HISTORICAL NOTE

Hughlings Jackson's early education

doi: 10.1136/jnnp.2006.105437

Hughlings Jackson (1835–1911) was born in the village of Green Hammerton in the parish of Whixley in Yorkshire, UK. In 1850 at the age of 15 years, he was apprenticed to Dr Anderson, a general practitioner in York, and he later trained in medicine at the York Medical School and St Bartholomew's Hospital in London, from where he qualified initially as a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries in 1856. His subsequent career as a physician at the National Hospital for the Paralysed and Epileptic and at the London Hospital, and his influence on his colleagues and on our understanding of neurological diseases, especially epilepsy and disorders of language and higher nervous activity, have been thoroughly documented, most recently by Critchley and Critchley,¹ who regard him as the father of English neurology.

Little is known, however, of Jackson's early education. According to Taylor,² Jackson probably attended the village school at Green Hammerton, followed by boarding schools in Tadcaster, Yorkshire, and Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, his mother having died when he was aged 1 year. Critchley and Critchley¹ could not trace any of these schools. The only certain clues to his childhood education are letters that Jackson wrote to his brother Thomas in New Zealand, referring to a school, named Longfield, run by Mr and Mrs Greenwood, which they both had attended. For example, on 28 May 1904, Jackson wrote,

I had been thinking of you in regard to our schooldays at Greenwoods. Yesterday the son of one of our school fellows at Greenwoods brought a patient from Halifax for my opinion and advice. The father was Hodgson Wright, a surgeon, and the son, Crosby Wright. What a gulf of time between schooldays at Halifax with the father and yesterday's consultation with the son.

Critchley and Critchley could not find Longfield, wondered whether it was in Tadcaster, but noted that it was more likely to be in Halifax.

We report that we have located Longfield School in Halifax, West Yorkshire and have traced both the Greenwoods and the Wrights, referred to by Jackson.

Longfield School was in a house called Longfield in Parkinson Lane in the western outskirts of Halifax. In the 1854 Ordnance Survey Map, it had extensive grounds and was surrounded by farmland (fig 1). By 1902, Longfield was surrounded by terraced housing. The building no longer exists in what is now an industrial estate around Parkinson Lane.

The school was run by Mr Thomas and Mrs Mary Greenwood. In the 1851 census, they had eight boy boarders and three servants. Mary Greenwood, originally from Lancashire, died in 1864. Thomas Greenwood, from the Calder Valley in Yorkshire, retired by 1871 and died in 1874. Both were buried together in St Paul's Churchyard, Halifax, near Longfield (fig 1). In February 1876, Jackson wrote to his brother, "Poor old Greenwood is dead. He went into speculations and lost much of the money he and Mrs. Greenwood had scraped together."³

John Hodgson Wright, "one of our school fellows at Greenwoods", was born in Halifax in 1834 and was therefore 1 year older than Jackson. He later practised as a surgeon at 16, King Cross Street, Halifax. His first marriage was to Elizabeth Crossley, granddaughter of the famous Crossley carpet family in Yorkshire. Their elder son, John Crosby Wright, born in Halifax in 1867, was undoubtedly the son referred to by Jackson in his 1904 letter to his brother Thomas in New Zealand.

Hughlings Jackson had strong family connections to Halifax. His maternal grandfather, John Hughlings, originally from Wales, was the Collector of Excise for Halifax, living with his family just outside the town in the village of Northowram. Hughlings Jackson's mother, Sarah Hughlings, daughter of John Hughlings, married Samuel Jackson, the son of a brewery family from Green Hammerton, at the Parish Church of Halifax, St John the Baptist, on 24 March 1828. Hughlings Jackson was the fifth and last child of this marriage, and his three older brothers, Samuel, William and Thomas, all eventually

Figure 1 1854 Ordnance Survey map of Trinity Ward, Halifax, showing Hughlings Jackson's school, Longfield, in Parkinson Lane and the nearby St Paul's Church where the schoolmaster, Mr Thomas Greenwood, and his wife, Mary, are buried.

emigrated to New Zealand, possibly because their father also lost a great deal of money in speculation, in this case on the railways.¹ Hughlings Jackson, who showed scholastic abilities, was allowed to continue his studies in England. Interestingly, Hughlings Jackson's maternal uncle, Harry (Henry) Hughlings, who lived all his life in Halifax, was a colonial land agent especially for New Zealand. Harry Hughlings probably assisted his three nephews, Samuel, William and Thomas Jackson, to emigrate to New Zealand.

Hughlings Jackson was not impressed with his early education and also expressed his approval that he had never been to a university.³ It left his mind free to pursue its own avenues of thought. He possessed a great capacity for minute detailed observation, with the widest power of generalisation and philosophical speculation.^{1 2 4 5}

E H Reynolds

Institute of Epileptology, King's College, Weston Education Centre, London, UK

M Andrew

Halifax, Yorkshire, UK

Correspondence to: Dr E H Reynolds, Institute of Epileptology, King's College, Denmark Hill Campus, Weston Education Centre, Cutcombe Road, London SE5 9PJ, UK; reynolds@buckles.u-net.com

Competing interests: None declared.

References

- 1 Critchley M, Critchley EA. *John Hughlings Jackson: father of English neurology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- 2 Taylor J. John Hughlings Jackson. In: *Dictionary of national biography*. Vol 2. London: Smith Elder, 1912:356–8.
- 3 Hughlings Jackson centenary: a commemorative dinner. *BMJ* 1935;1:769–70.
- 4 Kinnier Wilson SA. The Hughlings Jackson centenary. *Lancet* 1935;1:882–3.
- 5 Reynolds EH. The John Hughlings Jackson 1935 Centenary Congress Medial. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 2005;76:858–9.