

Dr John More and the College of Physicians

Dr More, having been accused of irregular practice by the College of Physicians (CPh) in 1612, was the next year charged with an offence against good taste in criticising the practice of Dr Francis Herring, a fellow of the College (FCP), and Archbishop Abbot took the opportunity to ban More from practising. The College was short of funds, however, and in 1617 the considerable sum of £20, a 'voluntary deposit' from More, induced the President, Henry Atkins, to propose conditional acceptance 'until either the King or [Privy] Councillors prohibit it'. This met with substantial resistance - More's formal admission was turned down by the Fellowship on a 15/5 vote. Even so, when Dr Arthur Dee, son of the celebrated Dr John Dee and a physician to Queen Anne, was asked by the CPh by what authority he presumed to practise, Dee replied in exasperation that 'medicine was his profession and that as he could make a business out of it, he ought to follow it', and cited More and Thomas Turner as examples of irregulars whose activities were being condoned by the College. i More continued to press the £20 offer - substantial compared to fees being paid at the time - ii and Atkins pointed out that, despite the embarrassment of Abbot's ban, his licensing 'would be pleasing to important men'. After further wrangling, in March 1619 the Fellows narrowly voted him in, and William Munk lists him as a licentiate of the College. iii Even so, 'the Registrar was careful to inscribe in full his letter averring the money to be a free gift, and More himself "ever...a servante" of the College'. iv

By 1616, More had moved from St Faith's parish to Fleet Street in St Bride's parish where until his death he lodged at the house of the Catholic Thomas Hicks or Hixes, a Charter member of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries from its incorporation in 1617. Even before then apothecaries - technically covered by the Grocers' Company, and able to practise freely the sale of drugs - fitted into the London civic scene more readily, and regarded theirs as no less exalted a calling than that of the physicians, yet they too could be pursued by the College of Physicians on suspicion of irregular medical practice, or of dispensing for unlicensed physicians. v

In 1616 the CPh questioned Hicks as to where he had obtained his *theriaca andromachi*. Hicks said it was from a Mr Wheatley, maybe another apothecary, but his servants said it was from Dr More. The term theriac referred to Venice or Venetian treacle, regarded as a universal panacea especially against poisons. A sort of homeopathic antidote, it was concocted supposedly - and expensively - from some five or six dozen ingredients according to lore passed down from the ancient Greeks. Its manufacture was controlled by Act of Parliament, and the CPh was empowered to pursue breaches. vi Indeed in the year following, the CPh received new powers of pursuit and enforcement. vii However no action was taken against More on this occasion. viii

From this time, evidence of another kind sheds light on Abbot's antipathy to More, and on More's links with 'important men'. Dr More, with other doctors some (but not all) of whom were also Catholics, features from time to time in the Acts of the Privy Council as recommending permission for patients - again, some of whom were Catholics - to go overseas, or be released from gaol, on grounds of medical necessity.

In 1617-18 there appears to have been a veritable procession of ailing gentry and their servants to take the waters at Spa. Whether this was the sole objective in visiting Flanders of the known recusants among them may be doubted. Below are the names of patients and of the doctors recommending permission:

1617: Henry Huddleston of Sawston esq. ^{ix}	John Giffard, John More
Jerome Roane (mention is made of a £200 bond) ^x	Sir William Paddy, John More
Anne wife of John Rootes, Hants. ^{xi}	John Argent, John More
Robert Jennison, gent. ^{xii}	John Giffard, John More
John Newport of Welton, Northants., esq. ^{xiii}	Richard Palmer, John More
1618: Henry Huddleston of Sawston esq. ^{xiv}	Simon Baskerville, John More
John Chamberlain esq. ^{xv}	John Giffard, John More
Joyce Langdale of Swine, Yorks. ^{xvi}	Simon Baskerville, John More
1623: Edward Fowler esq., wife, brother William to Spa ^{xvii}	John More
1624: Mrs Margaret Lewkenor was much benefited from a visit to Spa; her symptoms having recurred, she should be allowed to go again ^{xviii}	John More
Henry Atkinson esq.'s wife having had a mastectomy, recommended that they be allowed to remain in London, despite a recent proclamation for 'all gentlemen howsekeepers to repaire into the country' ^{xix}	Robert Lloyd, John More
1631: John Parker, gent., Bolland, Lancs. to Spa ^{xx}	Simon Baskerville, John More

