JOHN FREIND: PHYSICIAN, CHEMIST, JACOBITE, AND FRIEND OF VOLTAIRE’S

by

J. S. ROWLINSON*

Physical and Theoretical Chemistry Laboratory, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3QZ, UK

John Freind (1675/76–1728) achieved distinction in several walks of life, first as a classical scholar, then as a physician and as a chemist who advocated Newtonian philosophy. His clinical practice was generally conservative and he was against the newly introduced practice of inoculating the smallpox. His principles were Tory and High Church; his loyalty to the house of Stuart involved him in the Jacobite plot of 1722, and a spell in the Tower of London. His money was part of the foundation of Dr Lee’s benefaction to Christ Church, which still survives in name in scientific posts in Oxford. He was among the circle of friends that Voltaire formed during his two-year stay in England and, 50 years later, Voltaire took him and his son as the principal characters in a conte philosophique defending a deistic attitude against both atheism and revealed religion.

Keywords: John Freind; Voltaire; eighteenth-century medicine and chemistry; Jacobitism

OXFORD

In ‘good King Charles’s golden days, when Loyalty no harm meant’, the Rev. William Freind (1633–89) was Rector of Croughton, a small village in Northamptonshire, just over the border from Oxfordshire. He and his wife Anne had three sons, Robert (1667–1751), William (1668/69–1745) and John (1675/76–1728),1 and later a daughter, also Anne, whose date of birth seems not to be known. Each son was sent in turn to Westminster School in London, and to Christ Church, Oxford. In both places the Rector could be sure that they would be brought up in the principles to which he held: Tory in politics, High Churchmanship in religion, and loyalty to the house of Stuart. Robert and William were both ordained, the elder becoming Headmaster of Westminster School in 1711. William held two rectorships in absentia and won an annuity of £800 in a state lottery in 1715. It seems that he exchanged this, as the rules permitted, for equity in the South Sea Company and bought the manor of Hitcham in Buckinghamshire. He apparently lost most of his money when the company went bankrupt in September 1720; the manor was sold to his younger brother, John, and he died a poor man.

*john.rowlinson@chem.ox.ac.uk

109 © 2007 The Royal Society
John entered Christ Church in August 1694, when Henry Aldrich was the Dean, and where he was to receive a sound classical education from Francis Atterbury, with whom he was to become much involved later in life. He took his BA in 1698, and his MA in 1701. He had by then become a competent classical scholar who had jointly revised an edition of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* in 1696 and had taken part in a famous quarrel of the time over the authenticity of some papers known as the *Epistles of Phalaris*. Charles Boyle (FRS 1706), the 19-year-old great-nephew of Robert Boyle, had edited these in 1695. Dean Aldrich, Francis Atterbury, Robert and John Freind, and other Christ Church scholars had backed him because they believed them to be genuine; Richard Bentley (FRS 1695), then Librarian at St James’s Library in London and later Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, did not. Bentley was right, but the whole row soon became irrelevant to Freind’s career because he decided to study medicine and philosophy.

He contributed his first papers to the Royal Society in 1699 (a dissection of a child who had died of water on the brain) and in 1701 (on cases of convulsions in Oxfordshire). In 1703 he came to more prominence on publishing *Emmenologia*, a book on menstruation, in which he adapted Newton’s physical ideas on mechanics and hydraulics to a physiological problem. It is generally thought that the adoption of Newton’s ideas in Britain was led by the Whig and often Low Church factions, and, indeed, many in these groups were prominent in supporting him, but there was another group of Tory High Churchmen, some of whom were Scots Episcopalians, who led the attempts to adapt his theories into other branches of natural philosophy and medicine. Newton always firmly aligned himself with the Protestant succession, and took an active part in the resistance of Cambridge University to the attempts of James II to force Catholic officers upon it, but when it came to scientific matters he seems to have had no prejudice against those of different political views. One of the earliest of the Scots Episcopalians was Archibald Pitcairne, who applied Newton’s ideas in his inaugural lecture at Leiden in 1692. The mathematician and astronomer David Gregory (FRS 1692) moved from Edinburgh to Oxford in 1691 and was followed three years later by his pupil John Keill (FRS 1700). The group was soon joined by John’s younger brother, James (FRS 1711/12), by John Arbuthnot (FRS 1704), and by John Freind, who learnt some mathematics from Gregory. They had, from 1692, a copy of Newton’s unpublished manuscript, *De natura acidorum*, and, from 1706, the second (Latin) edition of his *Opticks*, from which they could follow his ideas on the attraction between the particles of matter and other adaptations of his mechanics to explain the properties of materials and of chemical processes. John Keill was the first to promulgate these views in their application to physics when he became the deputy to the Professor of Natural Philosophy in 1699. George Cheyne (FRS 1701), another of the Scots Episcopalians, wrote an essay in 1702 in which he called for ‘a *Principia Medicinae Theoreetricae Mathematicae*’. So when Freind followed with his *Emmenologia* he was joining a well-established group. He soon went further when he made a more sustained attempt to reorganize chemistry in Newtonian style in 1704. In *Emmenologia* he had poured scorn on the current state of chemical theory, writing first of ‘The theory of physick, which in many cases may be explained with the same certainty as geometry’, and then saying that ‘many things have polluted this genuine fountain of physick, yet nothing has more thoroughly defiled it, than that vile abuse of chymistry which has for some time crept into the healing art.’ But if it were possible that chemistry ‘were reduced to mechanick reasonings (which we may hope will be done some time or other) there is nothing, which seems to be of more service even in illustrating the theory [of physick].’ It was this gap that he then tried to fill in his second Newtonian book.
The Oxford chair of chemistry has had a chequered history. The first holder, Robert Plot, was succeeded by Edward Hannes, who resigned in 1704. The university had apparently been expecting an endowment of the chair by Elias Ashmole but when this was not forthcoming the chair lapsed. Freind, however, showed that he could now put into practice the improvement of chemistry that he had thought so desirable two years previously. Arthur Charlett, the Master of University College, wrote to Hans Sloane, a Secretary at the Royal Society, on 14 December, 1704, to say that ‘Mr. Freind of Christ Church ... is constituted our Professor of Chemistry’.

