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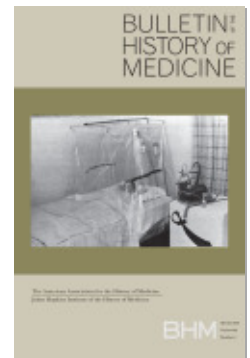
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John Houghton and Medical Practice in London c. 1700

JONATHAN BARRY

SUMMARY: This article considers the evidence for medical practice in London c. 1700 provided by *A Collection for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade* (1692–1703) by the apothecary and Fellow of the Royal Society, John Houghton (1645–1705). Houghton discusses how products are used medicinally, as well as the necessary qualifications for a physician, and reports his own experiments and health experiences. His advertisements reveal the range of (largely medical) products he could himself supply, but he also offered an information service, often for medical practitioners, throwing light on both the supply and demand for medical practitioners in different communities and the desirable attributes of shops. Whereas most sources used to uncover medical practice highlight conflict and competition, Houghton’s approach emphasizes consensus and cooperation, partly for his own ideological and commercial reasons, and partly reflecting the emergence of new forms of medical practice supported by the new science and by genteel consumer demand.

KEYWORDS: advertising, apothecary, London, medical practice, natural history, pharmacy, physician

The recent literature on English medical practice in the late seventeenth century has tended to focus on conflict and competition in London, both between individual practitioners and between institutions or types of practitioner, notably between physicians and both surgeons and apothecaries. Margaret Pelling and Hal Cook have authoritatively described the medical politics of seventeenth-century London, particularly the clashes between the London College of Physicians and other practitioners. Cook’s work also launched the model of “the medical marketplace,”

I would like to thank Hal Cook, Peter Elmer, Michael Hunter, Sara Pennell, Margaret Pelling, Patrick Wallis, and Alun Withey for help with this article, which arises from my Senior Investigator Award in Medical Humanities on “The Medical World of Early Modern England, Wales and Ireland c.1500–1715,” funded by the Wellcome Trust award 097782/Z/11/Z.

again focusing attention on the competition between practitioners to win patients' business.¹ Intellectual disputes within medicine, notably those between Galenic and chemical physicians, have been extensively analyzed, although Andrew Wear's excellent synthesis of this literature has proposed some rapprochement by the end of the century.² In this article I shall use evidence from the periodicals of the apothecary John Houghton to present a more cooperative and irenic medical world, where the free flow of information (providing both knowledge and choice) is emphasized over institutional structures or divisions. This supports the recent arguments of Patrick Wallis regarding the factors encouraging cooperation and association within and between groups of practitioners, and in particular the pressure on apothecaries like Houghton to present themselves and their shops to the public as trustworthy emporia and meeting places of likeminded people.³ In Houghton's case, this may have been strengthened by his ideological commitment to the virtues of free trade in goods and knowledge, and by his membership in the Royal Society, which (publicly at least) presented shared experimental knowledge (not least of medicine) as a means to generate progress and overcome divisions. We should be wary, therefore, of taking Houghton's evidence as disinterested, but equally it offers a valuable counterbalance to sources dominated by conflict.

Through Houghton's *A Collection for Improvement of Husbandry and Trade* (1692–1703) we can obtain an invaluable insight into the shared medical world of layman and practitioner, naturalist, and ordinary patient. His advertisements underline the potential mobility of practitioners (both geographically and across the tripartite division of medicine), their need (at least sometimes) to look beyond personal connections when

1. Harold J. Cook, *The Decline of the Old Medical Regime in Stuart London* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986); Cook, *Trials of an Ordinary Doctor: Joannes Groenevelt in Seventeenth-Century London* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); Margaret Pelling, *Medical Conflicts in Early Modern London: Patronage, Physicians, and Irregular Practitioners 1550–1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Mark Jenner and Patrick J. Wallis, "The Medical Marketplace," in *Medicine and the Market in England and its Colonies, c. 1450–c. 1850*, ed. Mark S. R. Jenner and Patrick Wallis (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), 1–23.

2. Andrew Wear, *Knowledge and Practice in English Medicine, 1550 to 1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), esp. 472–73.

3. Patrick Wallis, "Competition and Cooperation in the Early Modern Medical Economy," in Jenner and Wallis, *Medicine and the Market* (n. 1), 47–68; Wallis, "Apothecaries and the Consumption and Retailing of Medicines in Early Modern London" in *From Physick to Pharmacology: Five Hundred Years of British Drug Retailing*, ed. Louise Hill Curth (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 13–28; Wallis, "Consumption, Retailing, and Medicine in Early Modern London," *Econ. Hist. Rev.* 61, no. 1 (2008): 26–53.

developing their careers and businesses, and the factors that might underpin the investments that apothecaries, in particular, might make. We can trace the growth of oceanic trade in the demand for sea-surgeons and the growing influence of colonial products (including the new beverages, still sold as health products), welcomed by Houghton as strengthening the nation's economy, provided that every effort is made to win such trade for England and, where possible, grow the same products at home instead. Implicitly it is consumer demand, informed and directed by publications such as Houghton's, that will determine both individuals' and the nation's economic success. He chooses not to consider the institutional or party political controversies, regarding both the medical and national economy, raging during the same period. His comments on medicine and medicinal substances reveal the impact of the new science and changing models of medical practice, but without the polemical or intraprofessional rhetoric that dominate many other writings. Houghton appears to endorse the traditional superiority of the physician, and indeed of the London College of Physicians (then locked in conflict with the Society of Apothecaries, of which he was a senior member), but he expects physicians to have adopted the empiricism and non-Galenic approaches that he considered had improved on the ancients.

Houghton's Career and Publications

During the two decades before the Lords' judgement in the case of William Rose (1704), vindicating the right of apothecaries to provide medical advice, the best-known apothecary in England was surely John Houghton (1645–1705).⁴ However, Houghton's fame (then as now) rested not on his career as an apothecary, but on his pioneering writings advocating "improvement." He was an active Fellow of the Royal Society from 1680, though he left no scientific legacy (his major published paper is on the history of coffee: though it contains a chemical analysis of the beans, it is famous because it discusses early coffeehouses in London, suggesting

4. Anita McConnell, "Houghton, John (1645–1705)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.lib.exeter.ac.uk/view/article/13868>. For the Rose case, see Harold J. Cook, "The Rose Case Reconsidered: Physicians, Apothecaries, and the Law in Augustan England," *J. Hist. Med. & Allied Sci.* 45, no. 4 (1990): 527–55. Houghton and his publications are never mentioned by Cook, nor in Walter H. G. Armytage, "The Royal Society and the Apothecaries, 1660–1722," *Notes Rec. R. Soc. Lond.* 11, no. 1 (1954): 22–37.

that William Harvey was the first regular coffee drinker in England).⁵ But he was most notable for his journalism. His 1677 tract, “England’s Great Happiness,” was an innovative defense of consumerism and economic growth, while his two periodical series (1681–85 and 1692–1703), each concerning “the improvement of husbandry and trade,” have long been considered groundbreaking both in their provision of economic information and in their advertising of goods and services of all kinds.⁶

5. Michael J. Hunter, *The Royal Society and its Fellows 1660–1700: The Morphology of an Early Scientific Institution* (London: BSHS Monographs 4, 1982); John Houghton, “A Discourse of Coffee, Read at a Meeting” *Phil. Trans.* 256 (1699): 311–17, reprinted in his *Collection* between April 25 and May 16, 1701, “considering these papers may come to a great many that those [the Transactions] do not.” John Houghton, *A Collection for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade*, April 25, 1701 (London: R. Taylor, to 1703; facsimile repr., Westmead, U.K.: Gregg International, 1969), hereafter *Collection* plus the date for each reference to this series, in abbreviated form. The text of Houghton’s editorials was reproduced in *A Collection for Improvement of Husbandry and Trade*, 4 vols., ed. Richard Bradley (London: 1727–28), but not the advertisements. On April 16, 1694, Richard Baldwin entered in the Stationers’ Register the copyright of *A Booke for Strangers: An Account of Places and Thing Worth Knowing and Seeing in London, Oxford, Cambridge, etc.* “by John Houghton Fellow of the Royall Society,” licensed April 4, 1694, by Edward Cooke, but there is no sign that this was ever published: G. E. Briscoe Eyre, ed., *A Transcript of the Registers of the Worshipful Company of Stationers from 1640–1708 AD*, vol. 3 (1675–1708) (London: For the Roxburghe Club, 1914), p. 438.