Others of those for whom More and certain of his colleagues ventured to seek relief were prisoners, of whom some at least were priests active in the missions and thus dangerous clients. The identity, and therefore status, of some is uncertain - for instance the William Price on whose behalf More, Giffard and Joseph Phenton (Fenton) ^{xxi} approached the Privy Council in 1628: Anstruther lists only a William Price of St Asaph, ordained and sent to England in 1607; Bellenger has a Benedictine, William (Benedict) Jones *alias* Price who was of the London district and lived to 1639. ^{xxii} All that the Acts of the Privy Council entries state is that Price was a prisoner in the Clink, with half his body 'taken with the dead Palsie' (possibly tetanus) so that, then and in 1631, he was moved to the house of one of the doctors following certifications by More and Phenton. ^{xxiii}

In 1633, Dr More and Dr Richard Berry, another of Gee's suspect papists, argued that a Clink prisoner, Thomas Holmes, had 'a very sickly body, being troubled also with a cold palsy, obstruction of the spleen, besides the stone and bloody water' - the outcome is not stated. ^{xxiv}

Four years later, More and Dr Thomas Cadyman certified the need for the recusant Katherine Darcy, with her servants including Mary Stafford, to take the waters at Spa for six months. ^{xxv} In 1639 More and Simon Baskerville deposed that Sir Robert and Lady Hodshon were very ill and should be permitted to stay in London to complete their treatment before returning home to County Durham; these were stalwart Catholics (Lady Hodshon, or Hodgson, was an Ingleby). ^{xxvi}

The other proven or suspected papists named by Gee or in state papers include several of some distinction,

such as the elderly, upright Thomas Fryer;^{xxvii} Richard Palmer, who with Giffard had been called in to assist the dying Prince Henry;^{xxviii} the prolific author Thomas Lodge;^{xxix} Thomas Cadyman, at this time struggling as More had done to obtain CPh recognition, but later physician in ordinary to Queen Henrietta Maria, and knighted;^{xxx} and the cultivated Francis Prujean, who having been knighted by Charles II, was seen to show his appreciation by curing Queen Catherine of typhus.^{xxxi}

Pelling records frequent wrangles between practitioners. In 1620, More was cited in a dispute concerning Dr William Walker, a surgeon member (later Warden) of the Barber-Surgeons' company, a body at least equal in standing with the CPh.^{xxxii} A Mr Morton accuses Walker of 'treating one Jenkinson at Mr Archer's house, whom Dr Moore and Dr Chancey^{xxxiii} have refused.' Walker has given pills and let blood, and Jenkinson has died. Walker denies this, saying that he only let blood at Dr More's wish, and that Jenkinson had the plague. Dr Clement charges Walker with practice on one Hopkins, which Walker also denies. On resumption, Walker is charged with giving pills and opening a vein. He confesses to 'external' bleeding by Dr More's advice, and giving a conserve of red roses. The case appears to have been deferred with no action taken (allowing a case to 'lie on the table' was not unusual, apparently as a warning against future slackness or malpractice.)

Dr John Anthony - son of a Dr Francis Anthony, seemingly regarded as little better than a quack - held a medical doctorate but was refused licentiateship of the CPh; however after some backing from the duke of Richmond, the College agreed to connive at his practising on payment of £8 p.a. In 1632 he was summoned to a College hearing over his treatment of Lady Walsingham for smallpox, having given his patient almond milk and julep, and castor, saffron and oil of amber for 'fitt of the mother' - some form of hysteria.^{xxxiv} Anthony alleged that, after he had given her a laudanum pill,

'Dr. Moore being called, did approve of his Cordiall pill, which was his Laudanum pill. And ... after the second pill he mett with Dr. Moore and Dr. Despotine, by whose appointment Mr. Yardlye [an apothecary] made her Almond Milke: a fomentation for her stomach and a Cordiall julep ...'

