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# THE MUSEUMS OF THE EDINBURGH PHRENOLOGICAL SOCIETY

M.H. KAUFMAN AND S. BLOMFIELD

THE EDINBURGH PHRENOLOGICAL Society was established in 1820 by the brothers George (1788–1858) and Andrew Combe (1797–1847) and a number of other like-minded individuals. The original founder of phrenology was Dr Franz Joseph Gall (1758–1828), a Viennese physician, and it was popularised in England after 1814 by his disciple Dr Johann Gaspar Spurzheim (1776–1832). George Combe, an Edinburgh lawyer, became convinced of the validity of the ‘science’ after attending public debates held in Edinburgh in 1816 between Spurzheim and his opponent Dr John Gordon, a distinguished Edinburgh anatomist and physiologist.<sup>1</sup>

Phrenology arose from the confluence of psychology and anatomical research, and was an attempt to marry the ancient subject of physiognomy with cerebral localisation. Gall believed that he had discovered a complete and true physiology of the brain. In his view the brain was the organ of the mind, and made up of many individual ‘organs’ – each was associated with a single human ability or characteristic, and their individual sizes reflected the degree of development of these features. Gall also believed that the external contours of the skull exactly replicated the upper surface of the brain. Accordingly, it was possible to determine the size of the individual ‘organs’ from an analysis of the external features of the skull. The system, originally termed ‘organology’, ‘craniology’ or ‘craniognomy’, was soon called phrenology.<sup>2</sup>

The Edinburgh Society produced a volume of *Transactions* in 1824, and numerous issues of its *Phrenological Journal and Miscellany* from 1824 until 1847. In 1828 George Combe published his

*Essay on the Constitution of Man*, which was phenomenally successful and sold many hundreds of thousands of copies, as it was accessible to the middle and working classes, and offered them the prospect of self-improvement and personal happiness.<sup>3</sup> Edinburgh became the main centre for the study of phrenology, but in the fifteen years after the formation of the Edinburgh Society, over forty other phrenological societies were established in Britain, which gives an indication of how phrenology excited interest amongst a public eager to embrace new ideas.<sup>4</sup> While many works were published in support of phrenology during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they do not meet modern standards of rigorous and objective scholarship. Despite its earlier popular support, as it impinged on virtually every aspect of life, thought and belief, it is now discredited as a serious scientific discipline, although it is recognised as having made a significant contribution to the development of a wide range of other subjects, including education, psychiatry and criminology.<sup>5</sup>

The Edinburgh Phrenological Society, founded in 1820, eventually had over 600 members, of whom about 100 were from the medical profession, and was in possession of a collection of artefacts from at least 1822.<sup>6</sup> However, the membership of the Society rapidly diminished during the second half of the nineteenth century, and their funds became depleted. The Phrenological Museum, which initially had represented an ‘embarrassment of riches’, all ‘illustrative of the truth of the science of phrenology’, became a liability. The Society was already heavily dependent on the financial support of the trustees of

one of its former members, William Ramsay Henderson (1801–1832), and in 1855 the collection passed into the ownership of the Henderson Trust. Over the years, the museum was the largest single item of expenditure for the trustees.

This article charts the history of the collection of artefacts accumulated by the Edinburgh Phrenological Society and the Henderson Trust and where they were housed through the nineteenth century. The story can be followed in the Minute Books of the Henderson Trust.<sup>7</sup> The collection was initially kept in rented rooms in Clyde Street, near St Andrew Square; it moved in 1849 to more suitable accommodation in Surgeon Square at High School Yards; and then from 1878 until 1886 was displayed in a purpose-built Phrenological Museum in Chambers Street. Unfortunately, by this time the theories that these artefacts purported to illustrate were no longer accepted by the scientific community. The Museum's fate was sealed, and it was inevitable that its contents would be dispersed and the premises sold. The collections consisted of over 2500 items, including large numbers of human and animal crania, plaster of Paris casts of heads, and drawings and paintings illustrative of the principles of phrenology, as well as important lending and reference libraries, each with hundreds of titles. In 1887 these were all transferred on loan to the Anatomy Department in the University's New Buildings in Teviot Place, under the care of Sir William Turner (1832–1916), Professor of Anatomy.

#### THE SOCIETY'S CLYDE STREET PREMISES

The initial meetings of the Society were held in members' houses and other temporary accommodation, but from Whitsunday 1822 they rented rooms for their museum and lectures at Clyde Street, which ran between North St Andrew Street

and Elder Street, to the north east of St Andrew Square.<sup>8</sup> The premises were rented from the veterinary surgeon William Dick (1793–1866), originally a blacksmith and farrier (a term used almost exclusively for those involved in the veterinary care of horses). Born in Edinburgh, he attended demonstrations by the comparative anatomist John Barclay in the extramural medical school, as well as the lectures of Professors James Gregory (Practice of Physic) and Thomas Charles Hope (Chemistry) at the University, and he also studied for some time in the London Veterinary College, where he gained his formal qualification. In 1823 Dick founded what was originally called the Highland Society's Veterinary School, with a base at his father's forge in Clyde Street; it was later known as the Veterinary College of Edinburgh, and after 1874 the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. The School eventually transferred to new buildings at Summerhall in 1916, and in 1951 the 'Dick Vet' was incorporated into the University of Edinburgh as the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.<sup>9</sup>

From 1823 to 1829 Dick's lectures on 'the diseases of horses, black cattle, sheep and other domestic animals, illustrated by the necessary anatomical demonstrations' were given under the patronage of the Highland Society of Scotland in the Calton Convening Rooms, but with clinical tuition at his premises at 15 Clyde Street, 'furnished with a forge and other appendages for the practical instruction of country farriers'. In 1829 Dick's lectures also transferred to Clyde Street.<sup>10</sup> By 1830, the Veterinary School consisted of the forge, a temporary hospital based in the stable and a small lecture room adjacent to the forge; a museum was added the following year.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately no details are known of the rooms used by the Phrenological Society at Clyde Street, but it seems likely that their premises were separate from those used by the



Veterinary School, as the Society's Minutes indicate that their lectures were held in their Clyde Street museum hall right from the start in 1822.<sup>12</sup> Whether the Clyde Street building included a purpose-built museum or library for the Phrenological Society is not known, but it is more likely that a variety of rooms were adapted to house the Society's lectures and growing collections. In 1833 Dick refurbished the site, and new buildings were added at a cost of £2500.<sup>13</sup> A drawing of the main building as it was in 1916 shows a handsome three-storey ashlar façade to Clyde Street, with an arched entrance to the yard at the side.<sup>14</sup> Again, however, no details are known of the rooms used by the Phrenological Society within the reorganised Clyde Street complex up until 1849.

The Edinburgh Society had little in the way of resources beyond membership fees, and from the early 1830s relied heavily on financial support from the Henderson Trust. Whilst the Society as a body was quite separate and independent of the Trust it naturally followed that the minutiae of the Society's activities were known to the Trust. Equally, all of the early trustees were members of the Society: the brothers George and Andrew Combe and advocate James L'Amy were the three original trustees, and in August 1832 advocate James Simpson and solicitor William Waddell were added. This close, almost incestuous, association between the Trust and the Society was a consequence of William Ramsay Henderson's directions. Henderson died on 29 May 1832; his Trust Deposition and Settlement, dated 27 May 1829, was registered in Books of Council and Session on 9 August 1832, and the full text is reproduced on pages 1–8 of the first Minute Book of the Trust.<sup>15</sup> The critical section, which defines how the trustees could spend his money after his death, reads as follows:<sup>16</sup>

The whole residue of my means and estate, and of the said sum of £5,000 of my father's Last estate, shall after answering the

purposes above written, be applied by my said Trustees in whatever manner they may judge best for the advancement and diffusion of the science of Phrenology, and the practical application thereof, in particular; giving hereby and committing to my said Trustees the most full and unlimited power to manage & dispose of the said residue in whatever manner shall appear to them best suited, to promote the ends in view; Declaring that if I had less confidence in my Trustees, I would make it imperative on them to print and publish one or more editions of an '*Essay on the Constitution of Man considered in relation to external objects*', by George Combe, in a cheap form, so as to be easily purchased by the more intelligent individuals of the poorer classes, and Mechanics Institutions &c But that I consider it better only to request their particular attention to this suggestion, and to leave them quite at liberty to act as circumstances may seem to them to render expedient, seeing that the state of the Country and things impossible to foresee may make what would be of unquestionable advantage now, not advisable at some future period of time; But if my decease shall happen before any material change affecting this subject, I request them to act agreeably to my suggestion.

The deed of settlement included £5000 in a trust arranged by his father, Alexander Henderson, 'banker, of Eildonhall and Warriston'.<sup>17</sup> Alexander Henderson was initially a seed merchant with a nursery occupying part of what is now West Princes Street Gardens.<sup>18</sup> After serving as a town councillor from 1811 he was elected Lord Provost of Edinburgh for 1823–25, and after retirement from that office he became Master of the Merchant Company. He was first President of the National Bank of Scotland, and he also founded the Scottish Union Insurance Company.<sup>19</sup> His name is commemorated in Henderson Row in the New Town.<sup>20</sup> Alexander Henderson died on 5 February 1827.<sup>21</sup>

Much of the Trust's funds were spent in supporting the publication of numerous cheap editions of the works of George Combe, according to Henderson's wishes, as well as the Society's *Journal*. They were also, over the years, particularly generous in support of publication of books on phrenological topics by numerous other authors. Similarly, they

often paid all the expenses of lecturers who were invited both to Edinburgh and elsewhere to provide courses of lectures on topics promoting phrenology.