6. Roger P. McCutcheon, “John Houghton, a Seventeenth-Century Editor and Book-Reviewer,” *Mod. Philology* 20, no. 3 (1923): 255–60; R. B. Walker, “Advertising in London Newspapers 1650–1750,” *Business Hist.* 15, no. 2 (1973): 112–30; Michael Harris, “Exchanging Information: Print and Business at the Royal Exchange in the Late Seventeenth Century,” in *The Royal Exchange*, ed. Ann Saunders (London: London Topographical Society no. 152, 1997), 188–97; Harris, “Timely Notices: The Uses of Advertising and its Relationship to News during the Late Seventeenth Century,” *Prose Stud.* 21, no. 2 (1998): 141–56; Harris, “Printed Advertisements: Some Variations in their Use around 1700,” in *Books for Sale: The Advertising and Promotion of Print Since the Fifteenth Century*, ed. Robin Myers, Michael Harris, and Giles Mandelbrote (London: The British Library, 2009), 53–65; Harris, “The Information Business: John Houghton F.R.S. and Serial Publication around 1700,” Friday, March 27, 2009, talk at the Royal Society to be found at: <https://royalsociety.org/events/2009/john-houghton/>; Natasha Glaisyer, “Readers, Correspondents and Communities: John Houghton’s *A Collection for Improvement of Husbandry and Trade*, 1692–1703,” in *Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric*, ed. Alexandra Shepard and Phil Withington (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 235–52; Glaisyer, *The Culture of Commerce in England 1660–1720* (Woodbridge, U.K.: Boydell and Brewer, 2006), 145–55; Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007), 158–60, 172–97; Paul Slack, “The Politics of Consumption and England’s Happiness in the Later Seventeenth Century,” *English Hist. Rev.* 122, no. 497 (2007): 609–31; Slack, *The Invention of Improvement: Information and Material Progress in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), esp. 142–53. The 1681–83 series, *A Collection of Letters for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade*, is not analyzed here: see Adrian Johns, “Miscellaneous Methods: Authors, Societies and Journals in Early

Yet curiously Houghton's expertise as an apothecary, and the light his career and publications might throw on medical practice, have been almost completely ignored.⁷ This article is the first to consider his medical career (or indeed that of any individual London apothecary of the period) or to use his publications to study either his own or his contemporaries' medical practice. This omission may reflect doubts over how far Houghton practiced as an apothecary: historians have persistently labeled him instead as a journalist or dealer in tea, coffee, and other goods.⁸ Yet Houghton was a properly trained apothecary who practiced his trade successfully throughout his life. He was apprenticed February 6, 1663, to Nathaniel Upton, who was master of the city pesthouse in 1665, presumably placing him at the frontline of treating the plague.⁹ He was freed on May 3, 1670, later served on the Court of Assistants of the Society of Apothecaries, and took ten apprentices between January 1671 and February 1704, of whom four were later freed as London apothecaries: four

Modern England," *Brit. J. Hist. Sci.* 33, no. 2 (2000): 159–86 (with Houghton discussed on 176–77); and Noah Moxham, "Fit for Print: Developing an Institutional Model for Scientific Periodical Publishing in England 1665–c.1714," *Notes Rec. R. Soc. London* 69 (2015): 241–60.

7. James L. Axtell, "Education and Status in Stuart England: The London Physician," *Hist. Ed. Quart.* 10, no. 2 (1970): 141–59, briefly discusses (at 150–51) the material in Houghton's collection including the lists of physicians and surgeons and quotes one of the advertisements. Two short articles on Houghton appeared in *Pharmaceut. Hist.* (vol. 2, no. 3 [1971]: 5–6, and vol. 9, no. 1 [1979]: 2–3), the latter by D. T. O'Rourke. Juanita G. L. Burnby, *A Study of the English Apothecary from 1660 to 1760*, *Medical History* Supplement no. 3 (London: Wellcome, 1983) makes four brief references to "Haughton," but only to his journalism and Royal Society work. Houghton's *Collection* is cited regularly in Nancy Cox and Karin Dannehl, *Dictionary of Traded Goods and Commodities, 1550–1820* (Wolverhampton, U.K.: University of Wolverhampton, 2007), now online at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/traded-goods-dictionary/1550-1820/>, but is not used by J. Worth Estes, *Dictionary of Proto-pharmacology: Therapeutic Practices, 1700–1850* (Canton, Mass.: Science History Publications, 1990).

8. Hunter, *Royal Society* (n. 5), 222; Markman Ellis, *The Coffeehouse: A Cultural History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2004), 146. Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 175, wrongly suggests he only became an apothecary when his journalism had failed (two years before his death). Elizabeth Lane Furdell, *Publishing and Medicine in Early Modern England* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2002), 136, acknowledges his training as an apothecary but states that he "built an eclectic business as an agent, broker and vendor of chocolate, sago and German spaw water" (Furdell relies on Walker's article). Ogborn calls him a "broker," though he notes that Robert Hooke used tobacco and chocolate bought from him (*Indian Ink* [n. 6], 196–97).

9. For the pesthouse and Upton: Walter G. Bell, *The Great Plague in London in 1665* (London: Bodley Head, 1924), 88–89, 192–93, 287; A. Lloyd Moote and Dorothy C. Moote, *The Great Plague: The Story of London's Most Deadly Year* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 191–92.

were probably still apprentices at the time of his death in October 1705, having been taken within seven years.¹⁰ He was active in his first parish, St. Bartholomew Exchange, joining the vestry by September 1674 and serving in minor offices before becoming churchwarden for 1689–90.¹¹ He married his first wife, Elizabeth Rewse, in July 1670 and their seven children (all of whom apparently died) were baptized in the parish between 1674 and 1682, but Elizabeth died after March 1685, and John was a “widower aged 42” by November 11, 1687, when he married Elizabeth Claggett (1651–1720), the thirty-six-year-old daughter of the wealthy Greenwich apothecary Edward Claggett (d. 1672), a member of the Drapers’ Company whose London home was in Gracechurch Street.¹² Partly thanks to this marriage, he achieved reasonable prosperity. In 1693–94 he was rated on property with a rental value of £44, and £200 worth of stock, and he was taxed at the higher band (of those with £600 in personal estate)

10. Only about thirty of almost four hundred members of the society were members of the Court of Assistants: Cook, “Rose Case” (n. 4), 530. I owe the apprenticeship information to Patrick Wallis. Few apothecaries took as many as ten apprentices: only ten of 171 apothecaries freed 1620–30 did so (Patrick J. Wallis “Medicines for London: The Trade, Regulation and Lifecycle of London Apothecaries c.1610–c.1670” [University of Oxford D. Phil. thesis, 2002], 170).

11. *Vestry Minute Books of the Parish of St Bartholomew Exchange in the City of London 1567–1676*, ed. Edwin Freshfield (London: Rixon and Arnold, 1890), 110, 124–28 (he first paid the scavengers rate in 1670); *The Account Books of the Parish of St Bartholomew Exchange in the City of London, 1596–1698*, ed. Edwin Freshfield (London: Rixon and Arnold, 1895), 219–20, 237–41. He was also regularly paid for providing “physic” as an apothecary from 1684 until 1693–94 (*ibid.*, 215–16, 222, 225, 227, 229). Andrew Wear, “Caring for the Sick Poor in St Bartholomew Exchange 1580–1676,” in *Living and Dying in London, Medical History* suppl. 11, ed. William F. Bynum and Roy Porter (London: Wellcome, 1991), 41–60, gives a good sketch of the parish’s character before Houghton was involved.

12. I owe most of the baptism, marriage, and burial information to Peter Elmer. His first wife, Elizabeth, is named in the 1678 will (TNA, PROB 11/357/219) of John’s mother, Jane Houghton widow of Cheshunt, which bequeathed John the “Pied Bull” in Waltham Cross and made him residuary legatee and executor, and his wife (unnamed) is also mentioned in the will of his brother-in-law Richard Price made in March 1685 (PROB 11/381/91). She presumably died of consumption, given the statement by Richard Morton in his *Phthisiologia, or, A Treatise of Consumptions* (London, 1694), 181: “And in this manner I saw Mr. Houghton an Apothecary’s Wife, that was emaciated with a deplorable Consumption, preserved a Year or two, and very often recovered from a Putrid Fever caused by her Consumption, by the care of my Famous Colleague Dr. Tyson” [Edward Tyson]. For his second marriage, see *Allegations for Marriage Licenses issued by the Vicar General of the Archbishop of Canterbury, July 1687 to June 1694*, vol. 31, ed. George J. Armytage (London: Harleian Society Publications, 1890), 27; I am also indebted to an unpublished paper by Sara Pennell, “Elizabeth Claggett” on her background and later life. This information is not in McConnell, “Houghton” (n. 4).

under the 1695 Marriage Duty.¹³ True, he traded in many items beyond drugs and offered other services, but such diversification was typical of apothecaries in this period: many dealt in oils and colors for example.¹⁴ His journalism, by contrast, probably lost him money. When he gave up his periodical he stated: “since besides my trade of an Apothecary, wherein I have always been, and still am, diligent) [*sic*] I have fallen to the selling of coffee, tea and chocolate in some considerable degree, I cannot, without great inconvenience to my private affairs, which must not be neglected, spare the time to carry on this history as well as I would do.”¹⁵

This article analyzes what we can learn about medical practice in London from Houghton’s *A Collection for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade*, a one- or two-sheet periodical which ran (almost continuously) from March 1692 to September 1703. Its scale and format shifted significantly: initially one sheet costing 2d twice a week, it relaunched (after a half-year break) in January 1693 as a Friday weekly for 1d, rising to two sheets in July 1693 but reducing again to one in April 1697.¹⁶ Its two stable features were an editorial letter by Houghton (informing his readership about an aspect of husbandry or trade) and a large table of commodity prices around England with London financial information (including ten “drugg’ prices from April 1693 to November 1697).¹⁷ The editorial gradually became a serial natural history, considering in turn the mineral, vegetable, and, finally, animal kingdoms, epitomizing the publications of fellow members of the Royal Society (such as John Evelyn, John Ray, Robert Plot and Thomas Willis), giving readers the latest scholarship on the nature and uses of objects, and linking these to trade issues by

13. Pennell, “Elizabeth Claggett” (n. 12); *London Inhabitants within the Walls 1695*, ed. David V. Glass (London: London Record Society, 1966), 155. Cook, *Decline* (n. 1), 49, notes that about half the thirty apothecaries identified by occupation in the 1695 list paid at this higher rate.