Despotine, being told that Anthony was blaming his emulsion of almonds for Lady Walsingham's death, pointed out that he was last to be called in, claiming that he'd given her castor oil, not almond milk. After this somewhat tangled hearing, Francis Anthony was banned from future practice.^{xxxv}

Geographical proximity helped ensure that Londoners of various backgrounds were treated as well as courtiers; in October 1639 a case was heard at the CPh concerning 'John Yardley dwellinge in Milford lane....and his wife' who said that Roger Starlinge,

'a dweller in Lincolns Inn feild, some-times servant to Mr. Dunnington, had under-taken to cure the wife of Yardley of the pox about Michaelmas 1638. He had fluxed her for 20 days and then sweated her, but she worsened and Mr Yardley was enforced to leaue him and to call for Dr Moore....the Colledge thought fitt to send to D. Moore to knowe in what state of body hee found Mrs. Yardley'.

After inconclusive arguments involving yet another practitioner, Starlinge was acquitted, apparently because 'Dr Moore would not testifie any thinge in ye businesse'.^{xxxvi}

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- i Margaret Pelling (with Frances White), *Medical Conflicts in Early Modern London: Patronage, Physicians and Irregular Practitioners 1550-1640* - Oxford Studies in Modern History, 2003, pp. 97-98
- ii Pelling, *Medical Conflicts...*, p.288
- iii Pelling, *Medical Conflicts...*, pp. 325-327; also Margaret Pelling and Frances White, *Physicians & Irregular Medical Practitioners in London 1550-1640*, 2004. Pelling mentions, referring to a letter to the College of 1618, that Abbot was keen to exclude puritans as well as Catholic recusants from practising. The entry relating to Dr More in W. Munk, *The Roll of the Royal College of Physicians in London*, vol. I, 1518-1700, 1878, on the Royal College online site at <http://munksroll.rcplondon.ac.uk/Biography/Details/3174> [accessed 17 October 2013] says that 'John Moore, MD, was a Licentiate of the College, but I have not succeeded in finding a note of his admission: it must have been, I believe, about the year 1618. He was returned by the College to the parliamentary commissioners as a catholic, 29th March, 1626; and in the list for 1628 is the first named of six, most, if not all, of whom were Catholics, who stand immediately below the Permissi with the heading, "Sub nomine pœnæ solventes." He died in November, 1641. William Munk'
- iv Pelling, *Medical Conflicts...*, pp. 325-327; Pelling and White, op. cit.
- v Pelling, *Medical Conflicts...*, p.167; Pelling and White, Pelling and Webster, cit. Part 1, endnote ¹⁵
- vi J.P.Griffin, 'Venetian treacle and the foundation of medicines regulation' in *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* vol. 58 (3), Sept. 2004: '...in 1617, James I gave the Apothecaries a Charter to separate them from the Grocers as 'The Worshipful Society of the Art and Mistery of Apothecaries'. King James' proclamation on the Apothecaries Charter in 1617 included reference to another proclamation which had preceded it by two years. This announced that a book entitled *Pharmacopœia Londinensis* had been compiled by the College of Physicians at the King's command and was ready for press. 'No one throughout the whole of England was to compound any medicine, or distil any oil or waters or extractions named in it except in the manner therein prescribed, unless specially ordered by some learned physician. No one not a member of the Apothecaries' Company was to sell any composition named in the book or any medicine within London or seven miles about it'. The reference to the *Pharmacopœia* in the Apothecaries Charter preceded its publication by nearly 18 months!' - see BJCP online site at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1884566/#b18> [accessed 30 October 2013] for article and references quoted
- vii *ibid.*: 'On 8 October 1617 the College obtained a new Charter from King James I. ...It confirmed the existing powers of the College; gave it the right to sue for all penalties inflicted by it ...and gave the President and censors the right to examine, survey, govern, correct and punish all physicians, practitioners of physic, apothecaries, druggists in the City of London.' Nonetheless Pelling, *Medical Conflicts...*, p.285 observes that although substantial fines of as much as £5 per month, with possibly a gaol sentence added, could be levied in serious cases (subject as always to success in collecting) it was not unusual for an irregular practitioner to ignore or excuse himself from turning up to answer the CPh' summons
- viii Pelling, *Medical Conflicts...*, pp. 325-327; Pelling and White, op. cit.
- ix APCE vol. 35, p.233, 23 April 1617. John Giffard was a distinguished physician, FCP from 1598, who attended Prince Henry in 1612, and a papist according to John Gee: Pelling and White, op. cit. William Munk, op. cit., quoted from Francis Peck, *Desiderata curiosa*, 1732, Lib. VI, p.202:
'6th November, 1612. Dr. Atkins, a physician of London, famous for his practyce, honestie, and learninge, was sent for to assiste the rest in the cure. He (the Prince) got worse, whereupon bleedinge was again proposed by Dr. Mayerne and the favourers thereof, alledging that in this case of extremity they must (if they meant to save his life) proceed in the cure as though he was some meane person. This was not agreed to, and next day the physicians, chirurgeons, and apothecaryes seemed to be dismayed as men perplexed, yet the most part were of opinion that the crisis was to be seene before a final dissolution. ... His Majesty then gave absolute power to Dr. Mayerne to do what he woulde of himselfe without advice of the rest; but the doctor did not like this, for hee..would not adventure to doe anythinge of himself without the advice of the rest, saying that it should never be said.. that he had kylled the kynges eldest sonne. Bleeding was again proposed by Mayerne, but Drs. Hamond, Butler and Atkins could not agree upon it, instead of which they doubled and tripled the cordials. Then came to assist the rest Dr. Palmer and Dr. Giffard, famous physicians for their honestie and learninge. The result was *diascordium*, which was given in the presence of many honourable gentlemen." The prescription, however, was of no avail, and the unfortunate Prince died shortly after.'

