less detailed, but on many days, after seeing Huck or Dr. George Fordyce prescribe for patients, he thought he had “got some insight.”8

A week after he began his hospital work Parke registered with Dr. Colin McKenzie for three courses in obstetrics. For these he paid McKenzie seven guineas, rather reluctantly, it appears, for he thought McKenzie too obviously eager for his fees. Parke would, in fact, rather have taken Dr. Fordyce’s lectures on materia medica, chemistry, and practice, to which Curtis took him one day, but this was impossible as Fordyce’s lecture rooms in Covent Garden were too far from the Hospital.

McKenzie’s lectures began, as was the custom, with the history

7 On the Quaker community in which Parke moved, see R. Hingston Fox, Dr. John Fothergill and his Friends (London, 1919); J. Johnston Abraham, Lettsom: His Life, Times, Friends and Descendants (London, 1933); and Arthur Raistrick, Quakers in Science and Industry (New York, 1950).

8 For the experience of another Philadelphian who walked the wards at St. Thomas’ a few years before, see Betsy Copping Corner, William Shippen, Jr. Pioneer in American Medical Education: A Biographical Essay (Philadelphia, 1951), 11-57.
and bibliography of his science. He then treated the general principles of obstetrics, taught the anatomy of the reproductive organs, discussed the diseases of pregnant women, and described all the obstetrical instruments, although he approved only two. The lectures included demonstrations and practice with models and the examination of pregnant women. "Ye Dr shew'd us his preparations of the diff positions & presentations of the Foetu in Utero—which are very natural & extremely well executed & serve well to give an Idea of the diff stages of Pregnancy, in short they vastly exceed any thing of the Kind I ever saw." Many of the students in McKenzie’s course were younger than Parke; they were mere boys, whose "Indecency, Illmanner & foolish Conduct" at some of the demonstrations alternately astonished and disgusted Parke.

Parke’s schedule now called for him to arise in time to be at McKenzie’s lecture at seven. He then returned home for breakfast, and read or wrote until near eleven, when he set out across London Bridge for the Hospital. Afternoons he passed in reading or in sightseeing and social pleasure. His evenings were almost all spent visiting or receiving visits.

He was constantly meeting fellow Philadelphians. Among these were Daniel Roberdeau, John MacPherson, and Daniel Kuhn, who were all in London on business. He often saw Phineas Bond, who was studying law; and he had breakfast at least once with Jacob Rush in the latter’s rooms in the Temple. He met Thomas Coombe, to whom he was closely drawn and whom he reckoned “certainly a Great Man & an able Divine. I think he must make a figure in Phila.” Whenever he learned that a ship had come in from Philadelphia, he was “elevated” and hurried off at once “in pursuit of News from my native Land—News ye more entertaining to me than all the productions of our politicians joined together.” Nor did he forget his friends at home. When Captain Falconer sailed for Philadelphia in August he carried no fewer than thirteen letters from Parke to friends and relatives in Pennsylvania. The letter to Owen Biddle was “long & particular.” Sometimes he sent small presents: to his sister Sukey, for example, a saddle; to Dr. Evans, Cadogan on Gout (after Parke had read it himself); to Owen Biddle, Lewis’ Experiments and Observations on American Potashes; and to Joseph Galloway, a treatise on cider-making.
Parke made many little excursions with Lindley Murray and his wife; he found the former always agreeable company, the latter he thought pretty and good-natured. Together they witnessed the Horse Guards parade and saw the changing of the guard at St. James's Palace. They visited Westminster Abbey, which Parke thought "curious," and Westminster Hall, which struck him as small and meaner than he expected it to be. They went to Sadlers Wells, "famous for Rope Dancing &c.," and often strolled along the enchanting paths of Vauxhall Gardens and through the beautiful green serpentine alleys of Kensington Gardens, where a band played in the palace grounds at the expense of Colonel Burgoyne, who had an apartment there. One day at St. James's they "had the pleasure of seeing their Majesties with several of the Nobility, which was a pleasing sight. I had an excellent view of ye King & Queen as I walked very near their Chairs from St James to the Queens Palace where they Dined." Several times they went to the theater; once, after the show, Parke met some Americans and they all went to an eating house for a late supper of oysters. Parke parted from the others at eleven thirty, "as they were captivated by ye Ladies which so plentifully are planted all along the Strand to entice young Gentlemen home with them."