The post, which he probably owed to the patronage of Dean Aldrich, was not a salaried one and, indeed, was little more than a licence to teach. In 1704 he gave a course of nine lectures in the Ashmolean Museum in Broad Street (now the Museum of the History of Science) which, it was said, was received ‘with great applause, the novelty and perspicuity of his lectures, attracting and giving the highest satisfaction to a numerous audience’. We cannot know precisely what he said in the lectures because they were not published until 1709, in Latin, with an English edition in 1712, although he claims in his Preface that they were printed ‘just as they were read some years ago’. In the English edition, but not in the original Latin edition, he describes himself as ‘Professor of Chemistry’. He acknowledges his indebtedness to John Keill and he would, in 1704, have had access to Newton’s manuscript De natura acidorum. William Stukeley (FRS 1717/18), the antiquary, believed that Freind’s book was intended to take the place of one that Newton had had in manuscript but had then lost in a fire. Stukeley wrote about this to John Conduitt (FRS 1718), the husband of Newton’s niece and his successor as Master of the Mint, shortly after Newton’s death.

By 1709 Freind could have benefited from the appearance of Newton’s Opticks in 1704, and, in particular, from Samuel Clarke’s Latin translation of it in 1706, which included the new section on chemistry, and on the forces between the particles of matter, that we now know as ‘Query 31’ from its form in the later editions of the Opticks. This first public appearance of a chemical text of Newton’s in 1706, soon after Freind had lectured, may give credibility to the story of the manuscript lost by fire. Keill had meanwhile written two papers on inter-particle attractions that were nominally published in 1708 but were not publicly available until 1710, although Freind no doubt had access to them before his own book was printed. Freind followed Newton’s mechanical principles and his interpretation of the properties of matter as a manifestation of the many different forces of attraction between its particles. Freind tried to reduce all the operations of chemistry to the effects of weaker or stronger forces between the particles. After an introductory lecture, the titles of the remaining eight lectures are calcination, distillation, sublimation, fermentation, digestion, extraction, precipitation, and crystallization. His most spectacular effort was, perhaps, his attempt to explain why gold dissolves in aqua regia but not in aqua fortis, whereas for silver the position is reversed. His explanation was in terms of the sizes of the particles and the strengths of the forces, all reduced to algebraic symbols. Both he and Keill made the important points that the inter-particle forces fall off with distance more rapidly than Newton’s gravitational force—they are strong but of short range—and that they are not gravitational in origin because they depend on the ‘texture and density’ of the particles, whereas gravity is independent of these properties. The Latin (but not the English) edition of Freid’s Praelectiones chymicae is preceded by an enthusiastic dedication to Newton, by then the President of the Royal Society. Freind was duly elected a Fellow on 20 March 1711/12.