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- x APCE vol. 35, p.249, 21 May 1617. Sir William Paddie was a physician to James I, present at his death. FCP from 1591, four times President CPh, knighted 1603, MP for Thetford 1604-11; a friend and supporter of Archbishop Laud - Pelling and White, op. cit.; Elizabeth Lane Furdell, *Royal Doctors 1485-1714: medical personnel and the Tudor and Stuart courts*, 2001
- xi APCE vol. 35, pp.260-261, 30 May 1617. John Argent was FCP 1597, President 1625-27; no hint of papistry: Pelling and White, op. cit.
- xii APCE vol. 35, p.266, 16 June 1617
- xiii APCE vol. 35, p.387, 25 November 1617. For Richard Palmer, FCP 1609, see later in main text
- xiv APCE vol. 36, p.117, 27 April 1618. Simon Baskerville was a physician in ordinary to James I and Charles I, who knighted him; FCP 1615; an eminent anatomist: Pelling and White, op. cit.; Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses II*, 193 (1818 edition)
- xv APCE vol. 36, p.174, 17 June 1618
- xvi APCE vol. 36, p.185, 24 June 1618
- xvii APCE vol. 39, p.50, 4 July 1623
- xviii CSP (Dom.), James I, vol. CLXI, p. 195, 21 March 1624
- xix APCE vol. 39, p.383: 29 November 1624. Robert Lloyd is described as a surgeon. Not listed as such in Pelling and White, although seemingly Lloyd was an alternative spelling of the name of the physician Robert Fludd
- xx APCE vol. 46, p.267, no. 757, 24 March 1631. (From mid-1631 are no printed transcripts of the Acts, and the facsimile series covering mid-1637 to 1645 lacks detailed indexation)
- xxi Fenton was a St Bartholomew's surgeon, LCPh in 1626: Pelling and White, op. cit.
- xxii G. Anstruther, *The Seminary Priests* vol. 2, 1975; (ed.) D.A. Bellenger, *English and Welsh Priests 1558-1800*, 1984
- xxiii APCE vol. 44, p. 268, no. 814, 19 December 1628; CSP (Dom.), Charles I, vol. CCXI, p. 268, no. 28, 9 February 1631
- xxiv Pelling and White, op. cit. ; CSP (Dom.), Charles I, vol. CCLXVI, p. 564, no. 24, 23 April 1634. Richard Berry was a Padua MD apparently licensed to practise, listed by the College in 1626 as a suspected papist, but not admitted to membership of the CPh
- xxv CSP (Dom.), Charles I, vol. CCCLVI, p. 124, no. 137, 18 May 1637
- xxvi CSP (Dom.), Charles I, vol. CCCCXII, p. 455, no. 111, 13 February 1639. For the Hodshons, see the informative and entertaining details at 'Parish of Jarrow', *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham: volume 2: Chester ward* (1820), pp. 66-93 – online at [http://www.british-history.ac.uk/antiquities-durham/vol2/pp 66-93](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/antiquities-durham/vol2/pp_66-93) [accessed 13 December 2013]
- xxvii made FCP 1572; in fact he died before Gee's tract was published. A sincere observant Catholic. The *Loseley MSS* record that 'Thomas Fryer, of London, doctor of phisic, has compounded with Her Majesty for a certain yearly sum not to come to church', and quotes a contemporary document: 'Whereas Thomas Fryer, Doctor of Phisicke, dwellinge within the Cytye of London, ys required by yor l're of this instante to be before youe at Dorkinge on Thurseday nowe next cominge as touchinge his not cominge to churche: It may please yowe to be advertised that the sayd Mr Fryer hath been allreddye called before the Mr of the Rolls and Sir Owen Hopton, knighte. lieutenant of the Tower, Commissioners appoynted for the same cause, within the cyttie of London, and the countye of Middlesex, before whom he hath compounded and agreed to paye unto her Matie a certain yearely sum of money for his not cominge to churche, as by the certyficat thereof delyvered unto the Lordes of her Maties pryvie councill dothe appeare, w'ch by the commaundement of the Mr of the Rolls I am willed to signifie unto yor Masterships, At London, the xvijth of Maye, 1586. Yor Wrshippes humbly to com'aunde, Henry Clerke, The Clarke of the Peace in