Another venture with which the Phrenological Society was associated was the Secular School, founded for the education of children of the working classes in 1848.<sup>22</sup> Unusually, on its establishment, it was proposed to charge fees, firstly to 'give the school a prospect of permanent success on its own account', and secondly because the fees would tend to make parents appreciate the education offered to their children: the fees were modestly fixed at 4 shillings per quarter, and the school was subsidised by the Society. The Society was fortunate in being able to obtain William Mattieu Williams (1820–1892), a keen advocate of phrenology, to act as their teacher, and it was unanimously decided to call it the Williams' Secular School.<sup>23</sup>

By 1849 it was clear that enlarged rooms were needed for the Phrenological Society and its Museum, and this might also give an opportunity for the school to expand. It was suggested that property be purchased in the High School Yards, at 1 Surgeon Square, formerly the anatomical lecture room, museum and dissecting room of the surgeon John Lizars. The Trust had the necessary funds to meet the purchase price of £400, and considered that it would be capacious enough to accommodate the needs of the Phrenological Museum as well as the school.<sup>24</sup> The Secular School had previously been nearby, in a hall at 6 Infirmary Street (the west pavilion of Lady Yester's Church), where it had about 60 pupils in 1849.<sup>25</sup> By the time it moved to Surgeon Square in the following year, it had expanded to take about 160, of whom almost one third were girls.<sup>26</sup> With the resignation of Williams in August 1854 when he accepted the headmastership of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, the school was closed, as they were unable to find a suitably qualified successor.

George Combe visited Williams in Birmingham in 1857 in the hope that he might be able to recommend a replacement teacher for the Secular School so that it could be re-opened, but without success.<sup>27</sup>

According to the Henderson Trust Minutes, 'by the proposed purchase, and arrangements consequent on it, the valuable illustration of the science contained in the Museum will become available for the instruction of the pupils in the science'.<sup>28</sup> The use of the Phrenological Museum and its contents for teaching purposes, and the desire that it should be freely accessible were, and continued to be, of primary concern to both the Society and the Trust. Even before it had purchased 1 Surgeon Square, the Trust had resolved that the rooms adjoining the Museum should be used for the instruction of medical students, the working classes and the general public (the lecture room at Surgeon Square could seat over 200). This concern for public access was expressed often throughout the Society's history, and was frequently reiterated in agreements as and when the status of the Museum changed, but particularly when ownership was transferred from the Society to the Trust in 1855, and again in 1887 when the contents of their Museum and library were transferred into the supposedly safe keeping of the University.

#### THE PHRENOLOGY MUSEUM AT 1 SURGEON SQUARE

The land on which 1 Surgeon Square was built was owned by William Home Lizars (1794–1860), the prominent Edinburgh engraver. He applied to the City's Dean of Guild Court on 4 August 1824 for permission to erect a building on this plot of land to be used by his brother, John Lizars, surgeon, as a classroom.<sup>29</sup> There was some urgency in this request, because in a subsequent letter to the Dean of Guild



on 25 August he informed him that his brother had already 'advertised to the public that he will commence a course of Lectures upon the 18th of October next' (i.e. 1825).<sup>30</sup> With his application, he submitted an architect's drawing detailing a plan and front elevation of the proposed building (fig. 1). An engraving by W. H. Lizars gives an excellent indication of its appearance shortly after it was

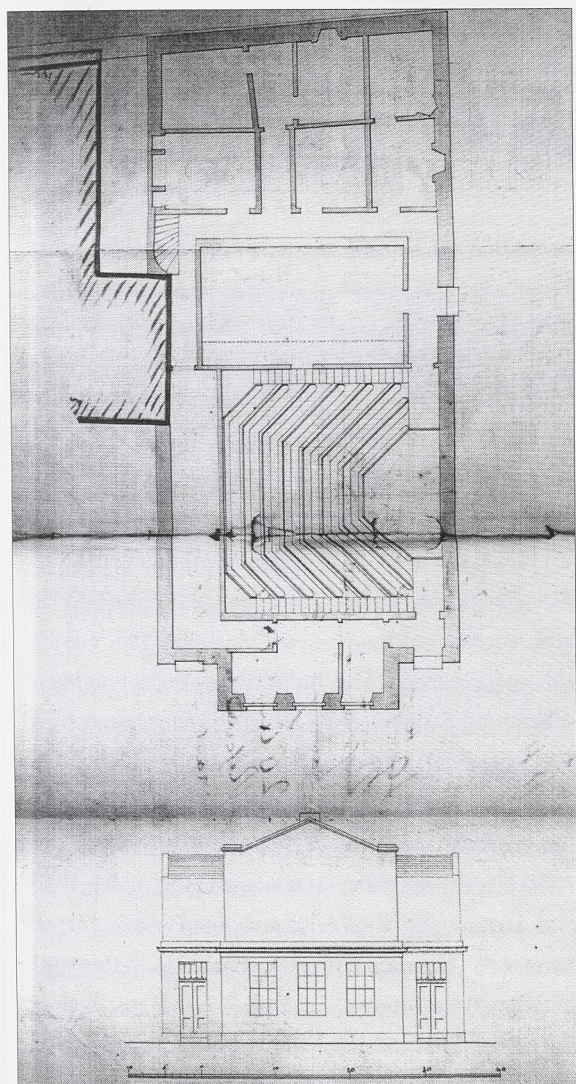


Fig. 1. Plan and elevation of proposed classroom submitted to the Dean of Guild on 25 August 1824 by W. H. Lizars, to be used by his brother, John Lizars, surgeon. (Edinburgh City Archives, Dean of Guild Court Archives, DGCA.)

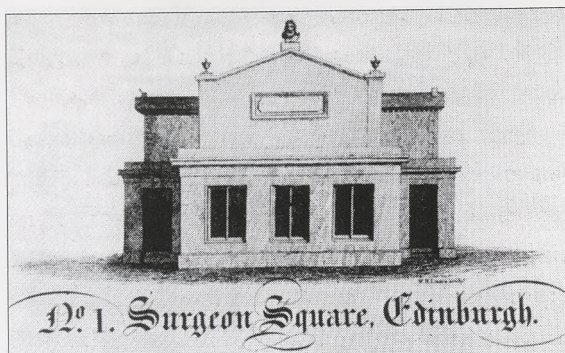
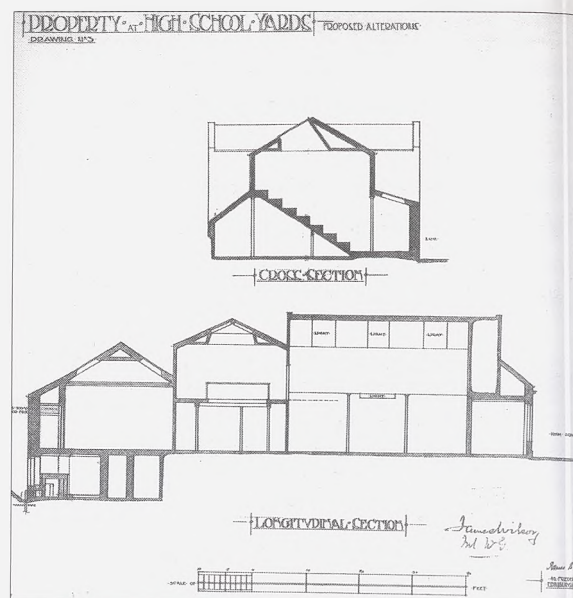
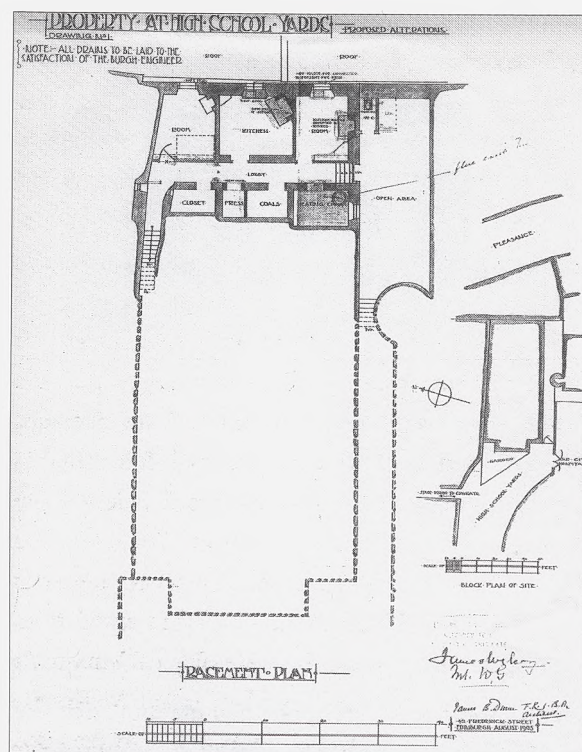


Fig. 2. Engraving of the façade of the classroom at 1 Surgeon Square shortly after it was erected, signed 'W. H. Lizars [sic] sculpt.' (From C. H. Cresswell, *The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh: Anatomy in the Early Days*, *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, New Series 12, 1914, pp. 141–156.)