The Latin edition was reprinted in Amsterdam in 1710 and at once attracted a critical review from Christian Wolff (FRS 1710), a follower of Leibniz, published anonymously in the Leipzig journal Acta eruditorum. Continental philosophers could not accept Newton’s
Postulated forces ‘acting at a distance’, which they regarded as a retreat from the mechanical models of Descartes and Leibniz into the obscurantism of the ‘occult principles’ of Aristotelian physics. They were not impressed by Newton’s cautious position of defending the effects of such forces without claiming to be able to assign any mechanical cause to them. Still less could they accept the positions of Newton’s followers such as Freind, who wrote in obvious exasperation: ‘Such a principle of attraction they are pleas’d to call a figment; but how such a thing shou’d be a figment, which really exists, is beyond comprehension’.16

These lectures alone might give Freind a claim to be among the ‘moderns’ in the jargon of the time, but then we remember his defence of the ‘ancients’ in the ‘Battle of the Books’, and we shall see that he was always conservative in his attitude to innovations in medical practice. Newton was a ‘modern’, even a revolutionary, in his mathematics and astronomy, but in his views on geometry and in his private practice of chemistry he retained a deep admiration for the ‘wisdom of the ancients’. The first years of the eighteenth century were complicated times, in politics, in religion and in intellectual attitudes generally; those living then cannot be characterized as simply as might be wished.

**Smallpox**

Freind left Oxford soon after delivering his course. Richard Frewin (or Frewen), who had helped Freind in 1704, continued to lecture until 1715, some years before he was elected, in the casual way of the times, as Camden Professor of Ancient History in 1727. Freind had gone to Portugal and Spain as physician to the British forces in the Peninsula under the Earl of Peterborough, who were fighting the French in what became known as the War of the Spanish Succession. Little is known of his medical work there; he wrote to John Keill in 1705 about an epidemic fever: ‘I saw last night a letter from Mr John Freind, the physician, to Mr Keill of X Church giving some account of the fever raging in that place, with the methods he used for remedy … malt and oat beer.’ On 9 September 1706 he wrote to William Cockburn FRS to say that there was again fever and dysentery in the army.20 His spell of duty completed, he went next to Italy before returning to England in 1707. Peterborough’s campaign had not been the great success of Marlborough’s campaign on the Danube at Blenheim, and later in Flanders, and Freind wrote a defence of his chief’s efforts that attracted a lot of notice. The Whigs were the critics so the Tories naturally supported Peterborough.21

On his return he received the degree of MD, by diploma, from Oxford University on 12 June 1707 and set up in medical practice in London. By 1711 Dean Swift reports that he had his own coach and was physician to Mrs Catherine Atterbury and her family.22 On 3 December 1709 he married, at St Anne’s, Westminster, Anne Morice (or Morrice), daughter of William Morice, who had been the Paymaster of Peterborough’s forces in the Peninsula. Their only son, also John, was born in 1715 (figure 1).23 Freind was soon off on his travels again when he went in 1712–13 to Flanders as physician to the army commanded by a fellow Tory, the Duke of Ormonde (or Ormond). A successful medical practitioner needed not only an MD but also the Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians. This college was then dominated by a conservative clique of physicians who had little time for new ideas, so Freind and Richard Mead FRS, another apostle of Newtonian medicine, made their way only slowly into this haven, both finally achieving FRCP in 1716, when Sir Hans Sloane had become President; Freind gave the Harveian Oration in 1720.24 He and Mead became friends, although Mead was a Dissenter and a Whig, and were soon involved in a controversy over the
treatment of smallpox, a great scourge of the time. It was generally agreed that the seat of the disease lay in the stomach, which should be evacuated, but opinions differed on the best treatment. Mead and Freind were in favour of purging the contents of the stomach but others favoured the inducement of vomiting. In 1717 Freind published an edition of and commentary on the first and third books of Hippocrates that dealt with this matter. This edition, dedicated to Richard Frewin, aroused the anger of John Woodward FRS, an advocate of vomiting. He was an irascible man who had been ejected from the Council of the Royal Society in 1710 for refusing to apologize for his behaviour to Sir Hans Sloane during Sloane’s performance of his duties as Secretary. Woodward became better known for his contributions to geology and for his bequest of fossils that formed the foundation of the Sedgwick Museum at Cambridge. He promptly attacked Freind’s claim of the efficacy of purging, thereby unleashing a stream of pamphlets from both sides. The puerile tone of these was exceptional even by the abusive standards of the time, and no attempt is made here to follow their course. The final episode occurred when Mead and Woodward came to blows with their swords outside Gresham College.