the Countye of Midd. To the Right Worshippful Sr Willm More, &c.'. *The Loseley manuscripts. manuscripts, and other rare documents ... from the reign of Henry VIII to that of James I*, ed. with notes by A.J. Kempe, 1836

xxxiii made FCP 1597, President 1620. In regard to attendance on the dying Prince Henry, see also endnote ⁹ above. See Pelling and White, op. cit.; M. Pelling and Frances White, *Physicians and Irregular Medical Practitioners in London 1550-1640*, database online at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/london-physicians/1550-1640> [last accessed 10 April 2018]

xxxix made LCPh 1610: Pelling, *Medical Conflicts...*; also Pelling and White, op. cit.

xxx or Cademan; resisted by the CPh as a recusant, but made a supernumerary FCP 1630, following royal appointment; Pelling, also Pelling and White, op. cit.

xxxi made FCP 1626; President 1650-54; Pelling, also Pelling and White, op. cit.; William Birken, *Prujean, Sir Francis (bap. 1597, d. 1666)*, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 2004

xxxii Pelling and Webster, also Pelling and White, op. cit.

xxxiii No biography in Pelling and White

xxxiv See extract from K.L. Peterson, 'Shakespearean Revivifications: Early Modern Undead' in *Shakespeare Studies*, Vol. 32, 2004, online at <http://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-125306071/shakespearean-revivifications-early-modern-undead> [accessed 4 February 2014]

xxxv Pelling and White, op. cit.

xxxvi Pelling and White, op. cit.