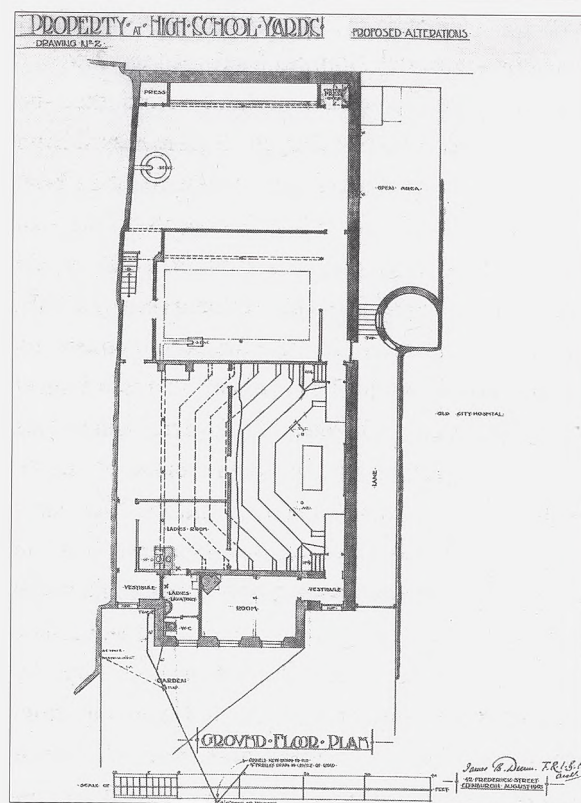
erected (fig. 2). The ground floor was divided into three principal areas: that closest to the old City Wall consisted of a number of small rooms, the central area was a single large room, and the third area was laid out as a typical lecture room with seven rows of steeply raked benches facing south. No basement is shown in Lizars' original plan, but drawings prepared when amendments were made to the drainage of the area in 1905 show a basement under the part closest to the old city wall (figs 3, 4 and 5). This suggests that part at least of the eastern section of the building may have been a pre-existing structure, with only the lecture room and perhaps the central hall newly built in 1824.<sup>31</sup> The cross-sections show that all the main storey rooms were well lit by skylights.

There has been some confusion about the numbering of the buildings around Surgeon Square, partly because there was historically no clear boundary between High School Yards and the square itself. Charles Cathcart published a useful account in 1882 of the buildings used here at various times for extramural medical teaching, accompanied by a plan reconstructing the arrangement of buildings around the square.<sup>32</sup> Old plans clearly show that the entrance to the old Surgeons' Hall and the square that grew up





Figs 3, 4 and 5. Drawings by James B. Dunn, August 1905, giving plans of the basement (3) and ground (4) floors, and sections (5) of 1 Surgeon Square, showing proposed alterations to the property. (Edinburgh City Archives, DGCA.)



in front of it in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was always from the north, by High School Yards (see fig. 6).<sup>33</sup> It was only after the acquisition of the main part of the site by the University of Edinburgh in 1905 that this was blocked off, and access reorganised to be from the west by Infirmary Street. The building correctly numbered 1 Surgeon Square, built by Lizars and home of the Phrenological Museum from 1849 to 1875, is now approached only from High School Yards; it bears the inscription 'University Settlement' across the façade, reflecting its use after a reconstruction in the 1930s, and is now the City's High School Yards Nursery School.<sup>34</sup> The remnants of Surgeon Square are in the University's property, to the north of the old Surgeons' Hall. The most prominent survival is the eighteenth century house at the north-east corner of the square, now known as Chisholm House, which was originally 2 Surgeon Square; the 1852 Ordnance Survey map labels this the Burn Hospital (with



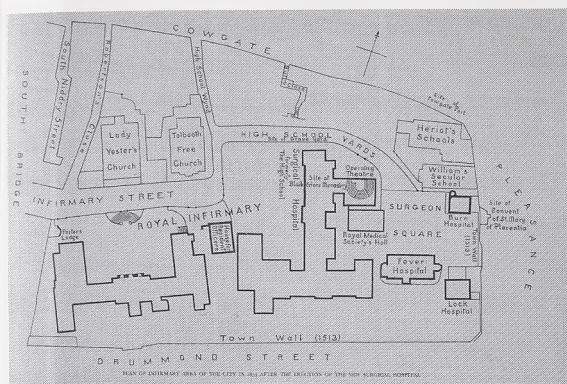


Fig. 6. Sketch plan of the Infirmary and Surgeon Square area in 1853. No. 1 Surgeon Square, marked as Williams Secular School, also housed the Phrenological Museum. (From A. Logan Turner, *Story of a Great Hospital: The Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, 1729–1929*.)

1 Surgeon Square, to the north, shown as Williams' Secular School – see *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, New Series 4, 1997, p. 110). It is understandable, but confusing, that Chisholm House has sometimes been wrongly thought to be 1 Surgeon Square in recent times.<sup>35</sup>

John Lizars, who taught anatomy and surgery, moved from 1 Surgeon Square in 1828 to take over William Cullen's teaching rooms in Brown Square (W. H. Lizars, however, retained ownership of 1 Surgeon Square).<sup>36</sup> In 1831 John Lizars succeeded John William Turner in the Royal College of Surgeons' Chair of Surgery, but he resigned in 1839, at which time the post was discontinued. As happened with many of the other buildings around the square, the lecture theatre at 1 Surgeon Square continued to be used for extramural medical teaching thereafter, though lecturers changed classrooms frequently and it is difficult to give comprehensive details. Thus, for example, the 1833 *Edinburgh Post Office Directory* includes K. T. Kemp, lecturer in chemistry, at 1 Surgeon Square.<sup>37</sup> The *Directories* for 1836 and 1837 record George Lees, lecturer in Natural Philosophy (physics). In 1840 Alexander Jardine Lizars (brother of John and William) is found teaching

there, before his appointment as Professor of Anatomy at Aberdeen the next year. Dr Allen Thomson is recorded in 1841, followed by Peter David Handyside, Henry Lonsdale and James Spence jointly from 1842, and they in turn were succeeded in 1845 by Dr James Mercer, until 1847.<sup>38</sup> The *Directories* record a number of other individuals working (or living) at 1 Surgeon Square over the years. Thus from 1841 to 1843 Dr John Moir was also there, with his Dispensary for Women, Children and Midwifery; from 1844 to 1846, John Stewart, japanner; and in 1847, a John Brown. John Hughes Bennett also taught here during this decade.<sup>39</sup> From 1856 until 1877 Alexander Stewart, Curator of the Phrenological Museum, is listed as resident here, with entries for the Phrenological Museum itself from 1856 until 1875. During the Phrenological Museum's time, surgery lectures by Alexander McKenzie Edwards are mentioned; J. Russell is also recorded there (1862–63), and the celebrated Joseph Bell (model for Sherlock Holmes) from 1864 to 1879.<sup>40</sup>

The Henderson Trust Minutes record that the deeds of ownership of 1 Surgeon Square passed from W. H. Lizars, 'the proprietor', to the Trust in May 1849.<sup>41</sup> A related statement of accounts shows that the Trust covered the expenses of considerable alterations to the fabric of the building (nearly £200), in order to make it suitable to accommodate its various collections.<sup>42</sup> The internal alterations must have been extensive to have cost the Trust almost half as much again as the purchase price of £400. Analysis of the accounts reveals that the Museum's contents were displayed on open shelving that ran around the principal room, between the windows; it was well illuminated by side-lights and sky-lights, and it could be further lit, when necessary, by additional gas fittings. All the old shelving from the Clyde Street premises was re-used, but it was necessary to spend a further £17. 11. 0 on new



shelving, implying that it had not previously been possible to display some of the collection adequately. This description of the museum area strongly suggests that all the items were displayed in the large single room situated next to the lecture room. After the Trust purchased the premises, the basement area was used for many years as a house for the Museum Curator; it is likely that the offices of the Society were on the ground floor at the rear.

Analysis of observations made in the Henderson Trust Minutes of 19 March 1867 also indicates that the collection was contained in the middle room, with approximately 1400 square feet of wall space available for display, and with two small workshop rooms adjacent. According to a note in the Minutes on 3 December 1868, the premises consisted of 'a Lecture Room, Phrenological Museum (3 rooms), Keeper's House, &c.' The same note draws attention to the fact that Dr Joseph Bell paid £15 per annum for the use of the lecture room, from 10 to 11 am, 'and the constant use of the small room in front'. Alexander Stewart, Keeper (or Curator) of the Museum, in addition to receiving a small salary, had rent-free accommodation on the premises, with coal and gas supplied. He also kept a bookbinding shop, and had the use of two small rooms under the lecture room seating as workshops.<sup>43</sup>

The Henderson Trust had purchased 1 Surgeon Square, and the Edinburgh Phrenological Society paid the Trust rent for use of the premises. The rent was fixed at £6 per annum – the same as that previously paid to William Dick for the use of the Clyde Street premises, 'as the Society is nearly destitute of funds'; the trustees also fixed the rent of the Secular School at £14 per annum.<sup>44</sup> By 1855, the Society was so impoverished that it could no longer afford to sustain its museum, and offered the trustees its entire collection of skulls and casts, together with the presses (shelved cupboards) in which they were

displayed as payment in kind for approximately six months' rent arrears.<sup>45</sup> The Museum was offered to the Trust with five conditions attached, although it is difficult to see what they could have done had the trustees not agreed. The Society had required that they were to have 'sufficient access thereto in all time coming'. Amongst the stipulations were that: either the present building or a suitable alternative building be maintained in order to display the collection; the public should have free access every Saturday for three hours; and on extraordinary occasions, individuals should be granted access outwith the usual Saturday hours on condition that a formal application had been made in advance.

The Trust accepted these conditions, and was accordingly given full responsibility for the collection. It was certainly fortunate that the Trust was willing to take on the responsibility for the future care of the collection at a time when the Society was in such dire financial straits, as the view had been expressed that 'it was to be feared that unless the present arrangements were entered into, the collection would, in the course of a few years, be unavoidably dispersed'.<sup>46</sup> The Trust Minutes of subsequent years indicate that the Society did remain in very close contact with their Museum, that its members continued to enjoy unlimited access, and that relations between the Society and the Trust were at all times cordial and co-operative. This close relationship is underlined by the fact that the agreement between the two parties was no more explicit or formal than the Society requesting 'sufficient access' to the collection.

