

**A BRIEF MEMOIR OF SIR WILLIAM  
BLIZARD. READ BEFORE THE HUNTERIAN  
SOCIETY, OCTOBER 7TH, 1835; WITH  
ADDITIONAL PARTICULARS OF HIS LIFE  
AND WRITINGS**

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A brief memoir of sir William Blizard. Read before the hunterian society, october 7th, 1835;  
with additional particulars of his life and writings by William Cooke

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**WILLIAM COOKE**

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SOCIETY, OCTOBER 7TH, 1835; WITH  
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A  
BRIEF MEMOIR  
OF  
SIR WILLIAM BLIZARD, KNT.  
F. R. S. L. & E.  
SURGEON AND VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE  
LONDON HOSPITAL,  
READ BEFORE THE HUNTERIAN SOCIETY,  
OCTOBER 7th, 1835,  
WITH ADDITIONAL PARTICULARS OF  
HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

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BY  
WILLIAM COOKE,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS, SECRETARY TO THE HUNTERIAN SOCIETY,  
EDITOR OF AN ABRIDGMENT OF MORGAGNI, &c.

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1835.  
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PATERNOSTER-RROW,

503.

TO

DR. BABINGTON, PRESIDENT,

TO THE VICE-PRESIDENTS AND COUNCIL,

AND TO THE OTHER MEMBERS

OF THE

HUNTERIAN SOCIETY,

WHOSE AMICABLE MEETINGS AND DISCUSSIONS HAVE GREATLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE  
DIFFUSION OF PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE AMONG THEMSELVES,  
AND TO THE BENEFIT OF SOCIETY :

THIS MEMOIR

OF A MOST DISTINGUISHED MEMBER, IS INSCRIBED WITH FEELINGS  
OF UNDISSEMBLED RESPECT,

BY

THE AUTHOR.



## P R E F A C E.

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IN the preliminary remarks, I have given an explanation of the reason for addressing the Hunterian Society on the decease of Sir William Blizard; and having been connected with this society from its commencement, and having taken an official part in the management of its affairs, every circumstance which has promoted its welfare has been deeply interesting to me. Few societies have proceeded with harmony so undisturbed, whilst the important objects for which it was established have been realized to a degree beyond expectation. It was impossible, therefore, without a departure from all propriety, to permit a man who had been eminently useful in the formation of the society, and in its advances to maturity, to sink into the silence of the sepulchre without a record of his usefulness, and a tribute to his memory.

But this of itself would not justify the *publication* of the Memoir. Sir William had been, in the best sense, a public man. He had gained celebrity as a practitioner in surgery, one of the most important departments of human labour, and had been instrumental, in various ways, to the advancement of its interests. He had identified himself with many public charities well deserving the best efforts of an enlightened mind and a compassionate heart, and had evinced great philanthropy. His character had been adorned with



frankness and uprightness, and he had been an intrepid advocate of principles which elevate the moral and professional character, and conduce to the best interests of a community. The combination of these qualities fully entitles him to a niche in the biography of his country; but those eminent and useful qualities which have rendered him worthy of this distinction, give him full claim to a biographer more able to appreciate and exhibit his merits.

There was another difficulty attending an attempt on my part to develop and sketch his character. Though not required to enter at length into the subject of religion, yet I felt that it would be scarcely possible, in a biographical sketch, with a strong conviction of the paramount claims of the christian faith, wholly to refrain from this topic. Its priority in importance as a matter of principle, and the extent of its requirements in the cultivation of the christian virtues, forced themselves on my mind, and I believed that my views were not in exact accordance with those of the distinguished man whose life I was requested to delineate. I feared, too, that as I could not wholly shrink from the subject, I might be betrayed into expressions offensive to my honoured and respected brethren in the profession, and injurious to the cause I meant to serve, should I venture to remind them of what they have at stake in matters of future and eternal moment, fearing that their plea of "works of necessity and mercy," has much wider adoption and influence than the case will justify.

I had reason to doubt whether our views harmonized on other points, not unimportant, and yet of less importance than the subject just adverted to. I might have approved more liberal measures of reformation and legislation in many of our institutions than he would have advocated in his latter years, and may be more sanguine than he was, in hope that what are called liberal opinions, in the moderate sense, in combination with extended and sound knowledge, and religious feeling, and a growing acquaintance with the true principles of civil and religious liberty, will lead to a greater prevalence of union, and kindness, and co-operation; and impart greater efficiency to the piety and benevolence of the country than has hitherto been experienced. These circumstances led me to shrink from the task. I saw that though he would require no apologist, there was a judiciousness demanded to which I could not lay claim. Having, however, put my hand to the work, though for a comparatively private purpose, I was urged to proceed, and felt a readiness to testify my gratitude towards the venerable and respected deceased, and a desire to give public effect to his many admirable traits of character. If by acquiescence in this request a want of correct feeling or sound judgment should, in any instance, be seen, I must yield to the imputation.

Little besides narrative has been aimed at. The design has been to make the reader acquainted with Sir William's professional and public character, without attempting elaborate disquisition. An extended and full biography would

have demanded materials far exceeding what it was in my power to collect and arrange. It is not intended to be purely professional. In the delineations, however imperfect, there are criterions of character, valuable recollections, and requiring testimonials, which it is hoped will not be contemplated without advantage.

The great Architect of our being, though he has been pleased to bestow on men their diversified talents, has left wide scope for their enlargement and exercise, and has attached high responsibility in regard to their neglect or cultivation. It may perhaps be said that no study, except that of divine revelation, has a happier tendency to quicken the movements of men in the right direction than that which relates to the full bearing of efficient members of the community, in the varieties of their intellectual and sentient constitution, on others of their race.

Should this inadequate effort have a tendency to commend assiduity and kindness, or excite my younger brethren to laudable efforts in the acquisition and advancement of useful knowledge; should it tend to show the excellence of professional virtue (which prohibits all petty jealousies, shallow artifices, groundless imputations, and mean hypocrisy; and calls for candour, and generosity, and benignity;) I shall feel highly gratified in having been permitted to conduce to ends so desirable.