Meanwhile a more serious discussion had started on the merits of inoculating the disease as a preventive measure. This practice was known in the East, and the first report reached the Royal Society from Constantinople in 1714 in a letter from a foreign Fellow, Emanuele Timone, to be followed by a second communication a little later from Jacobus Pylarinus. Charles Maitland, physician to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the wife of the former British Ambassador in Constantinople, introduced the practice into Britain when he inoculated her daughter in April 1721; he had inoculated her son in Constantinople in 1717. On 9 August 1721 a test was made on six prisoners, three male, three female, in Newgate Prison; all survived. Hans Sloane attended the test and became a strong advocate of inoculation although he recognized that it was not without its dangers. It was probably he who persuaded Princess Caroline to have her two daughters inoculated in April 1722. James Jurin, when Secretary of the Royal Society, conducted an extensive trial by correspondence with doctors up and down the country; his statistics convinced many that the protection provided outweighed the risks. There was, however, considerable opposition to the procedure, both on the grounds of its risks and on the ethical grounds, medical and religious, of deliberating infecting a healthy patient with a disease that was known often to be fatal. Freind was generally conservative in his clinical practice, as noted in his remedy for the fever in the army in the Peninsula and in a remark of his sister-in-law after his death that the last prescription that he gave her was the ‘use of her horse’. He was therefore against the practice of inoculation. Dr William Wagstaffe FRS publicly involved him in the dispute, but Dr John Arbuthnot used his
mathematical skills to confound Wagstaffe with statistics. In his History of physick, written soon after the arguments were at their height, Freind follows some criticism of John of Gaddesden, a fourteenth-century physician, with the ironic comment that he would ‘have been at the head of the Inoculators’. Dr Walter Harris wrote to Dr William Stukeley, after Freind’s death, to say that ‘he will ridicule the inoculators no more in his noble histories.’ The practice of inoculation ceased 80 years later when Jenner found that vaccination with cowpox was as effective a preventive, and much safer.

The Atterbury Plot

At the opening of the eighteenth century, politics in Britain was dominated by the question of the succession to the throne and the potential conflict between the Catholic Stuarts and the mainly Protestant country. William of Orange and his wife Mary were generally accepted because she was the Protestant daughter of James II, who had fled from London in 1688. When first Mary and then William died there was little opposition to the succession of Mary’s younger sister, Anne, because she was also a Stuart. But when Anne died without issue in 1714 there was no available Protestant Stuart, and her successor, George, the Elector of Hanover, was not acceptable to many of those High Church Protestants who were also loyal to the house of Stuart, both in England and, more widely, in Scotland. At once Tory plots were underway to bring over James III, or the ‘Old Pretender’, as the Hanoverian party called him; he was the only son of James II and a half-brother of Mary and Anne. He was, however, a committed Catholic, and so ineligible by law to inherit the throne. Protestants such as Atterbury and Freind convinced themselves that the rights and privileges of the Church of England would be safer under a Catholic Stuart than under a Protestant Hanoverian.

The first plot, in 1715, led to an invasion of Scotland and then of England by Catholic Continental forces, but was defeated in England at Preston in Lancashire, and soon afterwards in Scotland. Freind may have played a small part in this episode: his name was mentioned in one of the many pamphlets circulating at the time and his sympathies certainly lay with James, whom he had probably met on his Continental travels. He was then laying the foundation of his successful medical practice and his first overt political act was his election in 1722 as one of the two Members of Parliament for the small Tory borough of Launceston in Cornwall, then effectively controlled by Lord Landsdowne, who had been implicated in the 1715 plot. Freind and his fellow Tory got 43 votes each from the freemen of the borough, and their Whig opponents 25.

A further effort had been made to bring back James in 1719 led by the Duke of Ormonde, who had fled to France in 1715, but it never came close to success. Then in 1721 a rising was planned to coincide with the general election of 1722, but the agents of the Whig government of the day soon penetrated the conspirators’ foreign correspondence. This was written, either in cipher or in plain, with the conspirators’ names disguised by pseudonyms. The principal plotter was Francis Atterbury, Freind’s former tutor at Christ Church, now Dean of Westminster and Bishop of Rochester, and so a member of the House of Lords. He had become related to Freind by marriage when Atterbury’s daughter Mary had married William Morice, High Bailiff of Westminster and brother of Freind’s wife, Anne (see figure 1). This time Freind was certainly involved in the plot; he went under the pseudonym of ‘Clinton’, and Atterbury was ‘Illington’. This conspiracy also never had any chance of success but it was exploited by Robert Walpole, the First Lord of the Treasury or Prime Minster, to hammer his Tory political opponents. Freind’s part is obscure; James Stuart wrote from Rome to Lord Strafford on 30 March 1722 to say:
I think that you have done very well to let Dr. Freind into the secret of our present affairs. He is a most worthy man and out of good will to me would have quitted both his practice and his country to have attended me if I would have allowed him, which is sufficient proof of his sincere attachment to me and the cause.  

A letter to James Stuart from the Earl of Mar, who was managing rather incompetently the operations in Paris, put matters differently when he complained: ‘God have mercy on an undertaking of this kind with Dr. John Freind at the head of it.’ A letter to Freind that was found aboard a Spanish ship suggested that he was trying to raise Irish troops, but his main activities probably centred on the plans to get money to James in Rome to be used to finance the foreign troops who were to support risings in England and Scotland. Freind was a dining companion and client of Alderman John Barber, a London printer with Jacobite sympathies. In 1722 he advised Barber to go to Naples and Rome for his health, but the real purpose of the journey was to carry money, believed to be £50,000, to James. The printer was arrested on his return but released without charge. An anonymous writer in the Gentleman’s Magazine, shortly after Barber’s death, suggested that Freind’s correspondence with Rome was innocuous; he was only advising on the treatment of a sick child, but this is implausible.