On taking possession of the Museum, the Trust set about making significant improvements and alterations to the fabric of the building. The skylights were fitted with plate glass and the whole space was painted. Stewart, the Curator, cleaned, arranged and labelled all of the casts and skulls, and the

shelves were fitted with curtains on rollers to help preserve and keep the specimens clean.<sup>47</sup> In addition, a sign was erected to direct the public to the Museum, and inform them of the opening hours. A report by the Curator included in later Trust Minutes detailed the full extent of his achievements since his appointment in 1854.<sup>48</sup> Within the space of five years he had 'reduced the Museum to order ... organised a catalogue of its contents, and labelled 950 objects'.<sup>49</sup> As Curator, Stewart was expected not only to take day-to-day charge of the Museum, but also to clean it and attend on Saturdays from 1 pm till dusk when it was open to the public.

A record of visitor numbers between 1858 and 1864 illustrates that the Museum was well patronised and that, despite the decline in the activities of the Edinburgh Phrenological Society, the subject, and more particularly the artefacts, of phrenology, were still of considerable interest to the general public during the third quarter of the nineteenth century.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, a separate Phrenological Association had very recently been formed, chiefly by working men, who met in the lecture hall of the Phrenological Museum once a month; William Hodgson delivered a course of lectures to them in 1855.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps this new interest from the educated artisan class was the reason why attendance at the Museum rose sharply to 600–700 per annum in the late 1850s, peaking at 1680 in 1865 and declining slowly thereafter.

The question of purchasing the Spurzheim Collection, some of which had originally belonged to the founder of phrenology, Franz Joseph Gall, was first raised in 1866. Spurzheim's collection had been bequeathed to his friend, the London phrenologist John D. Holm, and then sold to Augustus Georgii of 18 Wimpole Street, London, who in 1866 offered it in its entirety to the Henderson Trust, with many of his own additions, for £100. At the request of Robert Cox, WS, the Henderson Trust's legal agent, William

Hodgson, as representative of the Trust, visited Georgii in 1867 to inspect the collection and report on its contents.<sup>52</sup> The collection at that time contained 720 items, about 100 of which were human crania, with an additional 168 skulls of animals; other items included casts of brains and a considerable number of casts of heads. Hodgson calculated that if the Society purchased the entire collection, it would require about 720 square feet of wall space, 'or one half of what is available in the middle room of the premises in Surgeon Square', to display all of its contents.

The Henderson Trustees deferred making any decision on the purchase until Francis Farquharson, Chairman of the Trust, had also visited London to inspect and report. The Spurzheim collection contained many valuable specimens, but the trustees had reservations: there was a lack of supporting documentation for many of the items; there were a large number of duplicates of items already in their own collection; and great expense would be involved in altering the existing Museum to accommodate the additional specimens.<sup>53</sup> Eventually, in response to a letter from Georgii stating that he was now considering disposing of the collection in small lots, the Trust decided in 1871 to purchase part of the collection for £60.<sup>54</sup> Alexander Stewart, the Curator, was given detailed written instructions as to which items should be acquired and, with this in mind, he selected about 350 casts of heads, 100 human skulls and 100 animal skulls to add to the Society's collection. It was arranged that the Spurzheim material would be kept together and displayed in the middle room of the Phrenological Museum.<sup>55</sup> Over the years the Society acquired a number of other small collections, mostly by donation, although occasionally certain items believed to be of particular importance were added by purchase.

In the Trust Minutes of 14 December 1868 attention is drawn to the fact that the Managers of the



Royal Infirmary intended to apply to Parliament for power to purchase compulsorily the property of 1 Surgeon Square.<sup>56</sup> The minute continues that 'it is agreed that the Trustees shall return as their answer that they stand neutral in the business'. However it was shortly decided to rebuild the Infirmary on a new site beside Middle Meadow Walk rather than expand on the existing site; in February 1870 the Trust Minutes note that, 'there being now no prospect that the Museum No. 1 Surgeon Square will be purchased by the Managers of the Royal Infirmary', they decided to invest their moneys so as to increase the value of their capital, presumably until their funds could be spent on more suitable premises.<sup>57</sup> The nominal value of 1 Surgeon Square was, in December 1871, believed to be in the region of £500. Dr Joseph Bell continued to be a 'partial tenant', although his rent was increased to £20 per annum, and 'it is a condition [of his use of the lecture hall] that no offensive smell is to be occasioned'.<sup>58</sup> Dr William Stephenson had also, by now, the use of the lecture hall for three months in the summer for his lectures on Infancy and Childhood at a rent of £5 per annum.<sup>59</sup>

#### THE PHRENOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN CHAMBERS STREET

The issue of purchasing a prime plot of land in 'the new street to be called Chamber's [*sic*] Street' (named after Lord Provost William Chambers) was first mentioned in the Henderson Trust Minutes as early as February 1872.<sup>60</sup> The trustees at that time felt that it might be advantageous to relocate their museum to a more public and salubrious part of the city. A site in Chambers Street offered a prestigious location. Francis Fowke's National Museum of Science and Art (later the Royal Scottish Museum)

was under construction, and the Adam/Playfair University building already occupied the eastern end of the street, between them forming most of its southern boundary. The whole street was to be widened and rebuilt on the north side in order to produce a grand new boulevard linking South Bridge and George IV Bridge.

The trustees chose a site on the north side of the old Argyle Square, opposite the Museum of Science and Art, where they initially planned to build 'commodious premises for a museum with lecture room and accommodation for the Curator, and shops on the Street Floor which might be let to advantage'.<sup>61</sup> A Building Committee was established comprising three of the trustees (John Ritchie Findlay, Dr Arthur Mitchell and John Ferguson) and the Trust's legal agent, and they were given the responsibility of costing the purchase of the site and determining the likely expense of designing and building appropriate premises.<sup>62</sup> Within the year the committee had made great progress, and had commissioned David Cousin (1808–1878), the City Architect, to draw up preliminary plans for a building to be erected immediately to the west of the proposed new Watt Institution and School of Arts.<sup>63</sup>

The original School of Arts had been founded in 1821 'for the better education of the mechanics of Edinburgh in such branches of physical science as are of practical application in their several trades'. Their first premises were in Niddry Street, but they moved after a few years to a building they rented in Adam Square, at the corner of South Bridge and North College Street.<sup>64</sup> The building in Adam Square was eventually purchased by a joint committee of the School and the subscribers to the Watt Fund to form the Watt Institution and School of Arts. The foundation stone of the new building in Chambers Street was laid in 1871 'with great Masonic ceremonial attended by representatives of all the

leading Lodges in Scotland'.<sup>65</sup> They transferred to Chambers Street in the winter of 1873–74. In 1885 the Watt Institution was linked with George Heriot's Trust to form the Heriot-Watt College.<sup>66</sup>

The Trust Minutes record that by February 1874 the original scheme had been revised, and that the building was now to be a joint venture between the two bodies. The site was the same, but Cousin had adapted his original plans to provide a single building for use by both institutions. The first intention to use the ground floor as rental property for commercial use was abandoned; instead, the Phrenological Museum would occupy the ground and basement floors, with the upper storeys given over to the Watt Institution.<sup>67</sup> The agreement between the Henderson Trustees and the Directors of the Watt Institution was finalised in October 1874. Discussions had taken place prior to this with regard to the title of the land and the building, and on the subject of the Trust making a substantial loan to the college. This was finalised with an agreement that involved the Henderson Trust lending the Watt Institution £2600 to defray the cost of their part of the building. As security against this loan, the Trust was to have sole title of the plot and building pending repayment of the loan.<sup>68</sup>

Cousin attended the meeting of the Henderson Trustees in October 1874, when he presented further drawings for that part of the building to be occupied by the Phrenological Museum. The trustees studied them in detail, and made additional amendments according to what they felt would best serve the needs of the Trust and their collection. The definitive plans were approved during this same session, and Cousin was authorised to seek tenders for the construction of the building.<sup>69</sup> It is interesting to note that the trustees had such a high level of input into the design process, and it is illustrative of the fact that both the use and users of the space were the driving

force behind the design and layout of the building. It is likely that the Trust's Building Committee had more understanding of their own requirements than Cousin, though Cousin's credentials certainly qualified him as architect for the Phrenological Museum, as he had earlier designed the Reid School of Music and its associated museum for the University of Edinburgh in 1858.<sup>70</sup>

With this agreement in place, the Henderson Trust allocated £2000 for building the new Phrenological Museum.<sup>71</sup> Their old museum closed in February 1875, and an advertisement in the *Scotsman* stated that 'the Phrenological Museum, Surgeon Square, will be closed until further notice. Anyone specially desiring to examine contents may apply to Mr Stewart at the Museum.' The Trust Minutes do not record when construction work started on the site, but it must have been considerably advanced by February 1876, since the Committee was already discussing the design of the display cabinets with Cousin. Four estimates of likely costs were provided by Cousin, depending on the materials to be used.<sup>72</sup> The final decision on this is not recorded, though the trustees expressed the opinion that the 'woodwork of the cases should be of Pitch Pine, that the shelving of the Wall Cases should be of wood, that the plan should embrace suitable Cases for the front window, and that as regard the centre cases, the subject of glass shelving should be carefully considered by Committee, particularly as to strength before finally deciding thereon'.<sup>73</sup> During the same meeting, in February 1876, a special committee was set up to organise the transfer of the Henderson Trust collection from Surgeon Square, and to consider its future care and supervision. By December 1876 the new building in Chambers Street was completed, and a meeting of the trustees was convened in their new museum, although it was still empty, awaiting the transfer from Surgeon Square.<sup>74</sup> The total cost of the



Phrenological Museum, as reported in the *Scotsman* on 2 December 1887, was £2810. Since the sum originally allocated for the project in 1875 was just £2000, the building was over-budget by around £800, a not inconsiderable sum in those days.