But London offered better than social life to divert a young medical student from his work. Three times Parke went to the British Museum to see Sir Hans Sloane's collections—"the most amasing collection of Curiosities I ever beheld." He went to the armory and menagerie at the Tower of London—"Lions, Tigers, Wolves, Panthers, Leopards, Wild Cats, &c with an Eagle—which were very well worth seeing," while the elephants at Buckingham Palace he thought "ye largest & most frightfull Beasts" he had ever seen. He bore a letter of introduction to William Hewson, who was Dr. Morgan's contemporary at Edinburgh and was now assistant to Dr. William Hunter. Hewson carried Parke right off to see Hunter's museum, where Parke blushed for ye indolence & neglect of our Philad. Professor of Anatomy—for sure a more complete collection of preparations I think is not in Europe. Nay every part of the Human Body is there to be seen in its greatest beauty—instead of an old dirty Theater I there beheld the most Elegant building suitable for the purpose—inshort it so far surpasses anything of the kind I ever saw before ye I think I cannot with any patience ever enter Shippens hereafter.
In midsummer, with seven young men friends, Parke made an overnight trip to Richmond Park, Windsor ("the palace is fine & ye paintings better"), and Hampton Court, which had everything calculated to "render it Grand & Magnificent," but the King did not live there. In the first week of October Parke was one of another party of eight, which included James Freeman and his wife Ann and a newly married couple returning to Yorkshire, which traveled to Oxford and beyond. The University city Parke thought "one of the most curious" in England, with its colleges built "mostly in the Gothic taste" and its ancient monuments, all fully described in the pages of the Oxford Guide. Parke thought Blenheim Palace—"y most compleat modern Building . . . if we take the whole together"—preferable to anything at Oxford, and he spoke only in superlatives of the formal gardens of Lord Temple at Stowe, six hundred acres of land covered with a "variety of Temples, Obelisks, Statues, Busts, Groves, Walks, Cascades & Bridges." At Northampton the party divided, the newlyweds and their Yorkshire friends continuing north, while Parke and the Freemans returned to London. They passed through Jordans, where they visited the graves of William Penn and his wife, Isaac Penington, "& several other of our ancient Friends" there. The five days' jaunt had been full of mirth and pleasure, but for Parke it had been especially costly—he had lost a shirt and stock.

The day after Parke returned from the Oxford trip, Dr. Fothergill sent for him. He advised him it was time to leave London and spend the winter at Edinburgh. In the spring he might return and walk the Hospital again. "The advantages of this plan he enforced in such a manner," Parke later explained to Biddle, "that I cou'd not object to his proposal, & further that almost every Physician in Philad" had been in Edinb & this tho' seemingly an imaginary superiority, yet not the most triffling when we come to practice." Parke packed his chest at once and sent it to Leith, the port of Edinburgh; he asked for a certificate to the Edinburgh Monthly Meeting; he made his farewells; and, borrowing five guineas from Freeman, he bought his ticket. Fothergill, Lettsom, and Huck gave him letters to the professors at Edinburgh, and Curtis introduced him, the night before he left, to another Quaker, John Sims, who was traveling to Edinburgh in the same coach and for the same purpose as Parke. At sunrise on

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9 Parke to Owen Biddle, Edinburgh, Jan. 13, 1772, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College (SC).
the morning of October 16 Parke was in the Newcastle stage on his way to Scotland.

On the afternoon of October 20 Parke and Sims rode into Edinburgh. The craggy aspect of the city and its surrounding countryside impressed them, and they were awed by the massive black tenements which towered over them as they passed up the streets. They went at once to the home of William Miller, to whom they carried letters of introduction, and Miller made them welcome. A seedsman whose home and garden were in the King's Park adjoining Holyrood Palace, he was a man of some means; known half humorously as "the king of the Quakers," he was the dominating figure in the Edinburgh Meeting, as his father was before him; and his pleasant home was a principal resort for Quakers in the northern capital. He delighted to welcome Quaker students to the University, had them often to his home, gave them advice and instructions, and watched over their manners and behavior.\textsuperscript{10}