14. Houghton also had other sources of income. Mark Jenner notes an investment in Thomas Houghton’s waterworks company between 1693 and 1703 in “From Conduit Community to Commercial Network? Water in London, 1500–1725,” in *Londonopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London*, ed. Paul Griffiths and Mark S. R. Jenner (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 271 n.119, but his suggestion that John was Thomas’s brother seems very unlikely.

15. *Collection*, 9.24.1703.

16. See Glaisyer, “Readers” (n. 6), 236–73, but also the printed proposal for the 1693 relaunch (Wing I627B) not noted by her.

17. From *Collection*, 5.11.1694, he identifies the following as “drugs”: alum, barley and barley pearl, civet, cerus, oil of turpentine and rape, saffron, yellow and white wax. For drug imports and prices, see Patrick J. Wallis, “Exotic Drugs and English Medicine: England’s Drug Trade, c. 1550–1800,” *Soc. Hist. Med.* 25, no. 1 (2012): 20–46.

considering the import data for each substance and discussing how far England could either produce the commodity better itself or make more profitable use of it. In these editorials Houghton frequently discusses how products are used medicinally, offering us an apothecary's perspective on a wide range of health issues.

However, Houghton also needed to make his publication pay by taking in advertisements. Initially these took the form typical of other newspapers, namely the sale of books (many medical), patent medicines, and other announcements by those with products or services to sell.¹⁸ But increasingly Houghton dropped these, noting "I find publishing for others does them kindness."¹⁹ I discuss later the range of (largely medical) products he could himself supply, but from 1696 he mainly offered an information service:

whoever will buy or hire, sell or let houses, lodgings or estate, want or will put out apprentices, want servants or will go to service; will take or go to board; will put to school or want scholars; or will have anything else enquired of, that is honourable for me to do, may be enter'd in my books for half a crown each; and its probable I may help them.²⁰

How accurate the advertisements were is a moot point (they are clearly all written by Houghton, often phrased as "I want," which means only that he is acting as agent for someone who wants), but for my purposes they need only offer a plausible indication of the services people might have wanted, and what features Houghton chose to highlight.

I will focus on Houghton's editorials and his information service; his early advertisements for books and patent medicines, though interesting for the range of medical approaches they involved (from learned orthodox works by leading fellows of the College of Physicians, to Paracelsian chemical collections and the medicines and ephemerides of an astrological physician), reinforce the conclusions of other historians studying medical

18. He added an extra page of advertisements on July 28, 1693, noting, "this part is to give away, and those who like it not may omit the reading. I believe it will help on Trade, particularly encourage the advertizers to increase the vent of my papers. I shall receive all sorts of advertisements, but shall answer for the reasonableness of none, unless I give thereof a particular character on which (as I shall give it) may be dependence, but no argument that others deserve not as well." On November 17, 1693, prior to advertising various patent medicines, he added: "Pray mind the preface to this half-sheet. Like lawyers I take all causes I may fairly; who likes not may stop here."

19. *Collection*, 2.21.1696.

20. *Collection*, 9.10.1703. This is the final version: similar statements had appeared for many years.

advertisements rather than constituting a novel source.²¹ Although his readers presumably included fellow medical practitioners (e.g., on June 7, 1695, he observes, “I find several barbers think it in their interest to take in these papers, and I believe the rest will when they understand them”), they were not Houghton’s primary audience, whom he termed the “plain man.”²² No woman’s opinion is ever cited and he never targeted any service specifically at women, though he does advertise some women’s services in childcare and nursing, and one housekeeper “that is rarely accomplished, understanding distillery, preserving, cooking, dressing, chirurgery etc.”²³ We have the opportunity to see a male medical practitioner describe the world in lay terms and also how he thought he could best advertise the qualities of medical practices and practitioners.

The Nature of Medical Practice

As noted above, our sources for medical practice in this period are dominated by conflict, especially institutional conflict between the London College of Physician and other groups: non-Collegiate physicians (including chemical physicians), the Society of Apothecaries, the Barber-Surgeons’ Company, and the many empirics offering their services. The records of the institutions and the numerous publications generated by these conflicts have dominated our perspective on London medicine. The very act of publishing medical knowledge in English has itself been seen as a challenge to the traditional medical hierarchy, empowering the patient to make his own choices, or become “his own doctor,” and in the case

21. For the most recent discussions see: Louise Curth, “Medical Advertising in the Popular Press: Almanacs and the Growth of Proprietary Medicines,” in Curth, *From Physick* (n. 3), 29–48; Mary Fissell, “The Marketplace of Print,” in Jenner and Wallis, *Medicine and the Market* (n. 1), 108–32; and Harris’s articles in n. 6.

22. In his November 1691 proposal for the publication, Houghton listed various potential readerships including: “And farther for the benefit of physicians, apothecaries, and others that are desirous to know the state of health at London; as also for the political arithmeticians that desire to know the Increase and decrease of places; ‘tis still designed to give weekly an account of the several parts of the Bills of Mortality of London.” But the much briefer version of this prospectus in his first issue did not list any specific interested parties. He did present data from the Bills initially, noting six causes of death, namely “aged, fever, gripings, small-pox, spot. fever, teeth,” but replaced them from May 11, 1694, with stock market prices. He remained interested in disease patterns, for example discussing the diseases affecting lead and mercury workers on August 27 and December 24, 1697.

23. *Collection*, 2.12.1698: cf. 5.22.1696, 11.20.1696, 1.15.1697, 1.22.1697, 2.19.1697, 8.27.1697, 9.2.1698, 1.6.1699. See Patricia Crawford, “Printed Advertisements for Women Medical Practitioners in London 1670–1711,” *Soc. Soc. Hist. Med. Bull.* 34 (1984): 66–70.

of the writings of men like Nicholas Culpeper, William Salmon, or John Pechey, this was clearly the intention.²⁴ How then should we interpret the fact that Houghton made no effort to engage directly in the controversies raging about medical practice in London between and within the ranks of the physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries?

Houghton may have thought the public would not be interested, or did not wish to alienate any potential readers, or wished to sustain the apparent impartiality on nonscientific matters boasted by the Royal Society. His “editorials” purported to be factual reports, and for his advertising services to be successful he needed the broadest possible market, although this did not prevent him making remarks about the benefits of free trade or economic growth that were at least implicitly partisan, even if he was never openly so. It also seems likely that Houghton was not interested in “institutional” politics.²⁵ However, if we read between the lines, we may also see good reasons why he favored a consensual model in which a knowledgeable apothecary with a well-stocked shop, such as himself, could work in harmony with enlightened physicians and surgeons, all informed by modern knowledge, to satisfy the choices of an informed public. This could operate within the current institutional models, but challenged (at least implicitly) any rigid hierarchy or divisions between its members, and required them all to be open to new ideas and practices, without necessarily abandoning well-established old methods.

Despite his focus on consumer choice, Houghton was certainly not another Culpeper or Salmon seeking to liberate his lay readers from dependence on physicians. He frequently cites admiringly the works of learned physicians such as Thomas Willis, and refers his readers for fuller details of medicinal substances to the “physical books” or the “dispensaries.” Recommending one medical publication he noted, “I need say no more than that it was thought worthy to be printed by the President and Censors of the College of Physicians of London.”²⁶ We will consider later his favorable attitude to chemical medicines, but he shows no support for the work of astrologer-physicians or empirics. Significantly,

24. Furdell, *Publishing and Medicine* (n. 8).

25. See Cook, *Decline of the Old Medical Regime* and *Trials of an Ordinary Doctor* (n. 1). Houghton does not feature in any of the histories of the Society of Apothecaries, unless he is the “James Haughton” who passed on “Mr Greene’s Museum” to the Society’s botanic garden in February 1683 (C. R. B. Barrett, *History of the Society of Apothecaries of London* [London: Elliot Stock, 1905], 103). *The List of the Liverymen of the 56 Companies of London* (London, 1701), 5, includes Houghton among the apothecaries, but he had not polled at the recent parliamentary election. For his earlier politics see below n. 73.