Unfortunately, all that now remains of Cousin's Phrenological Museum is the external shell, as the interior was completely rearranged during later improvements to the premises. However, something of the layout of the original museum can be ascertained from four drawings by Cousin in 1874.<sup>75</sup> The drawings are of the front and rear elevations and of the basement and ground floor plans (see figs 7 and 8). No cross-sections survive, and there are no details of the arrangement of the display cases.

The front elevation is a two-bay addition to the Watt Institution, consisting of four floors (the

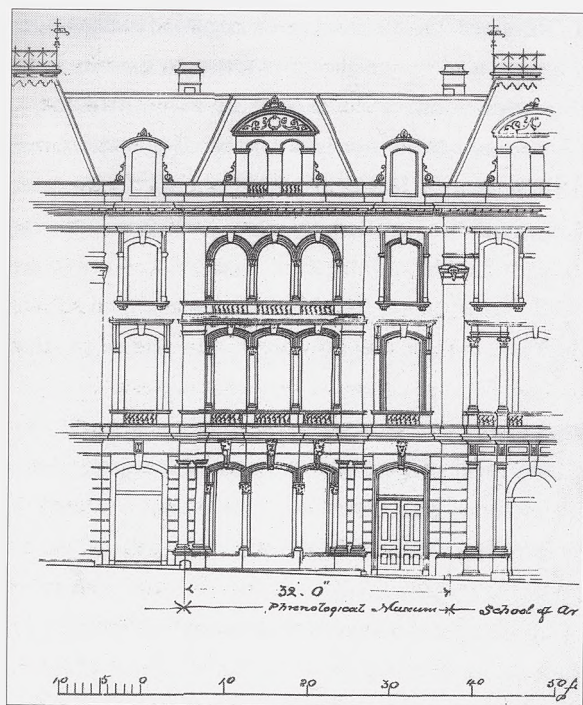


Fig. 7. David Cousin's drawing of the façade of the addition to the Watt Institution in Chambers Street, December 1874. The Phrenological Museum was to occupy the ground and basement floors. (Edinburgh City Archives, DGCA.)

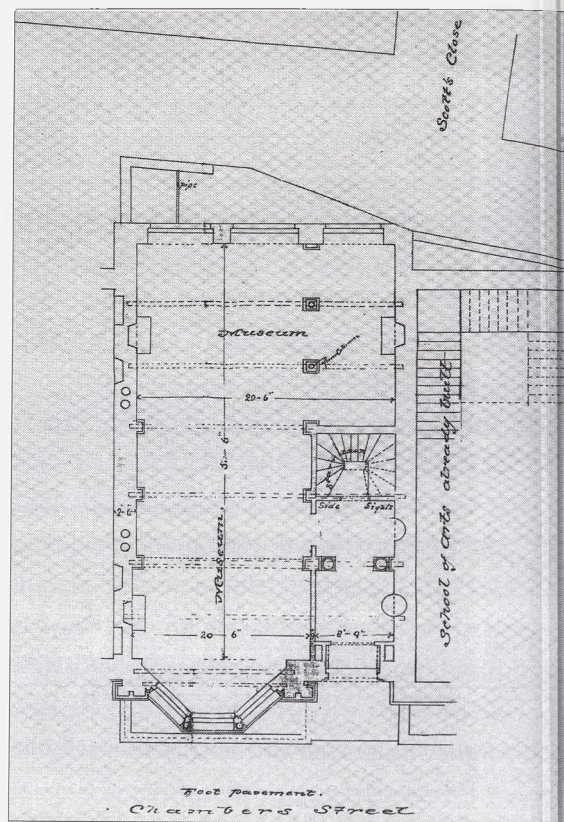


Fig. 8. David Cousin's ground floor plan of the Phrenological Museum in Chambers Street. (Edinburgh City Archives, DGCA.)

basement is not shown on this view) with a neoclassical façade and a French mansard roof. The façade of the ground floor of the museum and the basement comprised an entrance with a canted bay window on the left (fig. 9). The keystones of the three windows of the bay and the entrance doorway were embellished with sculptured heads depicting prominent figures from the early years of phrenology: when viewed from the street, the left keystone carries the carved head of Franz Joseph Gall, the central head is probably William Ramsay Henderson, while that on the right represents Johann Gaspar Spurzheim. The keystone over the entrance doorway bears the carved head of George Combe. Further decoration was offered in the deep horizontal channelling and double squared pilasters on either





Fig. 9. The former Phrenological Museum in Chambers Street, July 2001. While the Museum's original bay window is seen to the left of the photograph, the original entrance doorway, on the right, has been converted into another window. Note the sculpted heads on the keystones. (Photograph courtesy of Joe Rock.)

side of the window pavilion. The building was recessed, with a light well to the basement, so that the Museum vestibule was reached by a short vaulted arch from the street.

The Museum occupied all of the ground and basement floors in a 50 foot 6 inch x 20 foot 6 inch space. Where the span was at its widest, towards the rear of the building, the ceiling was supported with encased iron columns. The Museum was quite separate from the School of Arts – since there was no door between the School and the Museum on the ground floor, the Museum could only be entered from its main entrance on Chambers Street, or the small door in the basement to the rear from Scott's Close.

A spiral dog-leg stair, situated in the middle of the east side, gave internal access to the basement (the plan is annotated 'stair down', with no continuation upwards).

Both museum halls were lit from the two ends, from an assortment of windows to the north and south on each floor; a lunette window above the entrance door from Chambers Street admitted light into the vestibule. How the display cases were arranged is not known. Fixed glass-fronted cases lined the walls, and it was planned that there should be free-standing cases on the floor arranged in the same way as at Surgeon Square. Although the basement area is also marked as a museum on Cousin's plans, it is not known if it was actually used for that purpose since part of it at least was offered to Alexander Stewart, the Museum Curator, for his bookbinding workshop.<sup>77</sup> Since there is no indication on the plans of space set aside for a lecture room, it seems probable that the Phrenological Society held its meetings and lectures in the museum hall itself. This was in marked contrast to the Surgeon Square building, which had classrooms used by a variety of other lecturers as well as for meetings of the Phrenological Society itself. That the Henderson Trust did not make specific provision for teaching facilities in the Chambers Street building suggests a lack of demand for instruction in the subject.

In December 1876 Alexander Stewart was assigned to oversee the transfer of the collection, which then contained about 2500 items.<sup>78</sup> Although smaller than DeVille's immense collection in London, the Edinburgh collection was generally deemed to be more scientifically useful.<sup>79</sup> The trustees were considering retiring Stewart because of ill health, and formally did so in August 1877, when he was given an allowance of 15 shillings per week.<sup>80</sup> In the same month John Henderson was appointed Curator at a salary of £1. 10. 0 per week.<sup>81</sup> The new



museum opened to the public in February 1878, when an advertisement in the *Scotsman* declared that 'the Phrenology Museum, Chambers Street, is OPEN to the PUBLIC from 10 am – 4 pm every Week Day. Admission on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, 6d. Other Days Free.'<sup>82</sup> Over 1600 people signed the Visitors' Book during the first year. Between then and 1886, the number of visitors never fell below 1200 per year – indeed, in 1886 over 2300 visitors viewed the collection.

In 1880, less than three years after the Museum officially opened, the Trust Minutes record the first suggestion of financial difficulties, with the statement that 'the annual income is now insufficient to meet the annual expenses'. Arrangements were implemented to contain this shortfall, for example by reducing Alexander Stewart's allowance, and in 1883 John Henderson was informed that it was intended to close the Phrenological Museum, and he should 'look out for another situation'.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, by 1880 the Henderson Trustees were engaged in a legal battle with Miss Ruth MacLean and John Henderson Begg, distant relatives of the late William Ramsay Henderson, who had raised an action in the Court of Session which challenged the use of Henderson's estate, questioning the validity of phrenological enquiry. MacLean and Begg attempted to freeze the Trust's funds until the matter was resolved, in an effort to stop the trustees wasting (in their view) any more money on what they considered to be a pseudo-science. This necessarily put enormous pressure on the trustees, who were, amongst other things, responsible for the upkeep of the Museum.

The lawyers acting on behalf of MacLean and Begg (Morton, Neilson and Smart) wrote to the Henderson Trustees on 6 December 1880 in the following terms:<sup>84</sup>

Our clients instruct us before actually appealing the case to the House of Lords to inquire whether the Trustees are prepared to frame any scheme for the future administration of the Trust which,

while within the purposes contemplated by the Truster will more in accordance with modern science than the present administration ... Our Clients were actuated by a desire to see funds ... devoted to truly useful purposes ... they feel strongly that the time has now arrived for a considerable alteration in the mode of management in order to give effect to what would certainly have been the desire of the Truster had he now been alive.

The impasse was finally resolved by the acquiescence of the trustees, who offered a compromise solution to the problem. They agreed to accept Begg as a trustee, in order that he would 'co-operate with them for the development of the Trust in useful directions'.<sup>85</sup> What this amounted to in the short term was the disposal of the collection and the sale of the Museum premises.

