



JOHN JONES

ANDREW STEWART LOBINGIER, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Los Angeles, California

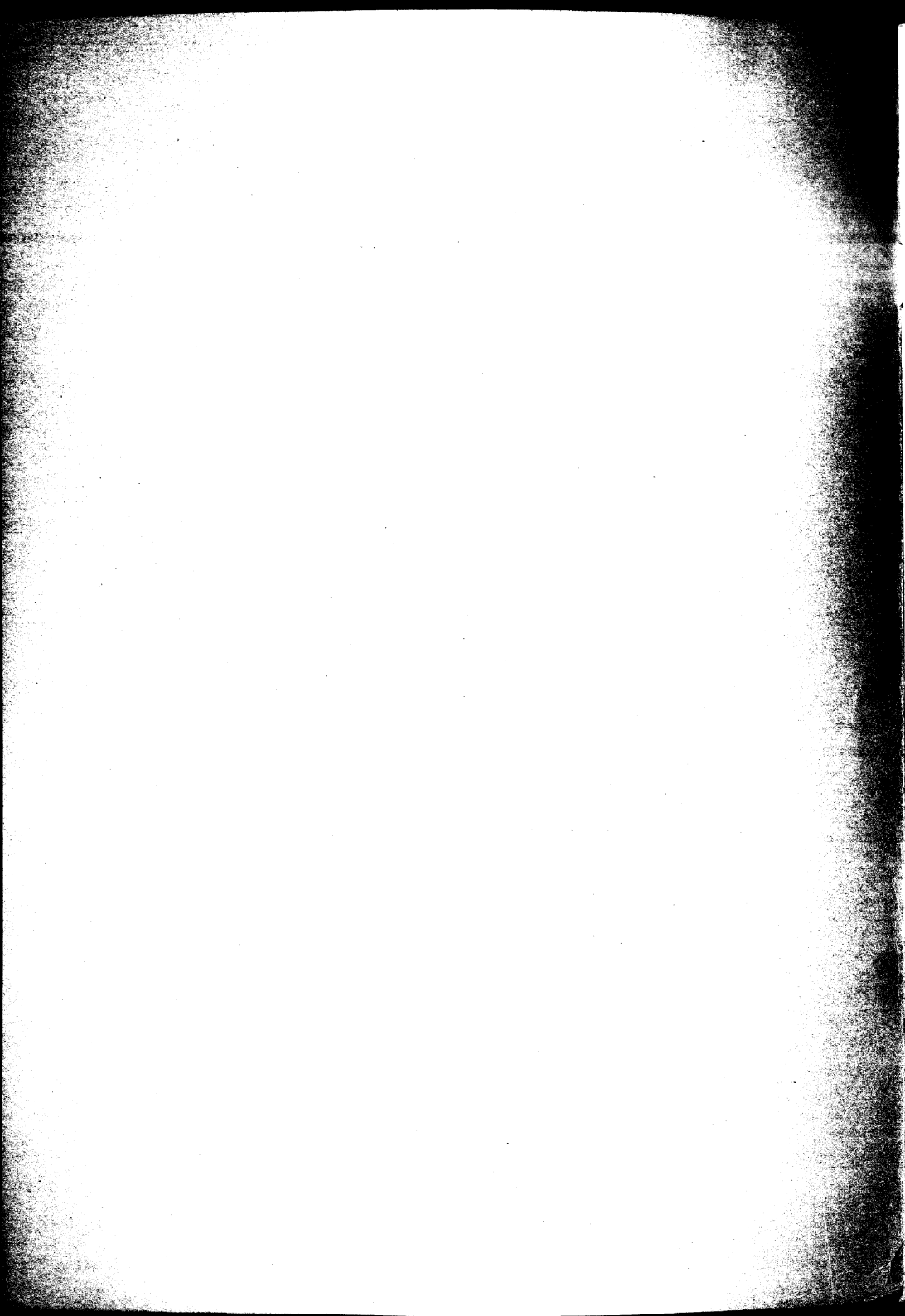


Reprint from

SURGERY, GYNECOLOGY AND OBSTETRICS

November, 1930, Vol. LI, 740-743

Copyright, 1930, by Surgical Pub. Co. of Chicago



MASTER SURGEONS OF AMERICA

JOHN JONES

ANDREW STEWART LOBINGER, M.D., F.A.C.S., LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

THE finest traditions of organized science spring from the impulses which animated the early masters. The life of Dr. Jones is intimately associated with the earliest and most inspiring traditions of the science of surgery in America.

