once the diagnosis of haemorrhage has been made.

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John and James Parkinson on appendicitis

Though straying from the strict confines of neurology, one of the classic, early accounts of appendicitis may be of interest. The extraordinarily versatile James Parkinson¹ read this paper on 21 January 1812.²

... a boy about 5 years of age, who died under the following circumstances.

He had been observed for some time to decline in health, but made no particular complaint until two days before his death when he was suddenly seized with vomiting and great prostration of strength. The abdomen became very tumid and painful upon being pressed; his countenance pale and sunken, his pulse hardly perceptible. Death preceded by extreme restlessness and delirium, took place with 24 hours.

Upon examination the whole surface of the peritoneum was found inflamed with a thin coat of coagulable lymph; ... The viscera independent of the inflammation of the peritoneal covering, appeared in a perfectly healthy state, excepting the appendix vermiformis of the caecum. No diseased appearance was seen in this part near to the caecum; but about an inch of its extremity was

considerably enlarged and thickened, its internal surface ulcerated, and an opening from ulceration which would have admitted a crow quill, was found at the commencement of the diseased part, about the middle of the appendix, through which it appeared, that a thin dark-coloured and highly fetid fluid, had escaped into the cavity of the abdomen. Upon opening the appendix, a piece of hardened faeces was found impacted ...

It is often overlooked that the title of this paper is subheaded: "By John Parkinson, Esq., Surgeon. Communicated by James Parkinson, Esq."

James had married Mary Dale in May 1781 and they had six children: two died in infancy, one son John qualified in Medicine and shared his practice. I remain unsure as to who made this major contribution.

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