#### TRANSFER OF THE PHRENOLOGICAL COLLECTION TO THE ANATOMY DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

In December 1882 the Henderson Trustees were planning to offer their entire collection to the Museum of Science and Art (subsequently Royal Scottish Museum) in Chambers Street, and to transfer their premises to the Heriot-Watt College. However, the Trust Minutes of the following year indicate that the Keeper of the Government Museum was not interested in acquiring the collection:<sup>86</sup>

The trustees then deliberated as to the course that ought to be followed, and they were of opinion that as the Museum had not fulfilled the intentions of the Trustees and at present cost a sum greater than they considered its usefulness justified, it was expedient it should be closed in course of time and the contents transferred elsewhere.

Other attempts to relocate the collection at that time also proved unsuccessful.<sup>87</sup>

The eventual transfer on 'deposit', or 'loan', of the entire collection to the Department of Anatomy

the University of Edinburgh was effected during March 1887, following an amicable agreement between Professor Sir William Turner on behalf of the University authorities and the Henderson Trustees.<sup>88</sup> This took into account the terms of the original agreement made between the Edinburgh Phrenological Society and the representatives of the Henderson Trust, on the occasion of the transfer of title of their collection in December 1855. Turner, on behalf of the University, accepted certain conditions pertaining to access, namely that 'the collection shall be open, as before, to the public at certain times free of charge'.<sup>89</sup> The old museum building was incorporated into the new Heriot-Watt College – the Trust Minutes recording that 'the Museum Buildings in Chambers Street stood in previous Accounts at the cost price of £2,820 5s 4d. They were sold to the Heriot's Trust at 11th November 1886 for £1,800'.<sup>90</sup> Under the agreement with the University, the Henderson Trustees would be able to terminate their deposit at any time and resume custody of the collection. No rent was to be charged by the University for the space occupied by the collection, although a small honorarium was charged to cover the wages of John Henderson, Curator since 1877, who came with the collection from Chambers Street as part of the package, to look after the collection after its transfer to the Department of Anatomy.<sup>91</sup>

Turner came to Edinburgh as a demonstrator in the Department of Anatomy in 1854, and continued there as Professor from 1867 to 1903, with particular interests in comparative anatomy, craniology and anthropology during the decades when Darwin's theory of evolution dominated debate in the biological sciences.<sup>92</sup> He was much involved in driving the University New Buildings project, which eventually produced the new Medical School at Teviot Place in 1880–84, with the associated graduation hall, the McEwan Hall, in 1897.<sup>93</sup> The

University Medical School was at the height of its world-wide fame despite its cramped quarters in the Adam/Playfair Old College; Anatomy was still at the heart of the medical curriculum; and the central showcase feature of Robert Rowand Anderson's new building was a splendid three storey galleried Anatomy Museum right at the heart of the Medical School. The museum hall was not finished till 1884, and thereafter Turner spent many years building up and arranging its contents. He was made Principal of the University in 1903, but retained his interests in anatomy and the museum right up until his death in 1916. A contemporary assessment records that 'in Turner's hands, there gradually grew that striking collection of human crania, and the varied assortment of skeletons of whales and dolphins and other amphibious mammals, illustrative of most of the varieties obtained in Scottish waters. The museum will remain for future generations as a splendid record of the scientific labours of the illustrious anatomists whose work it displays. *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice* [if you seek a memorial, look around you].'<sup>94</sup>

The Phrenological Museum's collections thus arrived just as Turner was originally setting out the displays in the new University Anatomy Museum (fig. 10). The additional human skulls from the Henderson Trust collection (many representative of skulls from different nationalities, and consequently termed 'national' crania) were assimilated into the University's existing skull collection, which was housed in Turner's 'skullery', a special annexe attached to the main Anatomy Museum hall (fig. 11). The comparative animal crania, the plaster of Paris life and death masks and the other phrenological artefacts such as the 'marked' crania and heads, were initially displayed in the main museum, and were available for inspection by the public and interested scholars probably until shortly before the outbreak of



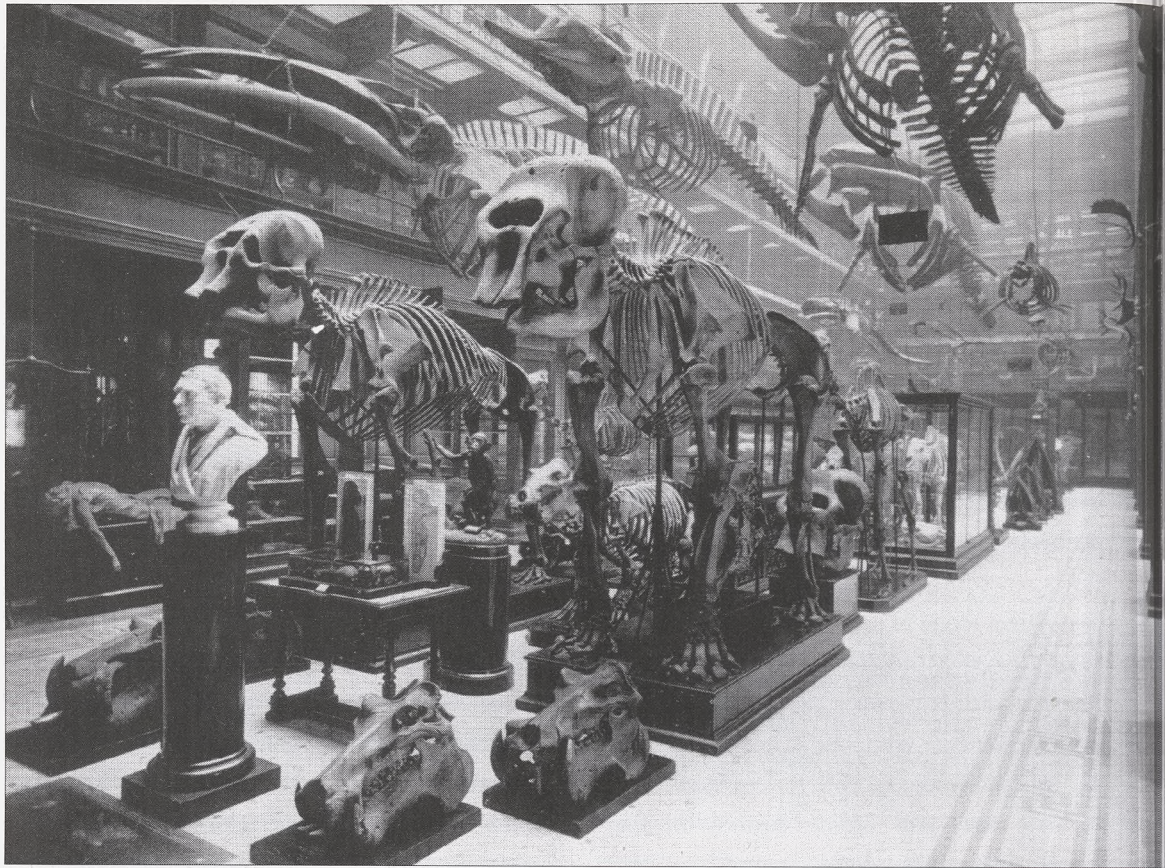


Fig. 10. Photograph of the main hall of the University Anatomical Museum in its original state. (*From the Turner Memorial Number, The Student, 1916.*)

the Second World War, but were later put into storage.<sup>95</sup> The University Anatomy Museum and its associated Library was drastically reduced in scope in the 1950s, with the removal or dispersal of much of the comparative anatomy and other 'peripheral' material; rarer old books were removed to the main University Library, the original museum hall was 'laminated' to create two floors of extra laboratory and office space, and the core human anatomy teaching specimens were removed to the newly created attic storey.

The Phrenological Society's collections of books and exhibits were 'weeded' along with the rest, and

much material that was judged to be of dubious scientific value was discarded.<sup>96</sup> It is always difficult to retain the integrity of museum collections when the original reason for forming the collection has ceased to have contemporary relevance, but in this case even the remnants of earlier collections become objects of historical interest.<sup>97</sup> Although phrenology has long been discredited as a science, it is now judged to be of considerable importance in understanding the evolution of medical and scientific thought in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and particularly in the early history of neuroscience. The collections of the Edinburgh Phrenological Society





Fig. 11. Photograph of the 'skullery' area of the University Anatomical Museum. By this time, the skulls that were formerly displayed in the Phrenological Museum had long been incorporated into the University's anthropological collection, though all bore appropriate reference numbers by which their origin could be determined. (*From the Turner Memorial Number of The Student, 1916.*)

and the Henderson Trust were effectively 'lost' after the Second World War, until they were re-discovered during the late 1980s, when they were identified, cleaned, and some of them put on display during the Edinburgh Festival, which was the first time that many had been seen for more than half a century.<sup>98</sup>

Today about 300 assorted casts, mostly death masks and life masks, a large collection of phrenologically marked crania and plaster of Paris casts of heads, and over 200 casts of skulls remain. These still constitute one of the largest surviving phrenological collections in the world, and include the likenesses of many famous and infamous individuals.

In July 2001 the Secretary to the University gave the Trust notice that all of its collections should be removed from the University's premises because it wished to convert the Anatomical Museum, where much of the collection was until recently displayed, into a teaching classroom. After negotiations between the Henderson Trust and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, the Henderson Trust's collection of artefacts relating to phrenology, the former Museum collection of the Edinburgh Phrenological Society, is shortly to be transferred on long-term loan to this institution. It is hoped that the majority of the collection will in due course be displayed in their premises.