The next day Parke and Sims did some sight-seeing: they inspected the College, which Parke thought made "but a very indifferent figure considering its reputation"; they viewed the Castle, which he thought contained little that was "very remarkable except a collection of filth" enclosed in walls "prodigiously strong"; and they walked through the New Town where there were already "some very good houses." Parke went down to Leith to get his chest and then, after dinner, set out with Sims to find permanent lodgings. There was no college dormitory; all the students lived in private houses, and the Edinburgh Directory for 1773-1774 listed one hundred ten "room-setters," most of whom provided room and board for students. Prices were dear. The young men looked "pretty generally thro' ye Town," and in the end took rooms in the house of G. Peters in Strichen's Close off the High Street, where Lettsom had lived as a student three years before. Parke engaged "a Room on ye first floor, with furniture &c, also Fire, Candles &c for which I am to pay £12 p Quarter." Sims took a smaller and less expensive room in the same house.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{10} James Smith, "The Story of Craigentinny," The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, XXII (1938), 201-261.

\textsuperscript{11} Excellent pictures of the life of medical students at Edinburgh may be found in the letters of John Ravenscroft of Virginia, who was graduated in 1770, which are used in D. M. Lyon, "A Student of 1765-70—A Glimpse of Eighteenth Century Medicine," Edinburgh
Mr. and Mrs. Peters had eleven roomers that winter; ten were medical students, five were Quakers. By Scots standards, Parke wrote his sister, Mrs. Peters kept a clean house, but even here he was constantly amazed at "ye Quantity of Dirt the Human Stomach is capable of digesting." But she was a pleasant, civil body, and the table was often enlivened unexpectedly. One evening when the students were called to supper they were surprised to find the Table encircled by several Ladies & Gentlemen—acquaintances of Mr. Peters none of which I knew, but found 2 of ye Ladies (the prettiest & most attractive) Names were Buchan—we had a very extraordinary Entertainment (for Edinburgh) on the occasion. Mrs. Peters shone with particular brilliancy on ye occasion—sung like a Nightingale, I was going to say—Punch & Wine circulated—Scotch Dialect bothers—in short the whole was a composition of drollery—broke up about 1—the humour of the scene put me in tolerable spirits.

The Misses Buchan whom Parke met on this happy occasion he saw several other times, once making one of a party with them for a merry evening in one of the oyster cellars in the Cowgate.

Once settled in at Strichen’s Close, Parke now presented his letters to the Edinburgh professors. For some he also had copies of the Philadelphia medical theses of 1771 which Dr. Morgan had asked him to present.

After Breakfast, I waited on ye shining Oracle of Physic, which I so long have wish’d to see. I mean the great Dr. Cullen who I found quite equalled my expectations. after delivering him my Letters, he very warmly expressed his pleasure in seeing any one recommended from his American friends, particularly from Dr. Morgan & Rush—as well as from his fr. Dr. Fothergill—being obliged to go out, he apologized for his hurry, & insisted on my calling often, which I think I shall not be backward in fulfilling.

After I parted with Dr. Cullen I waited on the great Dr. Gregory to whom I had a Letter from Dr. Morgan, with some American Theses—I found him quite the Gentleman & indeed much more of ye Physician than I expected. he certainly is very sensible & ingenious. he very politely invited me to Dine with him some time soon when convenient—then I waited on Dr. Black to whom I also had a Letter from Dr. Morgan with some Theses—I was with him but a little time therefore had little conversation—enough however to convince me ye he is a good Chemist.


12 Parke to Sally Biddle, Edinburgh, Feb. 25, 1772, Friends Historical Library, SC.
Parke also called on Dr. Colin Drummond and Dr. John Hope, physicians to the Royal Infirmary, to whom he had letters from Dr. Huck. Neither man impressed him, nor did an amputation he saw performed by Alexander Wood ("lang Sandy" Wood of fame), but he thought the operating theater larger and more commodious than any he had seen in the London hospitals.

Lectures began on October 30 and the introductory lectures were free to all students. Parke's comments on the Edinburgh professors are interesting reflections of his own mind and standards, as well as estimates of the lecturers.