26. *Collection*, 5.2.1695.

he never mentions astrological remedies or considerations in his own comments.²⁷ On August 16, 1695, discussing urine, he questions those who “have pretended to tell all diseases by it,” noting “this latter age has been much more modest, especially those physicians whose parts and learning should enable them to know most. How can any man know the disease by the colour of the urine, when they do not know the cause of the colour itself?” He concludes, “If it be thus, what wise man will trust to the judgement of urines, I know not. Without doubt the best way for any sick person is to have the physician see him: and thereby comparing pulse, urine, colour of the tongue, relation and other circumstances together, he may commonly find out the distemper, altho’ sometimes all is too little.”²⁸

Another sign of Houghton’s acceptance of the traditional medical hierarchy may be his publication of a list of London physicians on June 8, 1694. As he explained,

I know by experience that often patients in city and country are at loss what physician to choose, singly and in consultation; and after resolution, where to find them; therefore I’ll continue this a while, and afterwards, if desired, for a small charge; and do the like for chirurgeons, attorneys, brokers, stage-coaches, carriers by land or water, or any other shall desire it; and altho’ some of it at first will seem strange, yet I am sure after trial will be found useful: for all people of accidental business love it should be known where to find them, and others to have choice and persons they want.

27. He regularly commends the ephemerides published by George Parker, but in terms which suggest he was not himself interested in astrology, e.g., “I am informed by those that are good judges, that this ephemeris is very carefully and exactly computed beyond any other extant” (*Collection*, 3.1.1695). For astrological medicine see Lauren Kassell, *Medicine and Magic in Elizabethan England: Simon Forman, Astrologer, Alchemist, and Physician* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005); Louise Hill Curth, *English Almanacs, Astrology and Popular Medicine, 1550 – 1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

28. On uroscopy see Michael Stolberg, *Uroscopy in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015). Houghton had also discussed urine in the previous two issues and noted on August 9, regarding its taste, smell, and sight, that “I have also tasted the water drawn from bodies dead of the dropsie” though “I have not made so many experiments as I can wish I had done or for future intend to do.” On August 23 he considered “what tis farther good for; and it is esteemed a very good medicine both outward and inward; for it is often used with success by those that are troubled with the itch or other cutaneous (skinny) distempers. Tis reported to discuss [*sic.*, presumably in its Latin derivation of “break into pieces”] tumours and cure gangreens and sore eyes; and truly by reason of its volatile salt, tis reasonable that it should do so; and for the same reason I believe that it helps tertians, dropsies, jaundice, gout, stone, gripings and most diseases of pain.” His “own father when he was a boy laboured with a tertian (third ague),” and as he could “get no drink in his hot fit” drank “his own water which cured his ague”: see n. 73 for his father, who died when he was nine.

Although this action might be taken as supporting consumer choice and a free market in medical (and other) services, the actual list he printed was the 1693 membership list of the College of Physicians, divided into Fellows, Candidates, Honorary Fellows and Licentiates, with London street addresses mostly given (or towns for the few provincial Fellows in Shrewsbury, Bath, Exeter, Canterbury, Northampton, Gloucester, and Bishop's Stortford). On June 15, 1694, he repeated the physicians' list and added one of thirty-four "free chyrurgeons," presumably surgeons who were freemen of London, noting at the end, "country physicians or chyrurgeons may be inserted here if they please," though none ever were! On August 10, 1694, he put the surgeons in street order and reprinted both lists every few weeks until November 8, 1695. It is impossible to judge whether Houghton's decision to guide his readers to consult College physicians was a matter of convenience (he had access to a published list) or reflected support for the College, which had published the list to prove that its recently enlarged membership could cater to London's needs.²⁹ However, given that the officials of his own Society were supporting non-Collegiate physicians in their publications and court cases challenging the powers of the College, such decisions by Houghton might be seen as implicit support for the College, or at least an attempt to compromise between patient choice and the medical establishment.

But it is equally clear that Houghton supported the approach of those later seventeenth-century physicians who adopted into orthodox practice the skills and methods that had been associated with their rivals and critics (notably chemical physicians) and embraced the experimental approach of the "new science."³⁰ On March 22, 1695, noting that a "perfect account"

29. Cook, *Decline of the Old Medical Regime* (n. 1), 226, 275. The lists gradually reduced in length, with only twenty-nine surgeons named in the final list, twelve original names being replaced by seven new ones. More drastically, seventy Fellows are named in the first list, but only forty-four in the last (twenty-eight names disappearing), with the Honorary Fellows falling from twelve to nine, though the licentiates remained at thirty-eight (four names changed). Of the original six candidates, three had become Fellows, two disappeared, and one remained a candidate, together with three new candidates. The College's published lists of Fellows in 1694 and 1695 had not recorded reduced numbers, so either certain Fellows had objected to appearing in Houghton's lists, or he had decided to omit them.

30. Wear, *Knowledge and Practice* (n. 2), chs. 9–10; Harold J. Cook, "The New Philosophy and Medicine," in *Reappraisals of the Scientific Revolution*, ed. David C. Lindberg and Robert S. Westman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 397–436. One of the candidates whom Houghton proposed (unsuccessfully) for fellowship of the Royal Society on January 12, 1681, was William Russell who, together with his brother Richard, was a passionate advocate of chemical medicines: he was appointed a chemist in ordinary to Charles II on November 21, 1683, and he published *A Physical Treatise, Grounded not upon Tradition, nor Phancy, but Experience* (London: J. Williams, 1684) and a letter proposing reform of London

of the nutrition and blood of cattle “can hardly be written by any but the true physician,” he offers a “character” of the “Physicus”:

he that understandeth or searcheth out the cause of natural things, or a philosopher, lover of learning or wisdom. Medicus a physician comes from medeor to heal, remedy, cure, help, succour. The first I take to be the means, the last the end of his profession. So then he is not only a physician, philosopher or naturalist, but also a healer, or else he'll hardly deserve his title of physician. Then, in order to healing he well understands the nature of such bodies he is to heal, and this is done by his own most curious observation of what hurts or helps the patient; and not only so, but he knows the observations eminent men have made, and compares them with his own, which prepares him for several cases he never before met with, and confirms him in others. Altho' observation conduces much to this art, yet he well understands anatomy, knowing else he should want a great deal of fit knowledge: for it teaches him the outward and inward parts of animals; the outward, so as to apply emplaysters, ointments, oils, epithems, fomentations, cataplasms or any thing else proper; the inward, so to order the administration of acids, alkalies, purges, vomits, diaphoreticks, narcoticks, and several other medicines. Understanding all this he is well-vers'd in the nature of the simples whereof his medicines are made, he knows well the outside of minerals, vegetables and animals: also he is a good chymist, and knows the nature of the parts and effects of mixture, whereby in animal bodies shall be destroyed or improved any sort of juice. So that a physician is a great reader to know what has formerly been done, a great observer of what in his time is done, an exquisite anatomist, a curious simpler, an industrious chymist, and well-vers'd in the art of mixture. In short, he is a good philosopher, and of good judgement to compare things with things, and thence draw inferences. This art is chiefly applied to human bodies, but in a large sence its applicable to all animals.

Though respectful of learned medicine and the ideal of the physician, Houghton's definition demands a great deal beyond traditional book learning, reflecting the three main challenges to the authority of the Galenic physician in the previous 150 years, namely the need for skills in both anatomy and chemistry and powers of “observation,” all judged by the criterion of empirical effectiveness. These, together with the knowledge of “simples,” made his “physicus” in effect a general practitioner, combining the skills of physician, surgeon, chemist, and apothecary.

Houghton saw his publication as an extension of the work of the Royal Society, and it was endorsed by twenty-eight members, including eminent

medicine on iatrochemical lines in Christopher Packe, *Mineralogia* (London, 1693), 40–43, while the two brothers' medicines are publicized in John Headrich's *Arcana Philosophia, or, Chymical Secrets* (London, 1697). My thanks to Peter Elmer for this information on Russell.

physicians such as Edward Tyson, Hans Sloane, and Frederick Slare.³¹ He clearly saw the period since its foundation as one of great advances in knowledge: discussing an account of wine delivered to the Royal Society in October 1662 by Dr. Christopher Merret, “a learned physician,” he commented, “I knew him to be a very inquisitive gentleman: yet I doubt not but since that, the practice for the cure of wines has vary’d as well as it has done for humane bodies, every artist strives to bring their matters to a nearer and more easie method.”³² This progressivist stress on the advance of medicine through experimental method proved by the empirical results of its medicines offered no support for the traditional defense of learned Galenic physic as a mode of rational practice, and potentially left physicians (Collegiate or otherwise) subject to consumer choice as to whether they met the criteria Houghton had laid down.

One might also note that while his ideal physician will “apply” outward medicaments (thus trespassing on the traditional sphere of the surgeon), he will only “order the administration” of inward remedies—so presumably leaving their production, sale, and application to the apothecary. During the controversy between physicians and apothecaries, this division of labor was in grave doubt, with physicians proposing to make and sell their own medicines, in response (in part) to the threat posed by apothecaries who were leaving their shops to practice in people’s homes offering medical diagnosis and care. Houghton’s comments throughout his publications present him, however, as an apothecary based in a shop, stocking it with the best products he can and offering advice on the best remedies for diagnosed conditions, but not attending patients or challenging the diagnostic practice of the physician.

