Queen Square: A History of the National Hospital and its Institute of Neurology
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To those who made Queen Square; and especially to the memory of Joe Shorvon and Ian McDonald
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Preface

The National Hospital for the Relief and Cure of the Paralysed and Epileptic, as it was first officially named, was founded in November 1859, and opened its doors for business in 1860 as the first specialist neurological hospital in the world. It quickly gained a reputation as the ‘mecca of neurology’ and soon became a place of pilgrimage for neurologists from many countries. The book celebrates the fluctuating fortunes and history of the hospital from foundation to eventual amalgamation with University College London Hospital (UCLH) in 1996 and absorption of the Institute of Neurology into University College London (UCL) in 1997.

Our book leans heavily on the remarkable archive of the National Hospital, which provides a rich source of hitherto unpublished material. The illustrations, unless otherwise stated, are from the unique and very large collection of images in the same archive. We have also plundered the unpublished papers, memories and memoirs of individuals for records of contemporaneous events, and have used the annual reports and other written documents covering the work of the hospital, its medical school and the Institute of Neurology. We are also advantaged by the bequest to one of us of the large collection of uncatalogued material relating to Queen Square formed by Ian McDonald. In addition, we have made reference to a variety of other published documents and secondary sources. Although recognising that these are uneven in places, we have annotated the narrative with footnotes in order to add anecdote or detail and to provide context and comment without interrupting the flow of the text.

We have adopted a few conventions to which we draw the reader’s attention. Biographical sketches are provided for many of the deceased staff. These do not necessarily appear at first mention of each individual and with some obvious exceptions, their placement either in the main text or footnotes is not a statement on the relative contributions of these individuals. As Gordon Holmes elected to do in his 1954 book on the National Hospital, we have not referred to living persons, except in passing. This is because the snow is too fresh to provide a suitable footprint, and our policy both spares the blushes and avoids the reprimands of our colleagues. We recognise that not referring to living persons lessens the impact of the story for recent decades, and we accept that this decision much underplays the significance of achievements of those associated with Queen Square who are still alive. We hope those affected by this decision will accept this with forbearance.

Their work is for others to describe in due course.

For the same reason, we do not extend our account beyond 1996/7 as this was a natural point at which to end our account, even though much of interest and importance has happened since.

In the interests of space and readability, we have decided not to provide excessive references to many of the minutes or records in the hospital archives. These are freely available in the Queen Square archive. For the same reasons, we have not provided references to biographical details which lean heavily on conventional sources, such as Parr’s Lives and Munk’s Roll or obituaries in the British Medical Journal and Lancet, as these are also freely available online. In some instances, we have adapted our own previously published biographical accounts of specific individuals. We have also tried to avoid multiple citation of the same source, leaving some quotes apparently unsupported when their provenance is generally clear from earlier text.

We have added dates of birth and death of individuals mentioned in the text in the index, but have restricted this detail to those who have a direct bearing on the hospital’s history or on British neurology.
We have generally used the abbreviated term 'National Hospital' to refer to the hospital (the official name of which changed a number of times), and 'Queen Square' to refer both to the hospital and its medical school and institute. Similarly, we have in general given the first name and surname of individuals at their first appearance in a chapter and just the surname subsequently. However, we have varied these two conventions many times for purposes of style or emphasis. Finally, at times throughout this book, in the absence of a suitable umbrella term, we have used the term 'neurology' as shorthand for other specialties in the clinical neurosciences. We hope that our distinguished colleagues working in these specialist areas will be forgiving and not feel too disenfranchised.

We would like to acknowledge the assistance of many people in the production of this book. The National Brain Appeal provided financial support to the publishers, and we are grateful for their assistance and particularly to the Chief Executive, Ms Theresa Dauncey. Ms Sarah Lawson and her colleagues in the Queen Square medical library and archives provided enormous assistance in our search for information and in the provision of illustrations. Drs Christopher Gardner-Thorpe and Michael O’Brien both kindly read and commented on early drafts, and Dr O’Brien also provided invaluable help in producing the maps in Chapter 2. Others to whom we are grateful for their comments and information include: Dr Gordon Bird, Dr Anthony Dayan, Dr Stanley Hawkins, Dr Lee Illis, George Kaim, Professor David Miller, Dr Nicholas Murray, Dr Yoko Nagai, Dr John Silver, Nadeem Toodayan, Professor Michael Trimble, Dr John Walshe, and Julian Axe, Nick Ayres, Jennifer Gough-Cooper, Michael and Dr Nicholas Slater and Peter Zimmerman. The work of Simon Shorvon is partly supported by the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery and the Institute of Neurology. For more about the charity, visit www.nationalbrainappeal.org or telephone 020 3448 4724. The charity can also be found and followed on: Twitter @BrainAppeal, Facebook TheNationalBrainAppeal, and Instagram Brain_Appeal. The National Brain Appeal is the working name of the National Hospital Development Foundation – Registered Charity No. 290173.