He came of sturdy Welsh lineage. His grandfather, Dr. Edward Jones, emigrated from Wales in the ship "Welcome" with William Penn and his colony. He married the daughter of Thomas Wynne, speaker of the Penn Assembly. His son, Dr. Evan Jones, married Mary Stephenson, also of the Penn Colony, and settled in the town of Jamaica, Long Island, where the subject of this sketch was born in 1729. He was the eldest of four sons and his academic schooling was conducted by his father and mother in their home and in a private school in New York City.

It was the wish of John's father that he should study medicine and at the age of eighteen he was placed under the tutorship of Dr. Thomas Cadwallader, one of Philadelphia's most distinguished physicians. He was there brought in intimate relationship with the socially elect of Philadelphia, who were the friends of his own family and whose influence was in later years to form a most important background for his professional life in that city.

Jones was a conscientious and hard working student, ambitious to excel in all the opportunities offered by his illustrious preceptor.

America at that time had no medical college nor any hospital with an organized clinic where a student could be trained in course; and the facilities for clinical study were limited to the private patients of his preceptor.

After completing his training under Dr. Cadwallader, Jones went abroad, carrying letters from his preceptor to the master anatomists and surgeons of Britain and France. In London he became the pupil and eventually the intimate friend of Percival Pott, whose surgical clinic at St. Bartholomew's was justly celebrated. He also took the lecture course of William Hunter in anatomy and became a friend of John Hunter who was completing his course in medicine.

After finishing his courses of study in London young Jones went to France. He had acquired a reading and colloquial knowledge of the French language and first became a student at the University of Rheims where he received his degree

of Doctor of Medicine in 1751. From Rheims he returned to Paris, where he remained until April, 1752, with Professor Petit in his work in anatomy and in the surgical clinics at Hôtel Dieu with Professors Le Cat and Le Dran. From Le Dran, who was one of the first urological surgeons of his time, he learned to do lithotomies with skill and facility. From Paris he went to the University of Leyden and thence to London to be again with Pott and the Hunters, ending his tour of foreign study with the elder Munro in Edinburgh.

