

The Cambridge Illustrated History of Surgery

Written in a lively and engaging style, by a medical author and teacher of great renown, this book provides a fascinating and informative introduction to the development of surgery through the ages. It illustrates some of the key advances in surgery from primitive techniques such as trepanning, through some of the gruesome but occasionally successful methods employed by the ancient civilisations, the increasingly sophisticated techniques of the Greeks and Romans, the advances of the Dark Ages and the Renaissance and on to the early pioneers of anaesthesia and antisepsis such as Morton, Lister and Pasteur. Heavily illustrated in colour, The Cambridge Illustrated History of Surgery is the only serious choice for a reader wanting a lively and informative single-volume introduction to surgical history.

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**To Wendy, and to our children and
grand-children**

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Contents

Preface	<i>page</i> ix
Acknowledgements	xi
Further Reading	xiii
1 Surgery in prehistoric times	1
2 The early years of written history – Mesopotamia, Egypt, China and India	7
3 Surgery in Ancient Greece and Rome	16
4 The Dark Ages and the Renaissance	22
5 The Age of the Surgeon-Anatomist: Part 1 – From the mid 16th century to the end of the 17th century	35
6 The Age of the Surgeon-Anatomist: Part 2 – From the beginning of the 18th Century to the mid 19th century	46
7 The advent of anaesthesia and antisepsis	73
8 The birth of modern surgery – from Lister to the 20th century	92
9 The surgery of warfare	125
10 Orthopaedic surgery	151
11 Breast tumours	165
12 Cutting for the stone	180
13 Thyroid and parathyroid	195
14 Thoracic and vascular surgery	210

viii **Contents**

15	Organ transplantation	237
16	Envoi – today and tomorrow	249
	Index	255

Preface

This book presents, I hope, a fairly succinct overview of the story of surgery. The first chapters deal with the development of the subject from its earliest days, then the great watershed in the mid-19th century, with the discovery first of anaesthesia and then of antiseptic surgery. This is followed by the extraordinary explosion in progress which took place in the decades after Lister. Later chapters deal with specific fields of surgery, starting with, perhaps appropriately, the surgery of warfare, since over the centuries so many advances in the subject were made on the field of the battle. Further chapters then deal with orthopaedics, breast surgery, stones in the bladder, the thyroid and the parathyroid glands, surgery of the lungs, heart and blood vessels, organ transplantation and, finally, a look into the present and the future.

I have to confess that my personal interests and my own heroes have crept heavily into the text and into the illustrations. I do not apologise for wandering off here and there to describe the characteristics and accomplishments of men that I have come to admire as I have read of their contributions to the science and art of surgery.

The opportunity to prepare a second edition has allowed me carefully to revise and amplify the text, add a section on the story of Caesarian section and to bring up to date, as far as is in my power, the final chapter on the present and future. New illustrations have been added and some old ones replaced with colour versions.

x **Preface**

I hope that this new edition will bring as much pleasure to its readers as its writing has been to the author.

Harold Ellis

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xii **Acknowledgements**

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Further Reading

The author can recommend the following books to those who wish to find further information on the History of Surgery:

- Cope Z: *A History of the Acute Abdomen*. London, Oxford University Press, 1965.
- Hurt R: *The History of Cardiothoracic Surgery from Earliest Times*. London, Parthenon Publishing Group, 1996.
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