Although the Government’s agents had penetrated the conspiracy they had not yet identified the men behind the pseudonyms with enough certainty to bring them to trial. Walpole therefore proceeded against Atterbury by means of a bill of attainder. This was a bill put before both Houses of Parliament that prescribed the ‘pains and penalties’ that could be inflicted on Atterbury. It was an unpopular way of evading the need to produce evidence at a trial and was never to be used again after this bill. Atterbury was arrested on 24 August 1722, three weeks after he had officiated as Dean of Westminster at the state funeral of the Duke of Marlborough. He was committed to the Tower of London, and an attempt in September by his son-in-law, William Morice, to have him released by a writ of habeas corpus failed although the act was still in force; Walpole took the precaution of suspending it as soon as Parliament met in October. Throughout the autumn and winter Walpole continued to collect the evidence he needed to proceed against Atterbury and against the Rev. George Kelly, his assistant and the manager of the foreign correspondence. He suffered a setback when a key witness, the Rev. Philip Neyno, was drowned when escaping from arrest. Searches of Atterbury’s homes at Westminster and Bromley yielded nothing in his handwriting and no letters that named him explicitly. So in January 1722/23 Walpole returned to the House of Commons to set up a Select Committee. Freind spoke against the bill of attainder in the debate on the Committee’s report, but was himself arrested two days later, after a nurse for Charles Edward Stuart, the young son of James, had admitted on her return to England that Freind had sent letters to James. On 15 March Freind was sent to the Tower, where he joined Atterbury and Charles Boyle, now the Earl of Orrery, whom he had supported in the ‘Battle of the Books’ 30 years previously, and who had also been implicated in the plot. The House of Commons was always jealous in guarding its privileges and Walpole was compelled to come back to the House to explain that Freind had been arrested not for speaking in Atterbury’s favour but for the offence of treason. The bills against Atterbury and Kelly were passed by the Commons by 285 to 152, and by the Lords by 83 to 43. Both men were returned to the Tower from which Kelly eventually made his escape, to take part in the last and most dangerous of the Jacobite risings, that of Charles Edward Stuart in 1745. Atterbury was condemned to banishment and left the country for France on 18 June 1723. On his way out of the Tower, Atterbury was allowed to talk for a quarter of an hour with Freind, who was still confined there.
Freind was in the Tower for three months. It was during this time that he started work on the book by which he is, perhaps, most widely remembered, his two-volume *History of physick*. He was released three days after Atterbury had sailed for France, in response to the pleas of Richard Mead and others. Newton was then the President of the Royal Society but he made no move to censure Freind or to eject him from the Society. During Freind’s imprisonment Mead had looked after his medical practice and handed over the fees to him on his release. It was even rumoured that Mead, who was Walpole’s physician, had refused to treat the Minister until Freind was released. There was, however, some surprise when Freind then treated the family of Princess Caroline, and was appointed her principal physician when she became Queen on the succession of her husband as George II in 1727. Freind then retired from Parliament and severed his connection with the Jacobites. Atterbury was to write later, ‘… for I dare say, notwithstanding his position at court, he died of the same political opinions as I left him’. At court, it was said, ‘he tried to get a bishoprick for his brother Bob’.

The Royal Society did not escape unscathed; Alban Thomas, the Clerk and Librarian, was implicated in the plot and had to go into hiding. He was a graduate of Jesus College, Oxford, who had been the Librarian of the Ashmolean Museum, and so was probably known to Freind. The Society declared that he had vacated his post and eventually appointed Francis Hauksbee junior, the nephew of Newton’s demonstrator, to the job. Thomas acquired an MD from Aberdeen University and ended his days as a country doctor in his native Wales.

Freind’s practice continued to flourish and he had resumed his seat in the House of Commons on his release from the Tower. As the only Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians who was also a Member of Parliament it fell to him to propose a motion for the restraint of the sale of spirituous liquors. It can have had little effect on public behaviour, to judge from the later history of the eighteenth century. His relations with Mead cooled, possibly because Freind, who seems to have become more arrogant as his reputation increased and his practice flourished, may have claimed as his own some of the treatments that Mead had introduced. They were, however, to act together again after Newton’s death on 20 March 1726/27. The Council asked Sir Hans Sloane to be the President of the Royal Society on 29 March but the formal election in the following November was contested. Freind and Mead backed Martin Folkes against Sloane, but their candidate lost, although he was to follow Sloane in the post 14 years later.