Advertising Medical Practice

Houghton’s medical advertisements from 1696 onward are unique in that they do not involve individuals selling their services or medical products to the public, but instead show us different medical practitioners communicating to each other what needs they had/could meet to further their medical careers. This is invaluable evidence since there is no overt

31. *Collection*, 3.30.1692. Slare and, especially, Tyson (Houghton’s physician, see n. 12), who both joined the Royal Society at the same time as Houghton, were prominent among that minority of the College of Physicians who opposed its measures against apothecaries and non-Collegiate physicians in the 1690s, and although their friend Sloane went along with the majority, Cook reckons he also favored the “anti-authoritarian” position (Cook, *Decline of the Old Medical Regime* [n. 1], 194–95, 215–19, 235, 241–42, 246–47).

32. *Collection*, 2.16.1700.

discussion of the choices and opportunities that underpinned medical careers in this period in any other kind of publication, nor in most personal papers. For this reason, they are quoted here at length, since they reveal contemporary assumptions about medical practice not available otherwise to the historian.

First of all, his advertisements reveal that, although the College still sought to uphold the tripartite hierarchical division of medicine into physic, surgery, and pharmacy, the market that Houghton served—and hence supported—operated differently, often seeking general practitioners with broad experience, especially outside London. Houghton regularly advertises that if a town wants a medical practitioner, he can supply one. In three cases he specifies a physician: “if any considerable town needs a physician I can help.”³³ Twice he specifies a surgeon: “If any good town that had lately lost its chirurgeon and wants one, will give me notice, I can supply them with one that has been experienced in the army and divers foreign hospitals, in Paris and elsewhere.”³⁴ But three times he treats physic and surgery as joint skills: “I’ll give one thanks that will give me an account of a considerable town that wants one who understands physick and chirurgery”; and “If any considerable town be destitute of a practitioner in physick and chirurgery I would gladly know.”³⁵ Apothecaries’ businesses are discussed later, but two advertisements for apothecaries also involve the practice of medicine and/or surgery: “I can inform of a person who will immediately leave his business in the practice of surgery and pharmacy if meet with a person of the same profession who will take his house, shop and give a gratification. Tis well situated and well accustomed.” Similarly, “in a considerable market town about 50 miles from London is an apothecary’s house and shop to be let. Tis well-accustomed for medicine and chirurgery, there being employment for 2 servants and the present occupant will if desir’d stay with him 6 or 8 months to bring him into all the business.”³⁶ That practitioners trained in both physic

33. *Collection*, 3.30.1699 (6.4.1697; 4.16.1698). I have given references for advertisements quoted in the text (with similar advertisements not quoted elsewhere in parentheses afterward), except where the date of the advertisement is stated in the text. Many of Houghton’s advertisements appeared for many weeks, even months, but only the first date is given. For the advertising and sale of medical practices after 1700, see Anne Digby, *Making a Medical Living: Doctors and Patients in the English Market for Medicine, 1720–1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

34. *Collection*, 8.4.1699 (3.14.1701).

35. *Collection*, 8.5.1698; 5.10.1700 (6.20.1701).

36. *Collection*, 12.4.1696; 5.28.1697. He added to the latter on June 18 “but he who takes it must understand chirurgery.”

and surgery is clear from several advertisements: “one that understands medicine and chirurgery, but is willing to see something of the London practice, desires to be with some able chirurgeon, for which he will give him thanks to content.”³⁷ Many medical practices clearly spanned the traditional tripartite division, and Houghton gives no indication of any formal requirements, such as guild membership or citizenship, before practice could be commenced, although it may be that all these examples (and those below, where the same applies) were in noncorporate towns that had never had such regulations.

Some advertisements, however, indicate a continuing overlap between medical education and the mastery of learned accomplishments befitting a gentleman. Some of those trained as medical practitioners considered serving in elite households (not necessarily medically) rather than opening a public practice: “one that understands physick or chirurgery desires to be a chirurgeon to a ship or attend some gentleman that desires such: or he would be tutor to some young gentleman in travel”; and “a genteel young man of about 25, writes well, understands arithmetic and the Latin tongue, and has been several years well exercised in the practices of physick and chirurgery, desires to serve some nobleman or person of quality as clerk, secretary etc, or in any other station above a livery.”

Other advertisements confirm this: “A doctor of physick that understands all common learning and French would willingly travel as governour with some noble or gentleman or if desired be with him half or a whole year beforehand”; and “one of understanding and friends, that has been a chirurgeon at sea and in the army several years, desires some employment such may be thought fit for; or he would wait on a gentleman at home or abroad in a creditable post.”³⁸ The liberal education expected of a medical man equipped him for a variety of roles other than medicine.

Not only were physicians generally expected to have surgical experience, but Houghton included considerably more advertisements relating to surgery than to physic. Occasionally these refer to London practice: “a house ready furnished and fit for a chirurgeon about £20 the year in one of the principal streets of London, is to be let.”³⁹ But mostly they refer to ship’s surgeons, especially those going to the East or West Indies. On April

37. *Collection*, 4.26.1695.

38. *Collection*, 9.10.1697; 9.24.1697; 8.16.1700; 10.7.1698.

39. *Collection*, 9.20.1695. For London surgery in this period see Michael McVaugh, “Richard Wiseman and the Medical Practitioners of Restoration London,” *J. Hist. Med. & Allied Sci.* 62, no. 2 (2007): 125–40; Philip K. Wilson, *Surgery, Skin and Syphilis: Daniel Turner’s London (1667–1741)* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999).

13, 1694, Houghton notes “if any masters of ships want chyrurgeons or chyrurgeons [want] voyages, I’ll strive to help them,” and the next year “one that practised surgery in the country, desires to go to sea, under some other surgeon whose interest he will make it to be.”⁴⁰ Occasionally he advertises surgeons themselves: “if any master of a considerable merchant’s ship wants a chirurgeon of good understanding and gravity, about 40 years old and of good esteem and wealth, I can help.”⁴¹ More frequently he reports the availability of or demand for surgeon’s mates: “I want 2 or 3 chirurgeons mates for the East Indies, likewise a barber or two that is not married and has a desire to learn chirurgery; if he can play on musick the better”; “if any chirurghion of a ship wants a mate, I can help to one who has served a chirurghion of good business four years.”⁴² Nine advertisements solicit potential surgeon’s apprentices, and two report boys seeking apprenticeship: “if a very able chyrurghion wants an apprentice, I can help him.”⁴³ Often they praise the master as “of very good business, belonging to the Hospital” or “in a considerable practice” or “very considerable.”⁴⁴ The later advertisements mostly specify a “sea-chirurgeon,” for example “in a large ship bound for the Streights” or “bound for the Indies.”⁴⁵ Occasionally these specify the boy’s qualities: “if any good apothecary or chyrurghion wants an apprentice, with £40 or £20 that is a rare scholar, I can help”; and “I want a young man well grown, and a scholar, to be apprenticed to a chirurgeon in a great ship to East India, who will either bind him at Chirurgeon’s Hall or take him for the voyage as the parties concerned like or agree.”⁴⁶ One advertisement states, “I want an apprentice for a surgeon going to sea in a merchant ship of great force and value, who will bind him at the Hall, and make him free of the company and city, as likewise a mate or two, none dislike the ship or voyage and a barber or two for the same voyage and all other circumstances, which will go to sea.”⁴⁷

These last two advertisements are the only ones that even mention formal membership of the Barber-Surgeons Company or city freedom, and they appear to be potentially attractive extras rather than requirements.

40. *Collection*, 8.9.1695.

41. *Collection*, 5.8.1696.

42. *Collection*, 12.2.1698; 1.13.1699 (8.23.1695; 9.20.1700; 9.27.1700; 11.8.1700).

43. *Collection*, 8.3.1694 (6.18.1697; 8.6.1697).

44. *Collection*, 7.12.1695; 1.10.1696; 4.10.1702.

45. *Collection*, 8.13.1697; 7.7.1699.

46. *Collection*, 9.25.1696; 12.16.1698.

47. *Collection*, 12.4.1696.

Yet, despite this apparently insatiable demand for both surgeons and barbers, Houghton only once mentions barber-surgeons, who traditionally combined the two sets of manual skills with sharp instruments: “one that desires to serve a barber-chirurgion in the suburbs would treat with such an one.” And, apart from the two references to barbers on ships quoted above, he has only one apprenticeship notice: “I want an apprentice for a barber and perukemaker, of very good business.”⁴⁸ Twice he reports such people seeking posts waiting on gentlemen, namely “one that has been bred a barber” and “a French refugee that seems of good sense and looks gracefully. . . . He has been a peruke-maker and can shave curiously” (many other people seeking posts as butlers or gentlemen’s servants also stressed their ability to shave or manage a wig).⁴⁹ Judging by Houghton’s advertisements, therefore, it seems that the division between the skills of barbers and surgeons was widening, speeded by the growing demands of oceanic trade (at least in London), though we cannot detect the even-greater demand for surgeons within the army and navy during this period of warfare, since the armed forces did not advertise for personnel!⁵⁰ However, the references to experience in the armed forces, at sea and in “foreign hospitals” all suggest that more than a standard apprenticeship was desirable in developing the credentials for general practice.