## NOTES AND REFERENCES

We thank present and former members of the University of Edinburgh Estates and Buildings Department, and especially Ron Chisholm and Bob Prentice; Denis Smith, Site Manager, Salvation Army Men's Hostel, 1 Pleasance, Edinburgh; and members of staff of the Edinburgh Room, Edinburgh Central Library; the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS); Special Collections, Edinburgh University Library; and Edinburgh City Archives. S.B. also thanks Judge and Mrs Blomfield, Ms Annette Carruthers, Dr Andrew Fraser, Dr J. P. Shaw and Professor David Walker. M.H.K. is presently Chairman of the Henderson Trust, and thanks his fellow Trustees for permission to quote from the Trust's Minute Books.

- 1 Charles Gibbon, *The Life of George Combe, Author of 'The Constitution of Man'*, 2 vols (London 1878), I, pp. 94–96. See also M. H. Kaufman, 'Phrenology – Confrontation between Spurzheim and Gordon, 1816'. *Proceedings of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh*, 29 (1999), pp. 159–170.
- 2 Roger Cooter, *Phrenology in the British Isles: An Annotated Historical Bibliography and Index* (Scarecrow Press, Metuchen N. J. and London, 1989).
- 3 George Combe, *Essay on the Constitution of Man, Considered in Relation to External Objects* (Edinburgh 1828).
- 4 Hewett Cottrell Watson, *Statistics of Phrenology: Being a Sketch of the Progress and Present State of that Science in the British Islands* (London 1836).
- 5 Roger Cooter, *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science: Phrenology and the Organization of Consent in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge 1984).
- 6 The Minute Books of the Edinburgh Phrenological Society, with their Account Books and miscellaneous letters, are in Edinburgh University Library (EUL), Special Collections, E62/48. Vol. 1 of the Minutes (Gen. 608/2) covers 22 February 1820 to 2 September 1841, and vol. 2 (Gen. 608/3) 10 September 1841 to 12 December 1870; the Society was looking for accommodation for its collection of casts from September 1821. Both the 1824 *Transactions* and *Phrenological Journal* contain reports on phrenological casts already in the possession of the Society.
- 7 MS Minute Books of the William Ramsay Henderson Trust (HTM), 3 vols (vol. 1, 1832–95; vol. 2, 1896–1933; vol. 3, 1934–73), presently in the care of the senior author (M.H.K.), Chairman of the Henderson Trust.
- 8 EUL, Special Collections, Edinburgh Phrenological Society Minutes, Gen. 608/2: on 20 December 1821 it was agreed to rent the Clyde Street Hall for 20 guineas per year, with access to the museum one day a week in addition to the evening meetings.
- 9 O. Charnock Bradley, *History of the Edinburgh Veterinary College* (Edinburgh 1923); John Dixon Comrie, *History of Scottish Medicine*, 2 vols (London 1932), II, p. 701.
- 10 Bradley, *Edinburgh Veterinary College*, pp. 20–26.
- 11 *Ibid.*, pp. 28–30.
- 12 The Society moved its collection of casts into Clyde Street for temporary storage at 'Edinburgh College' in June 1822: EUL, Special Collections, Edinburgh Phrenological Society Minutes, Gen. 608/2, 10 June 1822.
- 13 Bradley, *Edinburgh Veterinary College*, p. 31; the architects were R. and R. Dickson of Edinburgh.
- 14 *Ibid.*, opposite p. 48.
- 15 The date of Henderson's death is recorded in Gibbon, *George Combe*, II, p. 258. For an early reference to the conditions in the Deed of Settlement, see 'Bequest by the late William Ramsay Henderson Esq. for the Advancement of Phrenology', *Phrenological Journal*, 7 (1831–32), pp. 655–657. See also M. H. Kaufman and J. P. Shaw, 'Some interesting Portraits in the History of Phrenology which were probably used to illustrate Lectures on Physiognomy', *Journal of Neurolinguistics*, 8 (1994), pp. 295–305, p. 295.
- 16 HTM, vol. 1, pp. 4–5; Gibbon, *George Combe*, I, pp. 256–257. According to Gibbon (p. 262), 'on 15th April 1836 the trust affairs and accounts were examined by a professional accountant in Edinburgh, who reported the residue of the fund after deducting the specific legacies left by Mr Henderson and the expenses of administration, to be £5645. 0. 9. This residue is subject to annuities payable to a gentleman, two ladies, and the family of an old servant amounting in all to £135 per annum. The sum applicable to phrenology consists of the surplus of the income of the trust estate, after deducting the annuities and the expenses of management. The aggregate amount of it from the commencement of the trust to the 31st December 1840 was £663. 9. 7.'
- 17 HTM, vol. 1, p. 1. For Alexander Henderson's purchase of West Warriston see Zella Ashford, 'The Lands of Warriston', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club (BOEC)*, New Series 3 (1990), pp. 12, 20–22.
- 18 For information on the firm of Eagle and Henderson see Priscilla Minay, 'Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century Edinburgh Seedsmen and Nurserymen', *BOEC*, NS 1 (1991), p. 9.
- 19 'Alexander Henderson, Lord Provost 1823–25', in T. B. Whitson, *The Lord Provosts of Edinburgh, 1296–1932* (Edinburgh 1932), pp. 106–107; this includes a portrait

- Raeburn in possession of the National Bank of Scotland (now Royal Bank of Scotland).
- 20 See Stuart Harris, *The Place Names of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh 1996).
- 21 'Lord Provost Alexander Henderson, 1769–1827', in W. P. Anderson, *Silences that Speak: Records of Edinburgh's Ancient Churches and Burial Grounds* (Edinburgh 1931), pp. 619–620. George Combe's biographer states that Henderson's father died in July 1828 (Gibbon, *George Combe*, II, p. 256), but no death of an individual of this name was reported in the *Scotsman* during July or August 1828, suggesting that Gibbon was mistaken.
- 22 The school opened on 4 December 1848 with 25 pupils: Gibbon, *George Combe*, II, p. 248.
- 23 See 'Williams, William Mattieu', in F. Boase (ed.), *Modern English Biography*, 6 vols (London 1965), III, p. 1381.
- 24 HTM, vol. 1, pp. 193–194, 28 March 1849.
- 25 The 1852 Ordnance Survey plan shows the New Jerusalem Church in the west wing of Lady Yester's, and *Edinburgh Post Office Directories* confirm that its address was 6 Infirmary Street.
- 26 Gibbon, *George Combe*, II, pp. 247–250.
- 27 HTM, vol. 1, p. 224, 19 December 1854; Gibbon, *George Combe*, II, pp. 249, 362.
- 28 HTM, vol. 1, p. 194, 28 March 1849.
- 29 Edinburgh City Archives (ECA), Dean of Guild Archives (DGA), 1 Surgeon Square, 4 August 1824.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 25 August 1824. Lizars' subsequent letter on 25 August, which was accompanied by the plan shown in fig. 1, explained: 'The petitioner is to build the Class Room for his brother Mr John Lizars Surgeon who has advertised to the public that he will commence a course of Lectures upon the 18th of October next therein, and if the Petitioner therefore is prevented getting the building finished by that time it may be attended with the most serious consequences to his brother'.
- 31 Robert Kirkwood's Plan of Edinburgh, 1817, shows an existing building in the right position, centred on High School Wynd, but not extending as far west as the Lizars building: the relevant section of Kirkwood's plan was reproduced in *BOEC*, NS 4, (1997), p. 109.
- 32 Charles W. Cathcart, 'Some of the Older Schools of Anatomy connected with the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh', *Edinburgh Medical Journal*, 27 (1881–82), part 2, pp. 769–781. For an account of the Royal Medical Society Hall at 11 Surgeon Square see M. H. Kaufman, 'The First and Second Halls of the Royal Medical Society', *BOEC*, NS 4 (1997), pp. 119–129.
- 33 See, for example, those reproduced in *BOEC*, NS 4 (1997), pp. 109–111.
- 34 No. 1 Surgeon Square was used by the Edinburgh University Settlement from its foundation in 1905: A. Logan Turner, 'The Story of a Great Adventure: The Birth of the University Settlement', *University of Edinburgh Journal*, 5 (1932–33), pp. 34–42. Nothing now remains of the Lizars lecture hall, as this part of the building was completely remodelled for the University Settlement in 1932, with the new façade angled to face the High School Yards street in front. The central portion of the building survives in outline, but the eastern part, and basement beneath, have been demolished to create a children's playground.
- 35 Thus Simpson and Wallace in 1956, concerned to show that the first Burn Hospital was established in 1843 in a small building at the north-west corner of the square, before transfer to 2 Surgeon Square after 1851, referred to the latter as 'still known as No. 1 Surgeon Square': D. C. Simpson and A. B. Wallace, 'Edinburgh's First Burn Hospital', *Journal of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh*, 2 (1956), pp. 134–143. According to the GPO Chisholm House is now styled No. 1 Surgeon Square.
- 36 James Syme had taught anatomy in the Brown Square extramural medical school for 1 year before Cullen, grand-nephew of the eighteenth century William Cullen, took over from 1825 till his death in 1828: Cathcart, 'Older Schools of Anatomy', pp. 779–780. The deeds for 1 Surgeon Square were in the name of W. H. Lizars when transferred to the Phrenological Society in 1849 (see below).
- 37 There is no entry under Surgeon Square in the street directory, but Kemp is listed as lecturing at 1 Surgeon Square under the profession 'Lecturers'; his residence is given as 3 Lothian Street in the alphabetical section.
- 38 See Cathcart, 'Older Schools of Anatomy' (note 32), pp. 778–779; also *Edinburgh Post Office Directories*.
- 39 Cathcart, 'Older Schools of Anatomy', p. 779.
- 40 Russell recorded in *Directories*; McKenzie Edwards and Bell by Cathcart, 'Older Schools of Anatomy', p. 779.
- 41 HTM, vol. 1, p. 194, 28 March 1849; p. 199, 4 March 1850. See also E. M. Walker, J. P. Shaw and M. H. Kaufman, 'Andrew Combe (1797–1847): Edinburgh Physician and Phrenologist', *Proceedings of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh*, 25 (1995), pp. 652–662; note however that this article reflects the confusion about the address of the Burn Hospital cited as 1 (instead of 2) Surgeon Square by Simpson and Wallace as indicated in note 35 above.
- 42 HTM, vol. 1, p. 350, Accounts of Trust as at 3 December 1868.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 357, 14 December 1868; p. 382, 25 December 1871.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 201, 4 March 1850.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 232, 24 December 1855.
- 46 *Idem*.



- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 248, 4 November 1857.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 266, 14 January 1859.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 334, 19 March 1867.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 321, 31 October 1865. There are three Visitors' Books in the Henderson Trust collection, covering 1 August 1850 to 10 June 1864, 20 June 1864 to 17 August 1879, and 20 August 1879 to 18 December 1886.
- 51 William Ballantine Hodgson, founder of the Edinburgh Phrenological Association and a Henderson Trustee, later became the first Professor of Political Economy at Edinburgh University, in 1871: see Cooter, *Phrenology in the British Isles* (note 2), p. 167.
- 52 HTM, vol. 1, p. 334, 19 March 1867.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 334, 19 March 1867.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 371, 24 November 1871.
- 55 *Idem.* For further details on the purchase of items from the Spurzheim Collection, see Kaufman and Shaw, 'Portraits from the History of Phrenology' (note 15), pp. 302–303.
- 56 HTM, vol. 1, p. 353, 14 December 1868. The Managers had already bought old Surgeons' Hall in 1833, and in 1850 they had purchased the remaining houses in Surgeon Square for expansion of the hospital; however, 1 Surgeon Square lay outside the land that had originally belonged to the Incorporation of Surgeons.
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 363, 4 February 1870.
- 58 *Ibid.*, p. 380, 25 December 1871.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 414, 19 December 1873.
- 60 *Ibid.*, p. 397, 23 February 1872.
- 61 *Ibid.*, p. 397, 23 February 1872. The future site of Chambers Street as it was around 1850, with Brown, Argyle and Adam Squares, can be seen in the first Ordnance Survey plan of 1852, and in Cathcart, 'Older Schools of Anatomy' (note 32), fig. 4.
- 62 HTM, vol. 1, p. 397, 23 February 1872.
- 63 *Ibid.*, p. 404, 12 June 1872; p. 418, 27 February 1874. Cousin was responsible for the architectural guidelines for the facades on the whole north side of the street, though most were actually built by different architects: see John Gifford, Colin McWilliam and David Walker, *The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh* (Harmondsworth 1984), pp. 182, 222–223.
- 64 See Ian R. M. Mowat, 'Adam Square: An Edinburgh Architectural First', *BOEC*, NS 5 (2002), pp. 93–101.
- 65 J. C. Smail, *The Phrenological Museum, Edinburgh: A Forgotten Relic* (privately printed 1963). This short pamphlet includes a contemporary photograph of the frontage of the Phrenological Museum.
- 66 Anon., 'The Heriot-Watt College's Century of Steady Expansion', *Edinburgh Evening News*, 17 October 1938. The Chambers Street building was vacated by Heriot-Watt University on 31 July 1989, and has since undergone extensive refurbishment; while the outside of the building is 'listed', and has been retained intact, much of the rest has been demolished. It is now occupied by the Crown Office and the Edinburgh Sheriff Court.
- 67 HTM, vol. 1, p. 418, 27 February 1874.
- 68 *Ibid.*, p. 427, 26 October 1874; pp. 431–435, 18 December 1874. The Directors of the Watt Institution had purchased the whole plot of land in Chambers Street for 25 shillings per foot of frontage; since the frontage of the Phrenological Museum was some 32 feet, the trustees paid about £40 for their part of the plot.
- 69 *Ibid.*, p. 426, 26 October 1874.
- 70 Michael Tilmouth, 'Music at Edinburgh and the General who helped found a Faculty', *University of Edinburgh Bulletin*, 19 (1983), pp. 9–14; Gifford, McWilliam and Walker, *Edinburgh*, p. 186. For a full account of the history of museum design at Scottish educational institutions, see Sarah Blomfield, 'The Architecture of the Scottish University Museum, 1789–1930', unpublished MPhil thesis, University of St Andrews, 1999.
- 71 HTM, vol. 1, p. 443, 5 February 1875.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p. 446, 17 February 1876. The estimates, ranging from £452 to £692, were for different combinations of 'wainscot' or pitch pine, and plate or sheet glass. 'Wainscot' is a superior quality of foreign oak imported from Russia, Germany and Holland, chiefly used for fine panel-work: *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd edn (Oxford 1973).
- 73 HTM, vol. 1, p. 447, 17 February 1876.
- 74 *Ibid.*, p. 456, 15 December 1876.
- 75 ECA, DGA. Chambers Street, School of Arts; the south elevation is copied in the National Monuments Record Scotland, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland. See also HTM, vol. 1, p. 426, 26 October 1874, for approval of the plans by the trustees.
- 76 Identifications by M.H.K.
- 77 HTM, vol. 1, p. 446, 17 February 1876.
- 78 *Ibid.*, p. 456, 15 December 1876.
- 79 M. H. Kaufman and N. Basden, 'Items relating to Dr Johann Gaspar Spurzheim (1776–1832) in the Henderson Trust Collection, formerly the Museum Collection of the Phrenological Society of Edinburgh: with an abbreviated iconography', *Journal of Neurolinguistics*, 9 (1996), pp. 301–325.
- 80 HTM, vol. 1, pp. 467–468, 18 August 1877.
- 81 *Ibid.*, p. 465, 30 July 1877.
- 82 *Ibid.*, p. 473, 4 February 1878.
- 83 *Ibid.*, p. 484, 3 February 1880; p. 506, 16 February 1883.
- 84 The letters are copied in the Trust Minutes, *ibid.*, pp. 491–493.
- 85 *Ibid.*, p. 493, 16 December 1880.
- 86 *Ibid.*, p. 506, 16 February 1883.

- 87 The trustees also investigated whether the skulls might be placed in the University's Natural History Museum, most of whose original specimens had been transferred to the Government Museum some years previously: see Sir Alexander Grant, *The Story of the University of Edinburgh*, 2 vols, Edinburgh (1884), I, pp. 354–358, 374–378.
- 88 HTM, vol. 1, pp. 547–549, 14 March 1887.
- 89 Also reported in *Scotsman*, 2 December 1887.
- 90 HTM, vol. 2, pp. 20–21, footnote A to table entitled 'Abstract of Annual Accounts of the Trustees of William Ramsay Henderson Esquire, from 10th January 1885 until 10th January 1900'. Smail, *Phrenological Museum* (note 65), cites the price as £1816. 15. 8, which may include legal and other expenses of the sale of the property.
- 91 The remaining funds of the Henderson Trust today are used to support Travelling Scholarships in basic and clinical neurosciences.
- 92 A. Logan Turner, *Sir William Turner, KCB, FRS* (Edinburgh 1919).
- 93 *The Student: McEwan Hall Special Number* (Students Representative Council, Edinburgh, 1897); *The Student: Turner Memorial Number* (Students Representative Council, Edinburgh, 1916); Peter Savage, 'Edinburgh University's Extension Scheme of 1874', *BOEC*, 34 (1979), pp. 95–104.
- 94 Turner, *Sir William Turner*, p. 418. See also Turner's published catalogue of the marine mammals in the Anatomy Museum: Sir William Turner, *The Marine Mammals in the Anatomical Museum of the University of Edinburgh: Part 1, Cetacea; Part 2, Sirenia; Part 3, Pinnipedia* (London 1912). Many of these specimens, including the whale found floating in the Firth of Forth in 1831 whose skeleton was dissected by the brothers Robert and Frederick Knox, were later transferred to the National Museums of Scotland: see J. S. Herman, *Cetacean Specimens in the National Museums of Scotland* (National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1992); M. H. Kaufman, 'Frederick Knox, Younger Brother of Dr Robert Knox: his contribution to "Knox's Catalogues"', *Journal of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh*, 46 (2001), pp. 44–56.
- 95 See M. H. Kaufman and R. McNeil, 'Death Masks and Life Masks at Edinburgh University', *British Medical Journal*, 298 (1989), pp. 506–507; M. H. Kaufman and N. Basden, 'Marked Phrenological Heads: their Evolution, with particular reference to the influence of George Combe and the Phrenological Society of Edinburgh', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 9 (1997), pp. 139–159. In the 1930s the *Edinburgh University Calendar* still noted that the Anatomy Museum was 'open at certain hours to all matriculated students', and listed the Henderson Trust's 'valuable collection of crania and casts' amongst its contents.
- 96 Some of the Phrenological Society's books were transferred to the main University Library, but they cannot easily be identified as there is no master list and they are mixed in with the general collections. A few still remain in the Anatomy Library.
- 97 See Charles D. Waterston, *Collections in Context: The Museum of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Inception of a National Museum for Scotland* (National Museums of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1997).
- 98 M. H. Kaufman (ed.), *Death Masks and Life Masks of the Famous and Infamous* (Edinburgh 1988).