At 8 AM. Dr. Home accosted the medical Tribe in his apartment, in ye most important & engaging manner he was capable, which to be sure was not much. I fear ye Mat: Med. will gain little improvement under his efforts—when in his Chair he appears much like Dr. Bond—at 9 AM. Dr. Cullen the inimitable Cullen I say addressed his Class in the warmest manner ye words cou'd express. sure a more warm, affectionate and at the same time a more engaging instructive, extemporary Discourse I never hear'd from any before. dwelt chiefly upon ye plan of his intended Course. Dr. Black delivered his introduction to his Chemistry at 10 AM—good Language & very instructive, but I blush for his delivery—at 11 AM, the sensible Gregory gave a Pathetic Discourse on ye advantages of ye Institution of Medicine. his Elegance of Style lead me to think him a Man of ye greatest Erudition in the Med College—rather low delivery. . . . Then went to Dr. Monro's Anatomical Theatre where I beheld the greatest collection of Med. Students, (upwards of 200) and ye most Elegant Theatre ye is in any one place in Europe I suppose—The Dr. is certainly the best Orator & I think may be ranked ye 3d Professor for Erudition in the School—then at home till 4 P.M. when I went to Dr. Young's introductory Lecture to his Course of Midwifery—a tolerable Discourse but very indifferent Delivery. 13

13 William Cullen (1710-1790) studied medicine at Glasgow, practiced in Lanark, and was elected professor of chemistry at Glasgow in 1751. He came to Edinburgh as professor of chemistry in 1755, moving to the chair of institutes (physiology) in 1766. He was the first at Edinburgh to lecture in the vernacular. In 1771 he lectured on practice alternately with Professor Gregory.

John Gregory (1724-1773) came from Aberdeen, where he was professor, to Edinburgh in 1766. He was professor of practice.

Alexander Monro secundus (1733-1817), professor of anatomy, had studied in London, Berlin, and Leyden. It is estimated that he lectured to 40,000 students during his occupancy of the chair at Edinburgh. He discovered the foramen of Monro.

Joseph Black (1728-1799) was Cullen's pupil and successor in the chairs of chemistry at Glasgow and at Edinburgh; he was called to Edinburgh in 1766. Black discovered the principle of latent heat.

Thomas Young was the first professor of midwifery at Edinburgh, appointed in 1756.

John Hope, physician-in-ordinary at the Royal Infirmary since 1768, held the chair of botany at Edinburgh from 1761 to 1786.

Colin Drummond was physician-in-ordinary at the Infirmary from 1751 to 1773.
Two weeks later, on November 4, the medical classes formally began. Not until December 18, however, did the formal matriculation take place in a little ceremony in the University Library, presided over by Principal Robertson in his academic regalia, when each student was called up in order and paid in his fee for the benefit of the Library. Following Cullen’s advice, since he had already had a good grounding in Philadelphia and it was Dr. Morgan’s hope that he return to take the doctorate there, Parke enrolled only for Cullen’s own lectures on the practice of medicine and for the clinical lectures of Cullen and Gregory at the Infirmary. Because Cullen had so much to tell his class and because he was sometimes called away on consultations and could not meet it, in April he began to lecture twice daily, and when the course finally came to an end he was lecturing three times each day. Gregory’s lectures at the Infirmary began on November 29, Cullen’s on February 21; the clinical course ended on April 24. Parke mentions the topics Cullen discussed in his lectures—it was essentially the material later published in his *First Lines of the Practice of Physic*—but there is no indication what Gregory and Cullen lectured on at the Infirmary. Parke occasionally attended in addition lectures of other professors, especially Monro’s on anatomy and Russel’s on natural philosophy.

The most unrelenting task of medical students at Edinburgh at this time was writing out the lectures they heard each day. The professors spoke so rapidly that even students with a system of shorthand missed words and phrases. Under these circumstances it was customary for several students to agree to compare notes literally after each lecture, so that what one missed another might supply and each have a perfect copy of what the professor said. Parke belonged to such a group, and some of the fat volumes of lecture notes that he brought back from Edinburgh bear the notation that they were made by “Thomas Parke and Co.” From Cullen alone Parke took upwards of eleven hundred pages of manuscript notes between November and May; and in addition he copied borrowed notes from Cullen’s other courses and from Black’s. He bought a copy of Cullen’s *Nosology* and filled its margins with references to his notes of Cullen’s lectures.

Parke took other opportunities than were offered by the formal lectures to increase his medical knowledge. One afternoon he heard
James Rae read a paper on hernia at Surgeons Hall, possibly part of Rae’s regular course there. The professors were universally kind and friendly and often invited the young man to dinner or tea. With Cullen particularly Parke appears to have been on close terms, and he used to stop in whenever he wished, to visit, or borrow a book, or talk over some medical question. In the student medical societies were other means of extending one’s knowledge. Parke mentions both the Chirurgo-Medical and the Physico-Medical Societies—the latter he thought had “some sensible Members”—and he may have belonged to one of these. The Medical (soon to become the Royal Medical) Society he thought “much ye best Society of any here.” But whichever society it was to which he belonged, he attended regularly during the winter and several times presented and defended a paper before it.