Most of his medical advertisements relate, unsurprisingly, to apothecaries, and they give us an invaluable insight into several features of an apothecary’s business, such as the use of both apprentices and journeymen, as well as examples of partnerships, together with the need for a well-located and -stocked shop. They include twenty advertisements for apothecary’s apprentices (four by boys seeking masters) and five for “chymists” apprentices. Apart from the one quoted above, none specify the boy’s qualities, but several praise the master: “of great trade in a great town in Lincolnshire”; and “of very good business in a considerable country-town not far from London” (four early advertisements are for “country”

48. *Collection*, 4.26.1695; 12.14.1694.

49. *Collection*, 9.4.1702; 6.16.1699.

50. For the impact of military demand see Harold J. Cook, “Practical Medicine and the British Armed Forces after the ‘Glorious Revolution,’” *Med. Hist.* 34, no. 1 (1990): 1–26; Cook, “Sir John Colbatch and Augustan Medicine: Experimentalism, Character and Entrepreneurialism,” *Annals Sci.* 47, no. 5 (1990): 475–505; Cook, “Markets and Cultures: Medical Specifics and the Reconfiguration of the Body in Early Modern Europe,” *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.* 21 (2011): 123–46.

apprentices).⁵¹ One “apothecary of good business” urgently needed an apprentice, and “therefore would take one with less than at another time” while another specified he “will not take under £50.”⁵² Two referred to a “turn-over” (an apprentice who needed a new master to complete his seven-year training), one specifying that he had served five years.⁵³

The fullest advertisement states: “an apothecary that is a Freeman of London and of the Apothecaries Company there, and lives in a good town in Essex, and has the chief business of the town, wants an apprentice.”⁵⁴ This leads us to those nineteen advertisements that offer businesses or properties for sale/lease, two already quoted when discussing mixed practice. Six others specify businesses in provincial towns, normally giving the county (Kent, Shropshire) or their distance from London. The towns are praised as “considerable,” “very good,” or “one of the best,” and the shop itself “extraordinarily accustomed.”⁵⁵ One advertisement combines all these: “in less than 24 miles from London in a very considerable market town is an apothecary’s house and shop to be let. It stands in the market-place, is well-accustomed but the master is lately dead.”⁵⁶ Some London apothecaries clearly considered moving out: “if any knows of a good apothecary’s shop to be dispos’d of, in any considerable town within 60 miles of London, I can help to a London apothecary would take it”; and “an able apothecary who can be very well recommended, for his health sake, would leave London and live in a market-town, in any place in England where there is one wanting.”⁵⁷ As the advertisements for physicians’ and surgeons’ places indicated, Houghton envisages towns “wanting” a certain type of practitioner, especially if one had died. However, this does not mean towns only had one medical practitioner: on May 12, 1693, he lists the main occupations in Derby (with 694 families or c. 4000 people), including seven apothecaries, eleven barbers, two physicians, and one

51. *Collection*, 11.9.1694; 4.3.96 (5.18.1694; 10.19.1694; 11.16.1694; 7.19.1695; 8.23.1695; 5.8.1696; 9.25.1696; 1.8.1697; 4.16.1698; 5.20.1698; 1.6.1699; 2.9.1700). For provincial apothecary businesses in this period see Alun Withey, “Persons that Live Remote from London’: Apothecaries and the Medical Marketplace in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Wales,” *Bull. Hist. Med* 85 (2011): 222–47; Joan Lane and Anne Tarver, “Henry Fogg 1707–50 and his Patients: the Practice of an Eighteenth-Century Staffordshire Apothecary,” *Med. Hist.* 37 (1993): 187–96.

52. *Collection*, 12.27.1695; 10.11.1695.

53. *Collection*, 3.9.1699; 7.28.1699.

54. *Collection*, 5.20.1694.

55. *Collection*, 8.5.1698; 11.4.1698; 9.9.1698; 4.8.1698 (8.24.1694; 2.21.1696; 4.17.1696; 8.26.1698; 8.9.1700; 1.24.1701).

56. *Collection*, 11.26.1697.

57. *Collection*, 8.5.1698; 8.28.1696.

“chyrirgion.”⁵⁸ It does appear, however, that all apothecaries were expected to be based in towns, even if their market, like that of the town, would include its rural hinterland.

Houghton’s advertisements also suggest that businesses might include more than one apothecary and his apprentices. He twice advertises potential partnerships: “if an eminent apothecary of good business will take a partner that will put into stock £500 or more, I can help him to such.”⁵⁹ If an apothecary died, Houghton offered: “if any apothecary’s widow that keeps a shop in the country wants a journey-man that has lived 20 years for himself in London, and has had the conversation of the eminent physicians of the Colledge, I can help to such one.”⁶⁰ Houghton advertises sixteen times for journeymen, with nine journeymen’s posts available and seven journeymen wanting jobs; six specify the “country,” but few details are given except occasionally that the apothecary is of “good” or “very good” business.⁶¹ More details appear in two related notices: “one who would be a labourer or house-servant to a druggist, apothecary or such like, desires an employment. He can write and cast accompt well, and have £100 security”; “if any wants a servant that has been bred a joyner, and is willing to serve any gentleman, so he may not wear a livery, or to serve an apothecary or druggist, or such like, I can help.”⁶² He also advertises “I want a lusty fellow between a 18 and 20 years old, that has had the small-pox to serve a druggist, and do any kind of work that he has for him to do.”⁶³ Finally, there are three advertisements for “servants” for chemists or gentlemen interested in chemistry, including “one that has practiced chemistry some years, desires to serve a chymist, or some gentleman that for his diversion keeps a laboratory.”⁶⁴ Chemistry had an appeal beyond its trade potential, due not least to the prestige of Robert Boyle (whom Houghton knew, recording how he had helped Boyle “to a great many

58. He compares Derby and London mortality rates, giving the death rates in two Derby parishes in 1691 as showing “not much more than 1 in 40 dying per year,” so, citing Petty’s calculation that London is 1 in 30 and Paris 1 in 25, “Derby is healthfulest” of the three, with few dying “of any epidemical diseases” (*Collection*, 5.19.1693).

59. *Collection*, 10.4.1695 (21.2.1696).

60. *Collection*, 11.8.1695.

61. One advertised “a French journeyman that speaks English pretty well”: *Collection*, 7.12.1700 (11.16.1694; 4.25.1696; 8.28.1696; 3.26.3.1697; 4.16.1697; 7.2.1697; 8.13.1697; 12.10.1697; 11.25.1698; 1.6.1699; 5.26.1699; 2.2.1700; 8.9.1700; 8.15.1701).

62. *Collection*, 11.29.1695; 1.24.1696.

63. *Collection*, 7.26.1695.

64. *Collection*, 3.22.1695 (10.4.1695; 12.20.1695).

[chocolate beans] for his own eating”).⁶⁵ But chemists were also needed to supply apothecaries, whose training did not equip them for the technical work in producing chemical medicines for themselves. Houghton himself reports sending various medical substances “to my chymist” for analysis.⁶⁶

The key attribute of both London and provincial shops was to be “well-accustomed” but also “fitted” or “wellfurnished” or “ready fixed.”⁶⁷ Occasionally Houghton advertises the fittings, such as “the frame, pots, glasses etc” or “the shelves or utensils,”⁶⁸ and on June 18, 1697, he reported that “all the utensils belonging to an apothecary’s shop to be sold, and if desir’d some drugs and a few compositions. They will be sold a pennyworth and are at Newberry in Berkshire. The buyer may remove them if he pleases.” Usually he mentions the house associated with the shop: “I know of a pretty apothecary’s shop to be dispos’d of, almost new, and either with or without a house, in town, with a good trade to it.”⁶⁹ Apothecaries were expected to live above the shop and there was a strong sense of a suitable location: “Near a very good market in London are 4 new brick double houses to be sold, having very good shops to them all. Tis a lease of 40 years and the clear rent is £80 the year. One of them stands rarely for an apothecary.”⁷⁰ Tantalizingly, he offers no indication of what made a shop “stand rarely for an apothecary,” though one assumes it would involve being close to (and highly visible from) busy trading sites, for example in corner locations of main streets.

Houghton himself occupied two such shops. Until December 1694 he traded in Bartholomew Lane (close to the main apothecary quarter of Cheapside, Bucklersbury, and Cornhill), just north of the Royal Exchange and on the corner of Ship Court where the Ship Tavern was located, and next to his parish church of St. Bartholomew Exchange. No doubt a corner location close to both a church and a tavern was desirable, but Hough-

65. *Collection*, 2.28.1701.

66. *Collection*, 3.8.1695.

67. *Collection*, 7.19.1700; 10.18.1700; 2.21.1696; 3.9.1699.

68. *Collection*, 3.14.1701; 6.18.1697. He also advertises (2.21.1696) “I have to sell for a friend a parcel of printed titles fit for pots, glasses, or boxes of all sizes, not differing much from gilding or painting and truly they are very pritty and will be sold at 3s the quire in which is above 900 and titles for chirurgeons chests at 2s the quire.” Later he adds (9.16.1698), “another sort more curious, at 10s the sett, in which are near 1000 names of drugs and medicines printed, besides some blanks.” And again, “I can furnish a druggist with wainscot, boxes, barrels, and drawers painted, also with large and small copper-scales and weights, a coffemill and molds and almond press” (6.25.1697).