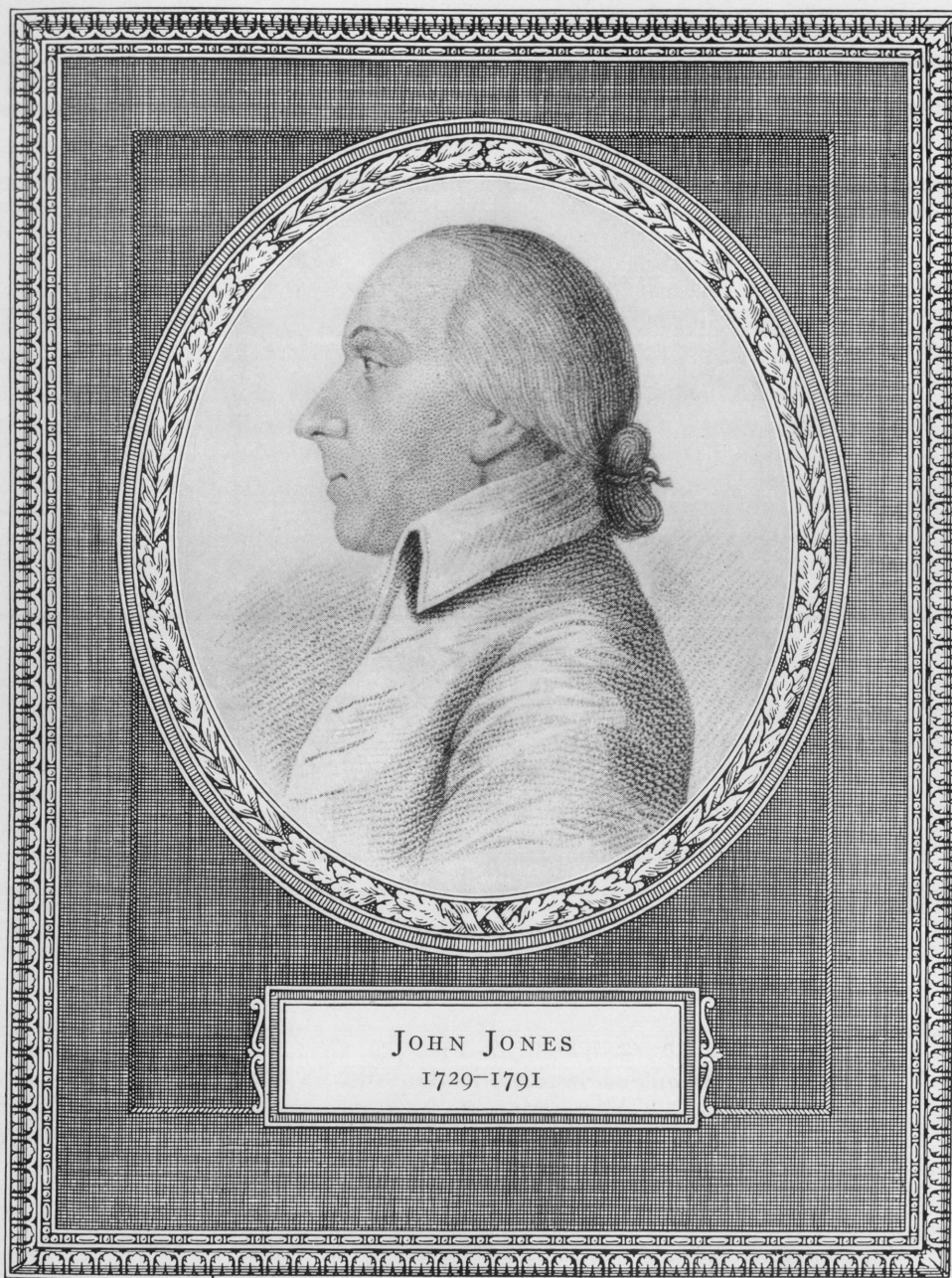
In 1753, Dr. Jones returned to New York to open an office and put in practice the accumulated knowledge gained from study with the teachers abroad.

Dr. James Mease, his biographer, commenting on the warm friends Jones had made among the master surgeons of Britain and France quotes some of the ideas which animated this brilliant young student, who had formulated the following course for the scientific surgeon:

"Besides a competent acquaintance with the learned languages, which are to lay the foundation of every other acquisition, he must possess an accurate knowledge of the structure of the human body, acquired not only by attending anatomical lectures, but by frequent dissections of dead bodies with his own hands. . . . There must be a happiness as well as art, to complete the character of the great surgeon. He ought to have firm steady hands and be able to use both alike; a strong clear sight, and above all a mind calm and intrepid, yet humane and compassionate, avoiding every appearance of terror and cruelty to his patients amid the most severe operations. . . . Whoever has acquired just and general ideas of the nature of a disease will seldom be at a loss how to apply them on particular occasions; and to him who wants those ideas, no rules or directions will be of much consequence."

In 1758, during the war between France and the British Colonies in America, when the invasion of New York was threatened at the Battle of Lake George, Dr. Jones enlisted as a military surgeon. The French general in chief command, General Baron D'Escaux was dangerously wounded and was taken prisoner by the British. Having learned of Dr. Jones' skill and that he had been a student of Le Dran, the French General sent for him to treat his wounds. The American surgeon continued to care for Baron D'Escaux after he was transferred to New York.

At the end of the campaign Dr. Jones returned to his surgical practice. His fame had now become widespread in the Colonies and his services were soon in demand everywhere. His skill in doing the operation of lithotomy, which in a very brief time he had brought from a procedure of great risk and high mortality to one of safety, brought him a well merited reputation. Moreover, Percival Pott had proved a loyal friend to his capable pupil and was unflinching in commending Dr. Jones to patients in America who sought his counsel. This cordial attitude on the part of Mr. Pott and the fine training under Professor Le Dran in urologic



JOHN JONES

1729-1791

surgery, which hitherto had been in bad repute in America, gave impetus to Jones' reputation as one of the most skilful and outstanding surgeons of his time. He performed the first lithotomy done in New York. Dr. Mease wrote of him: "He had acquired a facility in operating to which few surgeons had arrived. I have seldom known him longer than three minutes in a lithotomy and he has sometimes finished the whole in one minute and a half."