In addition to these activities, he read a good deal during the winter. Of medical and scientific works he mentions Duncan’s Elements of Therapeutics, The Economy of Human Life, Sydenham’s works, Priestley on electricity, a history of chemistry, James Lind on scurvy, and volumes of medical essays and commentaries. From Dr. Cullen he once borrowed a treatise on fevers. And he read other things as well—Hume’s History of England, John Locke’s Posthumous Works, Smollett’s Humphry Clinker, some plays of Shakespeare, some of Farquhar, some of Cumberland. Of Robertson’s Charles V he told his sister that it had given him “such a relish for History, that I fear I shall spend more time in the perusal of Historians, than I can spare from Medicine.”

All things taken together, he assured his sister, he had “never studied so closely as I have done this Winter, indeed it seems impossible to be an Idle Spectator here. . . .” In the end this close application to study reacted on his health, and he began to make himself take exercise. Usually it was only a stroll through The Meadows with Sims; occasionally the two friends went farther off and climbed the Calton Hill or to the top of Arthur’s Seat; and once they wandered south to the Pentland Hills and came home much later than they planned.

14 University of Edinburgh Library Borrowings Record, 1771-1773, passim.
15 Parke to Sally Biddle, Edinburgh, Feb. 25, 1772, Friends Historical Library, SC.
16 Ibid.
Shortly after he reached Edinburgh, Parke learned that Dr. Franklin was staying at the home of David Hume in St. Andrews Square. He hurried there, and on his third visit met Franklin, hat in hand, about to leave the house. Franklin assured Parke he was that moment on his way to visit him, "which Notice I cou'd not sufficiently acknowledge." He spent some time with Franklin, and the older man advised him on his studies and promised to recommend him to the notice of Dr. Cullen. The next day Parke met Franklin again, at Prestonfield, where Parke walked to deliver some medical theses to Sir Alexander Dick. Sir Alexander insisted on introducing him to the company and on his taking a glass of wine. Parke soon excused himself, but of the ladies present, he noted in his journal that night, Sir Alexander's daughter "was one of the prettiest."

But Parke never returned to Prestonfield. Unlike Dr. Morgan and Dr. Rush, who had entered some of the best society of the city, Parke stayed close to the little Quaker group in the town and at the University; and one would scarcely guess from his journal that it was written at the very period when William Robertson, Adam Smith, James Boswell and Lord Kames were making Edinburgh the Athens of the North. Indeed, all in all, Parke had a joyless existence that winter in Edinburgh. For a Quaker the city offered much less social life than London. The Quaker meeting was small—when thirty attended on First-day it was thought a large meeting. Edinburgh Friends were not fashionable, and only at William Miller's, which often seemed "to be a very agreeable Asylum by way of Change," did he find the gentle pleasures and homely comforts he missed. The companionship of young women was lacking; "it has been so long since I have spent any time with y* fair Sex," he wrote almost pathetically on returning from a tea at which several young women were present, "that I seemed Metamorphosed & quite inlivened." More than this, he worried about money—he and Sims finally roomed together to save a few shillings—and he was tortured by doubts of his professional capacity and by fears that he was deficient "in y* most important things requisite to my future happiness." The weather was sometimes grimly unrelenting for days on end. He disliked the food, dressed as it was, he said, "in y* Scotch Taste—i e. one third Dirt by way of Condiment." He was several times unwell and
once ill for a week. He was, in short, often homesick and many of his journal entries conclude unhappily, "thinking of America."

The lecture courses drew to a close with the coming of spring. Parke’s thoughts turned to London and another season in the Hospital there. He bought a map of England and, after some delay, he bought a mare as well, for he proposed to ride back to London alone. Early in May he carried his chest to Leith and shipped it to London; he said his farewells to the medical professors, especially to Cullen, and to his fellow students at Peters’; and at noon on May 12 he set out with John Sims through South Queensferry, Linlithgow, and Falkirk, past the Carron Iron Works, to Stirling. When the moment for parting actually came, "altho’ I must confess I never had no great regard for Edinburgh, I was a good Deal moved."