69. *Collection*, 7.28.1699.

70. *Collection*, 4.2.1697.

ton may have had personal reasons for the location. He was a friend of the incumbent (Dr. Woodroffe, another FRS).⁷¹ The London satirist Ned Ward caricatures an apothecary from the Royal Society, presumably Houghton, whose numerous “whims” include “he lives over-against a church, that when he dies he might not have far to travel upon four men’s shoulders.”⁷² Houghton was a strong royalist and Tory and his 1681–85 periodical had been overtly Tory Anglican, but Houghton reveals his religious opinions only once in his *Collection*, when recommending four religious publications on May 25, 1694 (upholding “the lawfulness of Common-Prayer” and unmasking “the power of enthusiasm”), and never comments explicitly on party politics, though his freely expressed views on free trade and support for trading companies held (Tory) political implications.⁷³

His second shop, the “Fleece” or “Golden Fleece” in Gracechurch Street, was on the corner with Little Eastcheap, a few hundred yards south of his previous location and just north of the other focus of apothecaries

71. For his links to Benjamin Woodroffe see Thomas Birch, *History of the Royal Society*, 4 vols. (London: 1756–57), vol. 4, 126, and E. D. Tappe, “The Greek College at Oxford, 1699–1705,” in *Anglicanism and Orthodoxy 300 Years After the “Greek College” in Oxford*, ed. Peter M. Doll (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), 153–74, at 158. For Woodroffe’s close ties to James II, but Whig politics as an Oxford head of college after 1692, as well as his scientific interests, see Edward Vallance, “Woodroffe, Benjamin (1638–1711),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.lib.exeter.ac.uk/view/article/29932>. Woodroffe may have favored chemical medicines, as the chemist and entrepreneur Moses Stringer publicized his “Elixir Renovans” by letters to him: C. J. S. Thompson, *The Quacks of Old London* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1929), 248.

72. Edward Ward, *The London Spy*, part 1 (London: 1698), 9–10. Ward later satirized the job notices, portraying a distressed gentleman finding Houghton’s periodical on a coffeehouse table and being encouraged at first by the advertisements until he realized that every post offered was exactly balanced by someone offering the same skills, leaving no chance for him: *Labour in Vain* (London: 1700), 22! This is not actually the case, and I see no reason to suppose Houghton invented any of his advertisements, though he will have determined their wording.

73. For his politics see James Jacob, “Restoration Ideologies and the Royal Society,” *Hist. Sci.* 18, no. 1 (1980): 25–38 at 30–34; Ogborn, *Indian Ink* (n. 6); and Slack, “Politics of Consumption” and “Invention of Improvement” (n. 6). John’s father, Roger (buried at Cheshunt January 8, 1655), had been an embroiderer at the royal palace of Theobalds before the civil war, a post he may have owed to being the godson of Roger Houghton (d. 1617), the steward of Sir Robert Cecil (see Roger’s will TNA PROB11/129/287, proved March 11, 1617). Cecil’s heir exchanged the Theobalds property (which Houghton had helped Cecil to develop) with King James for Hatfield House, making Theobalds a royal palace. John recalled being “born near” the Theobalds garden (*Collection*, 2.20.1702) and, discussing Guaiacum or Lignum Vitae, noted “when I was boy I remember to have seen a great tree hereof in the queen’s garden at Theobalds” (*Collection*, 7.17.1702). John himself was buried at Cheshunt on October 19, 1705.

around London Bridge.⁷⁴ The move to Gracechurch Street was probably the result of his wife's connections: she was baptized and brought up in St. Leonard Eastcheap, and she was to inherit her family house further along the same street from a nephew in 1703 and live there as a widow until her death in 1720.⁷⁵ His shop and business were advertised for sale in the *Daily Courant* of Saturday December 8, 1705: "The late dwelling house of Mr John Houghton at the Fleece, the corner of Little East-Cheap in Grace-church-street being let; the green and Bohea Tea, and Chocolate will be sold very cheap; there is also fine Goa Stones, Gascoin powder. Rezin of Jallap. Seed Pearl, etc. to be Sold."

Houghton's Own Medical Practice

This returns us to Houghton's own medical practice. As noted previously, Houghton never describes himself engaged in medical practice outside his shop, such as giving diagnostic advice or therapy in the patient's home, although any such references would only have arisen in passing, given that he is primarily commenting on specific products. He also rarely discusses or advertises his mainstream apothecary practice within his shop. Occasionally he drops hints, for example in his discussion of "rhubarb" (*Rheum officinalis*), which he praises greatly both as a purgative and a "binder," especially "mixed with some other proper medicines, as our physicians now know how, it is a medicine that in several cases we can as well depend on, as we can on Jesuits Powder for an ague, which seldom fails. It has of late been very scarce. I hunted many of the principal drug-gists shops and can get but very little that is superfine, of which if possible I'll always have some."⁷⁶ He also noted, "I have to sell some of the choicest Jesuit's Bark in England and some that I'm sure is very good of lower value."⁷⁷ But the goods he mostly advertises (and the stock advertised at his death) were those his readers would not expect to find in a standard apothecary's shop (hence they needed to be advertised); they were not his only or even main products. Nevertheless they illustrate that, as retailers, apothecaries were keen to diversify, both to distinguish their particular shop from other apothecaries, and to broaden their sales base by offering their customers related products.

The earliest he advertises is chocolate, which he had sold "in small quantities" since 1682, adding later, "I know this to be a restorative to

74. *Collection*, 12.21.1694; Wallis, "Apothecaries and the Consumption" (n. 3), 23–24.

75. Pennell, "Elizabeth Claggett" (n. 12).

76. *Collection*, 1.27.1699.

77. *Collection*, 9.13.1695.

weak people, and a great helper of bad stomachs.”⁷⁸ On April 6, 1694, he reported, “if any want any true German spaw-water they may have it of me,” and this became another standard. By 1695 he was selling both “extraordinary superfine thea” (coffee is added from 1697) and “very good flower of brimstone, as cheap, or cheaper than any in town,” and offered to “furnish grocers, chymists or others with any reasonable quantity” of the latter.⁷⁹ On February 21, 1696, he began advertising “lozenges for 8d the ounce” highly commended “against heart-burning” (later adding “excellent against consumption and all sharp humours for women with child and to prevent miscarriages”) and a week later added “casheu or catechew excellent against rheums and bad breath, if dissolv’d in mouth, at 18d per box.” On April 17, 1696, he reported: “I have a good quantity of several sort of pearl and other East India commodities to sell; and of as good Gascoigns powder as ever was made. Also some very good trim’d sarsaparilla, bezoar or large sprig- coral and true goa-stones.” On July 24, 1696, he offered “Ipais Nephreticum” (later called “nephritic stones”) “which is esteem’d excellent for the stone, by wearing it on the wrist. I have also the heltropian or blood-stone,” which he later explains was “to stop bleeding.”⁸⁰ All these products are then regularly advertised until 1703, along with “a large parcel of excellent DIAPALMA plaster.”⁸¹ Finally, on May 8, 1696, he offers, “Sal Volat., Oleos. Sp., Sal Armon., Cornu Cervi, Sal Succin and Ol. Succin. Rectif” and promises to “procure any chymical medicine as cheap or cheaper than any in town does; and I’ll sell any good commodity for any man of repute if desired,” and from August 13, 1697, he offers “a great variety of chymical medicines.” As noted, he is acting as a retailer, or even wholesaler, not manufacturer, for these products, trading on competitive prices and an ability to guarantee high quality.

He claims personal credit only for developing and manufacturing one product, which was intended for animals, not humans. On February 28, 1696, he notes that Richard Blome’s *Gentleman’s Recreation* has a “receipt” of balls for equine glanders: “this his recipe I have improved and will upon reputation make it of good things, and sell it for 2s the pound,” assuring the reader “if the flesh of beast, be any thing agreeable to the flesh of

78. *Collection*, 11.17.1693; 1.26.1694. He discusses the medicinal properties of chocolate, based on Henry Stubbe’s account, between January 17 and March 21, 1701, noting (1.24.1701) that “the [American] Indians as they in all things almost affect a simplicity, so in the making of chocolate they did not multiply ingredients and cared rather to preserve their health than to indulge their palates.”

79. *Collection*, 8.16.1695; 10.23.1696.

80. *Collection*, 10.2.1696.

81. *Collection*, 9.10.1703.

man (which I think none doubts) they are excellent to improve.” From April 30, 1697, he advertises them as Bloom’s Horse Balls, “excellent against glanders, colds, sickness, molten-grease, bad stomachs, fainting and leanness . . . to improve and strengthen all sorts of animals.” In 1699 he adds, “since this plague on horses, I have made some additions to my horse-balls, and I can’t learn there are better in England,” increasing the price “by reason of the addition” to 2s 8d and later advertises *The Compleat Horseman*, noting, “I can furnish gentlemen with the medicines therein mentioned.”⁸² This may suggest that Houghton aimed particularly to serve gentlemen visiting London.