Voltaire

The death of Queen Anne in 1714, and the resulting Hanoverian succession, marked a drastic change in British politics; the Tories were out and the Whigs came in. Those who had been responsible for the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht the previous year were thought to have acted treasonably; the Duke of Ormonde fled to France, where he joined James Stuart’s court, and the Tory peer Viscount Bolingbroke followed him but only to live quietly at La Source near Orléans and to marry a French wife. There Voltaire met him in 1722, and heard for the first time of the innovations in philosophy of Locke and Newton. A few years later, Voltaire, whose original name had been Arouet, came into conflict in Paris with a young nobleman who had derided his pretensions and his newly assumed name. Voltaire, being a commoner, came off the worse in this dispute and was exiled to England in May 1726, where he lived until October 1728. He soon learnt English and made himself at home in the literary, intellectual and social scene of London. Bolingbroke had been pardoned in 1723 (Freind had spoken in Parliament in his favour) and returned to his estate near Uxbridge in 1725, although he never
again took a significant part in politics. It was probably through Bolingbroke and Peterborough that Freind first met Voltaire and they soon had other friends in common, such as Dean Jonathan Swift (whose *Gulliver’s Travels* was published while Voltaire was in London), the playwright John Gay, the poet Alexander Pope, and the mathematician, physician and wit John Arbuthnot. Voltaire never met Newton. In 1725 Bolingbroke had introduced his acquaintance, the abbé Alari, to Newton, but he never did the same for Voltaire, possibly because Newton was by then no longer fit to receive strangers. It is commonly said that Voltaire attended Newton’s funeral although the only evidence is some far from explicit statements in Voltaire’s book, *Lettres sur les anglais*. 44 In this, the ‘first major work of the French Enlightenment’ 45, he gave an account of Newton’s and Locke’s philosophy. Voltaire’s principal contact with Newton’s closest circle came with his meeting John Conduitt after Newton’s death, possibly with an introduction from Fontenelle, the Permanent Secretary of the Paris Academy, who had asked Conduitt for materials to help him with his *éloge* for the Academy of which Newton had been a Foreign Associate since 1699. It was from Newton’s niece, Catherine Conduitt, that Voltaire then heard the story of Newton and the apple, which he duly incorporated into the 15th of his *Lettres sur les anglais*.

The face-saving reason for Voltaire’s visit to England was to raise money to publish by subscription his *La Henriade*, an epic poem on the life of Henri IV, which, like most of Voltaire’s writings, would not have passed the censor in France, although he had tried with an unsatisfactory version printed at Rouen some years previously, under the title of *La Ligue*. 46 In England he enrolled a fine list of ‘the great and the good’, which was headed by ‘Lord Peterborow’ (down for 20 copies, at 3 guineas a time) and included Viscount Bolingbroke (also 20 copies), Dean Jonathan Swift, John Conduitt, the Earl of Macclesfield FRS, Alderman John Barber, Dr Richard Mead, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Lord Hervey, Sir Robert Walpole (6 copies), John Brinsden (Bolingbroke’s secretary, with whom Voltaire lodged for a time) and Charlotte Clayton (see below). 47 There are several notable absences from this list, such as Alexander Pope, with whom Voltaire had quarrelled, Samuel Clarke, with whom he had enjoyed many philosophical and theological discussions, Henry Pemberton FRS, the editor of the third edition of Newton’s *Principia*, Hans Sloane, to whom Voltaire had presented a copy, 48 and John Freind. The absence of the last may be explained by the onset of Freind’s ill-health towards the end of 1727. In January 1727/28 he made his will, whose provisions he confirmed in May. 49 The most immediate account of his death in July is in a letter from Voltaire to Dr Richard Towne, who had undertaken to make an English translation of *La Henriade*. In a letter spread over several days Voltaire wrote:

> As I am talking to you about physic, I must acquaint you that Dr Freind is a dying for having out physicd himself: he took the other day ten ounces of herapicra at once, with some sene, and since that noble experiment he lies speechless. This must be looked on as selfmurther. I hope that you do not deal with yourself so violently. I wo you take a better care of yr health. I hear this minute doctor Freind is dead, leaving behind an ample fortune and a great reputation which nothing can lessen but his late sickness; he was the only patient that he treated so ill. 50

He died on 28 July 1728, at the age of 52 years. The cause of death is not clear. His sister-in-law, Mary Morice, wrote to her father in France to say that he ‘was thought to be in a fair way to recovery last Thursday; but there came a sudden ill turn the night following and he breathed his last on Friday about three in the afternoon’. 31 Walter Harris wrote that he ‘went off on Friday last of a fever; but an imposthume [abscess] in the thorax last of all broke and suffocated him’. 32
There is a monument to him in the south aisle of Westminster Abbey, with a long and glowing inscription written by his elder brother Robert. He was buried at St Mary’s, Hitcham, a small village in Buckinghamshire, not far from Burnham. He had bought the Lordship of the Manor of Hitcham from his brother William, after William had got into financial trouble some years earlier. He lived there in the manor house when he was not in London. It was burnt down later in the eighteenth century and all that now remains is the fine brick wall that had surrounded the house and garden, and the gateway into the park. His wife and young son may have been there most of the time because it seems that there was some estrangement between the doctor and his wife, who lived until 1737. Thomas Hearne, whose gossip is generally accurate if often malicious, had known Freind from the time of his Oxford lectures and had originally held him in esteem, but now he wrote in his diary:

Dr John Freind’s character since his death dwindles much. It appears that he was not only proud and covetous & inconstant in his principles, but likewise very lewd, insomuch that, separating himself from his own wife (w ch, it seems, he hath done for 11 or 12 years) he kept company with other women, particularly one M’s Mrs Chetwynd (a married woman, whose husband is still living) who was with him on his death bed, and tho’ he sent for his wife, yet he would take nothing from her hands, but all physick and everything else from the hands of Mrs Chetwynd. This course made him die in much worse circumstances than was otherwise expected, he being not so rich as had been reported.

There were several families of the name of Chetwynd but it does not seem possible to decide who this ‘Mrs Chetwynd’ was. There is, however, independent evidence from Freind’s will that there was some estrangement between him and his wife. He left to his wife only the interest on £4000, to which she was entitled under the marriage settlement of 25 November 1709, although he may have known that a pension from Queen Caroline would also be forthcoming. His three executors were his brother Robert, Mr John Laws and Captain Mordaunt Cracherode, and he left £50 to each of these. His will continues: ‘All household goods, plate, linen, books and pictures (except testator’s own portrait, those of his wife and son, the Bishop of Rochester and his son, and of brother Robert, which are in the house in town) are to be sold and the money realized for the use of son John.’ (John was then 13 years old and at Westminster School.) After the neutral tone of these bequests he suddenly becomes more enthusiastic: ‘I give[?] the same sum of fifty pounds to my very good (xxxxxxxx ) and much honoured friend Mrs C. Clayton and do in a particular manner recommend my son to her friendsshipp of which I have had the happiness to have had so great a share x x x x x x x.’ The words missing have been so thoroughly erased and replaced with x’s that it is impossible now to know what was originally written there. At the end of the will is a sentence, apparently added as an afterthought: ‘I leave to my good friend Mrs Clayton my picture a half length drawn by Mr Dahl.’ Charlotte Clayton was a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Caroline, and often acted as her secretary. She was married to William Clayton, MP for Westminster, later Viscount Sundon, and a friend of Samuel Clarke and of Voltaire. Presumably Freind had met her through his duties as the royal physician. Lord Hervey knew her well; he had married the beautiful Mary Leppel, who had been one of Caroline’s maids-in-waiting and in whose praise Voltaire had written his first verses in English. Hervey wrote of Charlotte Clayton: ‘I knew her intimately, and think that she really had a warm, honest, noble, benevolent, friendly heart.’ It is unlikely that Mrs Clayton was Hearne’s ‘Mrs Chetwynd’, but the wording of the will suggests that Freind’s feelings towards her were warmer than those towards his wife. He further charges his executors to pass the estate to his son when he reaches 21 years of age but meanwhile to see ‘that he may be bredd to a sound profession or at least to some business or...
employment’. The will specifies that if his son dies without heirs then £1000 is to go to the
Dean and Chapter of Christ Church to found an anatomy lectureship there ‘in the manner I
have mentioned in the paper annexed’. (The paper is not with the will; Christ Church knows
nothing of it and it is presumably now lost.) This clause makes it necessary to enquire further
into his son’s career. He remained at Westminster until he was 16 years old, in June 1731,
when a place was found for him at Christ Church, by mandate of Queen Caroline ‘out of
respect for his father’s memory’. A few days earlier he had also been entered on the books of
Lincoln’s Inn, but there is no evidence that he ever took a degree at Oxford or ever qualified
as a barrister at Lincoln’s Inn. Little is known of John’s career but it seems not to have been
a particularly reputable one. He died young on 8 April 1750, at the age of 34 or 35 years. Most
reference works say that he died unmarried, which, if so, would have settled the question of
any legitimate heirs, but this was not the case. He was unmarried at the age of 31 years, when
there was a case in Chancery, Freind v. Freind (10 April 1746), in which Robert Freind, as a
trustee for the estate at Hitcham, had to prevent John from cutting down timber or otherwise
diminishing the value of the estate, to meet his own, possibly extravagant, expenses. It was
maybe this crisis that induced Robert to lend him £300. At some time between the date of
the court case and his death four years later he married Elizabeth, the daughter of his father’s
executor, now Lt.-Col. Cracherode. This is clear from his own will of 24 January 1749/50, by
which Elizabeth inherited all possessions except those that should stay with the property and
pass to the heir, his cousin William, the son of Robert, and later Dean of Canterbury (see
figure 1). It was therefore time to activate the clause in his father’s will and pass £1000 to
Christ Church to endow the lectureship in anatomy. But the amount was insufficient for that
purpose and nothing was done until the death in 1755 of Dr Matthew Lee, another Christ
Church man, who left money to build an anatomy lecture theatre, at a cost of about £1200,
and to add enough to Freind’s bequest to endow the lecturership. He had been an admirer of
Freind’s clinical skills. John Parsons, of Westminster and Christ Church (as was required by
the will), became the first Lee’s Reader in 1767. He interpreted his brief widely and lectured
on chemistry also from at least as early as 1776. The building became a chemistry laboratory
after the teaching of anatomy moved to university premises in 1860. It is now part of the
Senior Common Room, after the removal of radioactive contamination in the twentieth
century, the results of the experiments of A. S. Russell. The fruits of John Freind’s and
Matthew Lee’s endowments live on, not only in the College Readership in Chemistry at
Christ Church but in three university posts, the Dr Lee’s Professorships in Anatomy,
Chemistry and Experimental Philosophy.