At the organization of the medical school in the College of New York (now Columbia University) Dr. Jones was appointed professor of surgery. He had had a careful training in obstetrics and up to this time obstetrics and surgery were taught in the same lecture course by the same teacher. He came back from Europe with the conviction that surgery was a distinct and separate branch of practice and should be taught and practiced as such. He not only was the first professor of surgery in America but from that time on was accorded the title of "Father of American Surgery."

Since his boyhood he had suffered greatly from asthma. His health from this malady became so impaired he finally determined to go to London to be with his old friends there with the hope that the fogs of London would afford him relief. Strange as it may be, he did grow better and stronger in this environment, and attributed his improvement in health to this change in climate. He again attended the clinics of Mr. Pott and the lectures on anatomy by Dr. Hunter. The personal courtesies and social hospitalities extended to him by them and notably by Mr. Pott, were a life-long inspiration to him. While in London he succeeded in raising the funds needed to complete New York's first hospital.

The threatened outbreak of the War of the American Revolution cut short his stay in England and he returned to New York, enlisted for the war, and served with Warren, Bard, and Morgan in the organization of the medical department of the Colonial Forces. In 1775 his chief and principal work on surgery was published. Its title was *The Plain, Concise, Practical Remarks on the Treatment of Wounds and Fractures*. At the beginning of the war there was a great dearth in the Colonies of young surgeons who were capable of treating gunshot wounds and fractures. This book so replete with knowledge Jones had acquired in the clinics of Le Dran and Pott proved an invaluable handbook for the young military surgeons in this war, and for many years afterward to the surgeon in civil practice.

When the British forces occupied the city of New York its three or four leading surgeons, Jones among them, found it necessary to leave; and inasmuch as he had previously been benefited by the climate of Philadelphia and had many friends there, he took up his residence and opened an office in that city in the summer of 1778. On the resignation of Dr. John Redman in 1780 from the Pennsylvania Hospital, Dr. Jones was unanimously elected to succeed him and continued to serve on its staff until his death eleven years later. When in 1787 the

Medical College of Philadelphia was organized, Dr. Redman was elected president and Dr. Jones vice president.

He became not only the physician of Benjamin Franklin but his intimate personal friend and was remembered by Dr. Franklin in his will. Dr. Jones has written a most interesting and detailed account of the last illness of his illustrious patient which his biographer incorporated in the narrative of his life. The intimacy and delightful fellowship which bound the great philosopher to his surgeon friend had its counterpart earlier in his life with Percival Pott and was to be greatly enriched by a notable friendship with President Washington, whose physician he had been for years and whom he attended for some indisposition the afternoon of the day Dr. Jones died.

Among the contributions to the surgical literature of the time in addition to the volume on the *Treatment of Wounds and Fractures*, were *Camp and Military Hospitals*; *The Diseases Incident to Armies, with the Method of Cure*; *Graduation Thesis at the University of Rheims, 1751*; *Account of the Last Illness of B. Franklin, 1790*; *A Case of Anthrax, 1791*.

He had trephined and opened the dura in a patient with delirium and symptoms of cerebral abscess eighty days after a head injury which terminated in recovery. This was one of the first operations on the brain in America and is reported in his work on the *Treatment of Wounds and Fractures*.

His notable executive ability in organizing the Department of Medical and Surgical Service at the beginning of the American Revolution has previously been mentioned. So active was he in the public affairs of his city and State that he was made a senator in the State of New York.

This cultivated gentleman of versatile accomplishment was an illustrious surgeon of international note, a loyal patriot, a splendid citizen, and a devoted friend of humanity. He was an honor to the profession he loved and the guild which his achievements distinguished.

The life and ideals of this noble-minded teacher and master should be an inspiration to all who have followed the course and development of the science of surgery in America.

40767