From Stirling they turned south toward Glasgow, a bustling town, "much more regularly built" than any Parke had seen except Philadelphia. Its college was more elegant in appearance than the shabby buildings of the University of Edinburgh, but its faculty was not Edinburgh’s equal, and the library was small. At Hamilton, a few miles from Glasgow, after viewing the ducal palace there and with many pledges of mutual affection, the two friends parted, Sims to return to Edinburgh, Parke to continue southward over snow-clad hills through Carlisle and Kendal into Yorkshire. It was a leisurely journey, and in this stronghold of English Quakerism he found kind and agreeable friends who made his stay among them pleasant. Several accompanied him on the road from Kendal to Settle; "let any one paint to themselves y’e pleasure of such a party & say I was not happy if they can.” In each of the manufacturing towns which lay along his route he stopped to inspect factories: at Leeds he saw a warehouse with many hands at work packing woolen cloth for America; at Sheffield many of the cutlery, silk, and metal button factories were in Friends’ hands; he visited slitting mills and plate mills at Birmingham. He came through Warwick, whose castle was “grand & Elegant”; he passed the ruins of Kenilworth Castle; he entered Coventry and passed through St. Albans to London, where he arrived on the evening of June 4. He drove at once to James Freeman’s in Grace Church Street, “to my old Quarters—not without a considerable palpitation with Joy of seeing my many valued friends.”
It was the King's birthday, and the fireworks on Tower Hill that night seemed fit accompaniment to the joyful throbbing in his heart.

It was a good time to be back in London, for this was the period of London Yearly Meeting. The city was filled with many Friends from England and Ireland, and there was a greater number of public Friends from America than anyone could remember having seen in London at any one time. One of these was John Woolman, who was making his last religious journey. Parke heard him speak several times. The next two weeks passed swiftly in a round of visits with old friends and in meeting new ones. Lettsom, for example, engaged him "with a continued round of Questions about Edinburgh etc." Twice Parke was in a small party which went to the studio of Benjamin West to see the newly finished painting of Penn's treaty with the Indians—"a most noble piece." West explained it to them himself, and when Parke told him he was an American, "he expressed great pleasure, said he was glad to see me, & that I might be welcome to bring as many as I pleased to view his Paintings." Before he left England the next spring, Parke subscribed for engravings of Penn's Treaty and of The Death of General Wolfe as well.

When Yearly Meeting was over Parke went out to Dunmow in Essex to visit the family of his Edinburgh schoolmate Sims. Joseph Dimsdale, whom he knew at Edinburgh, the younger son of the celebrated Baron Thomas Dimsdale, was there when he arrived, "agreeably situated in the Company of Miss Sims." Parke had arrived sooner than Dimsdale expected; poor Joe had promised to make another visit in the neighborhood that evening, and so Parke had Miss Sims to himself. "I was really supremely happy with Sally in ye interim sat up 'till 12—then she lighted me to bed & parted for ye Night, not without having a very sensible impression in my heart, for I certainly never was so much Captivated in so short a time—slept well however with some pleasing dreams of Miss Sims." Next day—Sally "appear'd more charming than ever" at breakfast—"much sooner I must confess y'n I choose," he and Dimsdale set off for Hertford. There he was one of a large company for dinner at the Baron's, who was "quite a Jolly Man & very sociable." Joe proudly showed Parke his father's patent of Russian nobility, which appeared "prodigiously rich & grand." Dinner was "grand," too, elegant

17 Parke always referred to Dimsdale as Joe, never Joseph.
beyond anything Parke had seen in England; with liveried servants and rich plate and china, it had “little ye appearance of a Quaker Table.”

He was back in London on the 18th, sold his mare, but at a loss which kept him uneasy for weeks, and on the 20th he resumed his work at the Hospital, making the rounds once again with Huck and Fordyce. The latter was especially helpful to Parke this summer. Once a week, on the day he received patients, he invited Parke to his home for dinner, then, after a comfortable meal, he explained the cases which had been taken in that morning. But the case book Parke kept at the Hospital seems not to have survived, and his journal says nothing more of his work at St. Thomas’ than that he attended and, occasionally, that some case was interesting or curious.

In September he resumed attendance at McKenzie’s lectures, not so much in the conviction they would help him, it seems, as because he had paid for three courses and as yet had taken only two. His schedule was now what it had been the year before—a lecture at seven, then home for breakfast and some reading or writing, attendance at the Hospital at eleven, then dinner at home or with friends. He saw Lettsom occasionally and Curtis often; and once he went to the Royal College of Physicians to hear the Harveian Oration “delivered with much pomp & formality.” He bought a few medical books, but did not read as much as he had at Edinburgh.