Running through both his advertisements for his own products and his comments on medicinal substances are common themes: the importance of reliable quality (and the difficulty of ensuring this, especially with imported substances); the demand for competitive pricing; the use of other druggists and chemists as a source of supply for some products, while Houghton specializes in supplying others, both retail and wholesale; and the appeal to a discerning set of customers, still led by gentlemen but interested in new products whose qualities had experimental support. Nevertheless, the ultimate requirement was empirical success in restoring or preserving health.

A nice example, which also illustrates his economic nationalism, occurs in his discussion of the bezoar on July 10, 1696. He notes, “with this and several other things is made the Gascoign’s powder, which is an excellent medicine indeed, and in very great use with our English physicians.” Then he mentions the “Goa stone made in India,” which “is thought to be a such like medicine.” He admits, “tis esteem’d as an excellent medicine, only there is this difference; the Gascoign’s powder is made in England and we certainly know what it is; but the Goa stone we take upon trust; however, tis generally believ’d to be a good medicine.” He adds,

these are all excellent in a great many cases; our fam’d physicians seldom write a bill without some of them, particularly they are very good where the blood wants sweetening: for they are alkalis which have a nature to destroy acids’ describing how by imbibing the acid salt from the blood the ferment causes a heat, and the thick parts being gone, the rest are made thinner and more ready to transpire, and thus it is according to my imagination that sweat is rais’d by such medicines; and by reason they commonly ease pain, it is an argument with me that pain is caused in a great measure by such acid salts.

82. *Collection*, 4.7.1699; 12.22.1699. For horse balls see Louise Curth, “A *plaine and easie waie to remedie a horse*”: *Equine Medicine in Early Modern England* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 171.

This last example raises the question of Houghton's understanding of how medicines worked, and in particular his attitude to chemical vs. Galenic medicine. As we have seen, Houghton practiced chemical analysis and offered chemical medicines for sale. But rather than see a stark choice between the two systems, he appears to have favored a compromise widely found among physicians by this date, by which chemical understandings and chemical medicines were incorporated into orthodox medical practice, just as apothecaries for the next century offered both chemical and Galenic medicines. Once again, he avoids contention, yet when examined closely it is clear that he has adopted many aspects of the new chemical understanding of the body.

His longest comment, significantly, comes in a discussion of alkalis on December 30, 1698:

Great has been the study among philosophers and physicians, what have been the principles of natural things, from which they hop'd to find out the nature of health, that is the due proportion of each principle; and by the different proportions to find out the difference of diseases: And in order to it, the ancients suppos'd fire, air, earth and water, others since chymistry grew in fashion salt, sulphur and mercury; Dr Willis spirit, salt, sulphur, water and earth. Others will have it only water; and of late some are mighty earnest for acid and alkali; and Dr Morton was for venoms and antidote, but he meant the same thing as he once told me. That any of these are right, I find the learn'd don't agree, and truly where it do's not consist only in such and such proportions, but also in such and such obstructions, and sometimes more than ordinary large passages; sometimes through such and such percolations, or strainings, through variety of angulated colanders and sometimes by different ferments and coagulations: truly twill be a difficult thing for those that have study'd Nature but a little to hit her right. I find those that study her most are most diffident and modest, and will trust more to their large skill in history of cures, than they will to any mathematical conclusion from any principles have been yet laid down, although they that know most in chimistry, anatomy and other natural knowledge should know most of principles.

Houghton's other comments echo this cautious progressivist rhetoric, occasionally offering his own suggestions as to how medical processes might work, but stressing their provisionality and his willingness to be proved wrong. He is skeptical of speculative hypotheses, preferring empirical evidence, but also keen to see new "theories" developed, noting (regarding the effects of coffee), "could I meet with a satisfactory theory of sleep perhaps at this I might give some better guesses."⁸³ Discuss-

83. *Collection*, 5.16.1701.

ing metals as medicines, he cites regularly from the Parisian chemist Lemery's *Course of Chemistry*, praising his reasoning as "very ingenious . . . but some things are too high for my reach and who is he that passing thro' the pathless ways of conjecture, may not sometimes miss the right; tho I do not say this doctor doth, but to him I refer the reader to judge for himself."⁸⁴ Citing Lemery on how mercury works, he observes, "the solution of his hypothesis is very pretty, and for ought I know true: But methinks he has not explain'd it so well as might be. I'll give my thoughts, but submit them." He proposes that mercury is globular and volatilized by body heat and because of these globes it leaves space between itself and when it flies, some of the salts are pressed in, so the rest of blood and humors are left thinner and can be cast out by spitting or evacuating.⁸⁵ Houghton's model of the body seems closest to that provided by Willis and Boyle, emphasizing the operations of acids and alkalis through the pores and within the circulatory channels, with chemically derived images of "furnaces" and great stress on temperature.⁸⁶ He spends July 1693 summarizing "the most excellent philosopher and physician Dr Willis" on fermentations, concluding on July 28 "whether such knowledge as this is worth minding by my brethren the apothecaries, or they are expert in it already, I must leave to their consideration": his sole (and apparently rather disparaging) reference to his fellow apothecaries.⁸⁷

84. *Collection*, 12.3.1697. He further notes: "The doctor has given receipts of a great many generous and brave medicines from steel and not only he but almost all physick-books do the like; and generous medicines they may well be call'd, for the great good they do in green-sickness, dropsies, ill habits of body, almost every thing. Oft I have seen young virgins that look'd like old tallow-candles, in a small time, with these medicines look like roses."

85. *Collection*, 1.15.1698.

86. For example, discussing oil he notes (*Collection*, 5.3.1700) "it is used in medicine for a great many purposes both outward and inward, particularly if rubb'd upon the skin or some other parts, 'twill make them extend and be lubricous or slippery and I presume by stopping the pores, and not quickly evaporating, it makes a kind of reverberating furnace which more warms internal juices underneath, whose circulation were by a coagulation or a force on the capillary vessels obstructed, and so may a tumour be made and then hastened by means of this reverberation, caused by the oil or unctuous matter. What is the cause of extension or how the oil should unloose the hooks, or whatever it is that causes the contractive faculty in the parts, is difficult to explain; but if those whose inclinations lead to such considerations would canvas it, until it come to be easily understood, the world would be beholden to them."

87. For the Society of Apothecaries' support for new medical approaches see Dmitri Levitin, "'Made up from many Experimentall Notions': The Society of Apothecaries, Medical Humanism and the Rhetoric of Experience in 1630s London," *J. Hist. Med. & Allied Sci.* 70, no. 4 (2015): 549–87; Anna Simmons, "Medicines, Monopolies and Mortars: The Chemical Laboratory and Pharmaceutical Trade at the Society of Apothecaries in the Eighteenth Century," *Ambix* 53 (2006): 221–36.

It would be wrong to conclude, however, by implying that Houghton subscribes solely to a chemical model of the body or to chemical/mineral medicines. He also refers regularly to humors and takes for granted the importance of processes of concoction and evacuation central to humoral medicine, and the key significance of diet, noting that both honey and milk are “meat, drink and medicine” and “we generally find, that where [milk] is most in use, there are fewest diseases and physicians.”⁸⁸ He also discusses the medicinal virtues of numerous animal and vegetable products, though space permits only two final examples, both taken from 1700. On August 30 he discusses bay berries, which are “emollient, sovereign in affections of the nerves, colics, gargarisms, baths, salves, perfumes and some have used leaves instead of cloves. It is a common thing with nurses, to help the children of the gripes, to boil bay-leaves in their food.” On October 4 he reports, citing his friend John Evelyn, that “Juniper berries are one of the most universal remedies in the world,” as the berry swallowed “instantly appeaseth the wind-colic,” a decoction is “most sovereign against an inveterate cough,” and the water is a “most singular specificque against the gravel in the reins; but all is comprehended in the virtue of the theriacle or electuary which [Evelyn] has often made for the poor against the stone, rheum, phthisis, dropsy, jaundies, inward imposthumes, nay, palsy, gout and plague itself, taken like Venice Treacle.”

Conclusion

Houghton’s own political and commercial interests led him to gloss over the tensions and problems affecting medicine in this period. Instead he offers a view of medicine consistent with his ideological arguments for demand-led economic growth based on colonial expansion and empirically led improvements in products and services. He offers a cautious endorsement of the medical establishment, but one that is (implicitly) conditional on the adoption by the physicians of both new ideas and new forms of medical practice that effectively demanded general practitioners, even if (especially in London) they specialized in one branch. Within this world the apothecary could prosper in his “well-accustomed” shop, but needed, like Houghton, to be alert to the potential for new products and

88. *Collection*, 8.15.1702; 5.17.1695.

services, selling both himself and his shop as constantly seeking to improve their ability to meet customer demand. The lessons his publications can teach us are subtle and detailed, compared to the strident voices found in the medical polemics of the period. Nevertheless, his optimistic empiricism, which reflected and sustained his emphasis on informed consumer choice, makes his work an invaluable testimony to the normal pattern of medical practice in London around 1700.



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