Biographical Sketch

Thomas Callaway, FRCS (1822–1869)

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Abstract This biographical sketch on Thomas Callaway corresponds to the historic text, *The Classic: A Dissertation Upon Dislocations and Fractures of the Clavicle and Shoulder-Joint* (1849) available at DOI [10.1007/s11999-011-2098-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11999-011-2098-1).

Thomas Callaway Jr., was born in 1822, the eldest son of Thomas Callaway Sr., a successful surgeon [3]. Owing to the early death of his parents, Thomas Callaway Sr., was raised by his grandfather, a Steward at Guy's Hospital, London [4]. The father had been quite successful. According to Plarr's *Lives* [4], he "made a considerable fortune by private practice...Callaway wrote nothing. He was better fitted for the private practice in which he was successful than for the position of a surgeon to an important hospital with a medical school." The son, Thomas Callaway Jr., followed in the footsteps of his grandfather and father and trained at Guy's Hospital under John Hilton, among others. In 1846, his dissertation, "A Dissertation Upon Dislocations and Fractures of the Clavicle and Shoulder-Joint" [1] was awarded the prestigious Jacksonian Prize of the Royal College of Surgeons. (The first Jacksonian Prize I could identify was awarded in 1811 [2] and the most recently announced 1968.) He practiced at Guy's hospital as an Assistant Surgeon and Demonstrator

in Anatomy [5]. In 1860, Callaway served as Staff Surgeon Major to the British Legion during the so called, "Italian Campaign" in the south of Italy when Garibaldi was attempting to unite Italy with the help of British money. He subsequently moved to Maison Lemorzin, Place Bresson, Algiers, and became a member of the Algerian Faculty of Medicine in 1862. He died in Algiers in 1869.

The *Classic* we reproduce this month is the relatively short section from his dissertation [1] on scapular fractures. He noted these were infrequent fractures, accounting for 18 of 1901 cases of fracture during six years at Middlesex Hospital. The reasons he gave for the infrequency were the surrounding muscles and the lack of firm fixation to the trunk ("looseness"). He stated, "Fractures of the scapula are nearly always the result of some great and direct violence, the soft parts covering it suffer severely with it." Callaway divided the fractures into those of the body, the inferior angle, the neck, the processes, and the inferior tip (lowest angle). Diagnosis could not always have been easy in the days before radiographs. The treatment for most of these fractures was keeping the arm well secured to the trunk and rest. For fractures of the neck of the scapula, he recommended the following:

"The treatment of a fractured cervix consists in putting a pad in the axilla, throwing the shoulder upwards and backwards, and brining the elbow forwards and to the trunk. These ends may be accomplished with Desault's apparatus. At the end of seven weeks I should remove the bandage and commence passive motion, and direct the patient to result use of his arm with caution. The depth at which the fracture is seated renders the employment of all external applications fruitless. The cold douche bath

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might perhaps be of service, as tending to restore the tone of muscles which had been so long quiescent.”

Callaway said little about the outcome of these injuries; however, his descriptions of the injuries remain contemporary.

References

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