Parke was in short not working very hard this winter in London. He himself feared he was “not gaining yt useful instruction which my friends may expect from my residing in London.” There were many diversions and he loved most of them. He went more often to the Coffee House and frequently joined the Americans there, finding their club now “tollerable agreeable but expensive.” In Edinburgh he had dismissed the celebration of St. Crispin’s Day as “very Ridiculous & silly”; the Lord Mayor’s Show in London he now thought “well worth seeing.” The young man who returned to London in the summer of 1772 was, in fact, not quite the same plain Chester County Friend who had arrived there a year before. He paid more attention to his dress and bought some more clothes that he might appear as a gentleman, and even had his head shaved and a caxon wig made—a change which astonished him almost as much as it did his English friends.

18 Parke to Owen Biddle, London, July 10, 1772, Friends Historical Library, SC.
More and more “ye English Nymphs,” as he called them, engaged his thoughts. Toward almost every one of them he met he felt a special tenderness. Of Betsy Empson he wrote that he really had “a considerable affection for that Lass—such a constant inclination to please, joined to a middling person cannot fail meeting with ye approbation of all who are so happy as to partake of her acquaintance”; and after taking her home one night he wrote ruefully that “cou’d medical knowledge be acquired in this manner I think I should soon be a proficient—but alas! I fear I am wrong in not being more diligent.” As for Betsy Corbyn, he used to stare at her in Meeting. Learning that Betsy’s parents were both away one day

I embraced the opportunity of spending an hour with Betsey—and a happy one it was, found them both more agreeable than ever—Ned Gray also availed himself of the interval, & was happily indulging himself with their company—after conversing as long as we dare stay lest we might be interrupted by the return of Pater & Mater, we decamped a back way highly pleased with our interview & both promised secrecy.

And Sally Sims was often in his mind. He certainly thought of marriage when he was with her, while for her part Sally exhibited toward him a Quakerly, if unmaidenly, determination.

At the beginning of August Parke interrupted his work at the Hospital to make an excursion by water and land to Canterbury and Dover. It was a fairly large party, and included James and Ann Freeman. They sailed down the Thames to Whitstable, where low tide kept them in the harbor all night, and then traveled overland to Canterbury. At the portals of the Cathedral Parke’s Quaker testimonies were unexpectedly tested. No one might enter the building, the beadle informed them, unless he removed his hat in reverence for the house of God. This was something James Freeman would not do, but Parke compromised, and while poor Freeman remained proudly but disconsolately alone on the Cathedral porch, Parke viewed the beauties of art and architecture within. That night, however, as he reflected on his conduct, he was filled with remorse. “I don’t know whether I was right in submitting to it, I fear I was not.” The party visited Margate, which was becoming a fashionable seaside resort for the wealthy, where Parke and Freeman went bathing in the sea in one of the machines invented by Friend Benjamin Beale. They traveled through Ramsgate, Deal, and Sandwich to Dover. Although
it was narrow and crowded, Dover had a romantic air; the chalk cliffs and the castle were impressive; and as the day was clear they could all see very plainly across the Channel to Calais.

Two months later at the conclusion of McKenzie's course, Parke took another journey, this time to Norwich. As it gave him an opportunity to pass through Dunmow, he had looked forward to it impatiently ever since he received an intriguing letter from John Sims, "not very long yet a little ambiguous about Sally—still advises me to go to Dunmow again." He spent the first night at Dunmow, where he talked to Sally of love and marriage. He passed northward through Wells and Cambridge, whose colleges he thought "clever" but inferior to Oxford's; visited Holkham Hall, where the steward filled him with venison pastry and home-brewed ale, "of which I drank so plentifully that I was evidently elevated"; and so made his way to Norwich. To John Gurney, Jr., he bore from Robert Barclay the character of one whose "Stoicism is not so great as to deprive him of knowing wherein true beauty consists," and Gurney was enjoined to introduce him to "the different members of the superlative part of nature in your City."19 No sooner had he arrived than he "brushed up a little to put ourselves in order to view the Norwich Lasses," and as this was Quarterly Meeting day he presumably saw a good many of them. For the rest Parke viewed the town, was regularly entertained by the Gurneys and other Quaker families, and on October 2 he left the city.

He rode through Yarmouth, whose narrow streets and narrow coaches struck the stranger's eye; through Lowestoft, remarkable for nothing except its china manufactory; through the small but lively trading town of Woodbridge where he found the plainest Friends in England, like those of Uwchlan Meeting in Chester County; to Ipswich and Colchester. Dunmow was only a few miles off his route; he found Sally and her father both happy to see him. Next day it was too wet to think of riding. Parke spent it

upon ye whole happily situated yet not wholly without some disagreeable sensations on Sally's account, as I fear she expected my conduct would be different than it proved, but as I cannot think of giving her my hand, I in honesty could not lead her affections astray by giving her the least reason to think I had any such intentions—yet I must confess her personal charms attracted my attention much.

19 Barclay to John Gurney, Jr., London, Sept. 5, 1772, Gurney Papers, Sec. i, 21, Friends Reference Library, London.
As he was setting off, Dr. Sims having offered to accompany him a few miles, Sally suddenly appeared attired for the road. "She looks very well on y'e Saddle as well as on foot. . . . then we parted." Sally doubtless thought Thomas must be shy. A month later she came to London. He avoided her, then sought her, and as they walked through Cheapside together one evening, "she threw out several hints that she wou'd be glad to attend me to America, but that cannot be."

He had been in England now a year and a half, and he was yearning for home. He would have liked to return that fall with Samuel Emlen, a public Friend from Philadelphia who showed a great concern for him and whom he greatly loved and respected. But Emlen sailed in November, too early for Parke. In February, however, when his friend Robert Barclay announced he would sail for Philadelphia in the Pennsylvania Packet, Parke brought his studies to a close. Together he and Barclay bought some provisions for the long winter voyage—a half chest of oranges, some hung beef, gingerbread nuts, and a checkerboard to while away the tedious hours. On May 3, 1773, the Pennsylvania Chronicle reported the vessel's arrival; among its passengers was "Thomas Parke, M.D." (but the title was incorrect and Parke never obtained a doctorate). He had been away two years.

His old preceptor welcomed him into partnership and, upon Evans' death six months later, Parke fell into a very satisfactory practice. "Our worthy friend Dr. Parke has a fine opening for practice," Barclay wrote young Gurney that fall, "& from what I can learn improves it—c'est un garcon come il faut." He resumed his former friendships and, as he had done in vacations before his trip abroad, occasionally made a pleasure jaunt to New York or through the Pennsylvania countryside. His innocent flirtations with the American lasses were as gay as with those of London, and his friends chaffed him about them. In 1775, however, he was married to Rachel Pemberton. He was named a physician to the almshouse in September, 1773, and a physician to the Pennsylvania Hospital in 1777. He was established.

20 "Account of Stores laid in by R. Barclay & T. Parke—in Capt Osborn Feby. 1773," Barclay Letters, Quaker Collection, Haverford College.
21 Barclay to John Gurney, Jr., Philadelphia, Oct. 29, 1773, Gurney Papers, Sec. iv, 2, Friends Reference Library, London.
Some of the friendships he made in England continued for many years. He and Barclay corresponded, although principally on business matters, and sometimes exchanged gifts; with Lettsom Parke's relations were medical and scientific, and the Englishman kept urging the American to establish an American society for natural history; the Freemans thought of him often, as did John Sims. Betsy Empson, they told him, soon married a widower with a child; Betsy Corbyn kept her beauty, for another Philadelphia traveler spoke of her a few years later as "a figure which laughts all Sculpture to Scorn"; but what became of Sally Sims? With his medical professors Parke's ties were less close, but occasionally a young medical student asked him for letters of introduction to London and Edinburgh. When he provided them he was simply completing a circle which opened the day he boarded the Chalkley on the first stage of his own studies abroad.

Dickinson College

WHITFIELD J. BELL, JR.

22 Barclay Letters, Quaker Collection, Haverford College.
23 Sims to Parke, Paternoster Row, Aug. 9, 1783, Etting Papers, Scientists, 79, HSP.
24 Ann Freeman to Parke, London, Feb. 17, 1775, Pemberton Papers, XXVII, 71-72, HSP.
25 Jabez Fisher to Parke, Leeds, Aug. 29, 1775, Pemberton Papers, XXVIII, 40, HSP.