Freind’s collected works were published in a fine quarto volume in 1733, after the History of physick had been translated into Latin by Dr John Wigan, who also edited the whole book.
This expensive enterprise was licensed for 14 years to the printers, but their copyright was
probably valueless after the appearance of another version printed in Paris two years later.
The disposition of the portrait or portraits mentioned in Freind’s will (for it is not clear from
the wording whether there was one or two) is something of a mystery. There are now four
versions known, all the same picture of Freind seated at a desk with a piece of paper before
him and a bust of Hippocrates on a stand beside him. One was presented to the Royal College
of Physicians by the bequest of Matthew Lee in 1755; a second one came to them in 1887
from Dr Owen Rees FRS. Christ Church has one portrait, of which the first mention in the
college records is in 1770, and there is one in the Bodleian Library, given in 1787 by John
Smyth of New College. William Freind, the Dean of Canterbury, had left one version to his
son Robert, in his will of 1 November 1766. All are versions of the same picture and all are
of the same size; they are clearly the portrait by Michael Dahl that George Vertue engraved in 1730, two years after Freind’s death. The paintings differ only in the presence or absence of his name, which may have been added later. The Royal Society and the National Portrait Gallery have copies of the engraving (figure 2). This differs from the paintings only in that there is some illegible writing on the piece of paper in front of the sitter. But which of the oil paintings is the original, and which are copies, and which is the portrait left to Mrs Clayton, seems now to be impossible to decide.

Voltaire returned to France a few months after the death of John Freind senior. He was by then convinced of the merits of English institutions and practices. Perhaps the first evidence in print of his conversion to Newtonian philosophy occurred in 1730 when, in revising La
Henriade, he changed a reference to the vortices of Descartes to one on Newtonian attraction.\(^5^9\)

His serious study of natural philosophy began after his association with Émilie, marquise Du Châtelet, in 1733 and his friendship with Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis. This mathematician had been in London while Voltaire was there, and was elected to the Fellowship of the Royal Society in June 1728, but the two never met then. Voltaire’s first written source of instruction was Pemberton’s *A view of Sir Isaac Newton’s philosophy*, published while he was in London. His own *Elements of Sir Isaac Newton’s philosophy* appeared in 1738, in French in Amsterdam and in English in London. He wrote, in English, to his old friend Claude Thieriot (or Thiriot) to say, ‘After all I am the first in France to sort out all these matters, and I dare say, the first in Europe, since S’Gravesande writes only for mathematicians and Pemberton often obscures Newton’s meaning’.\(^6^0\) However, he was not satisfied with this version of the book and immediately began collecting materials for a new edition. Letters went from Cirey, where he was living with Émilie Du Châtelet, to Paris, asking for Keill’s *Introductio ad veram physicam* and for other books: ‘The ’s Gravesande, 2 volumes in quarto, is what I need most urgently. I cannot live without this Sgravesande and without Desaguliers. They are essential.’\(^6^1\) The result was a new edition in 1741 with an extra chapter on attractive forces between small particles.\(^6^2\) He did not, however, make any use of, or possibly even know of, Freind’s lectures of 1709, although his mathematical mentor, Maupertuis, certainly did; he mentions both Keill and Freind in his paper ‘Sur les loix d’attraction’.\(^6^3\) Voltaire seemed to place his acquaintances into distinct categories, and Freind was, in his eyes, a physician and not a Newtonian philosopher. Similarly, when he went to Leiden he wrote to Thieriot\(^6^4\) to say, ‘I am come to Leyde to consult Borhave about my health and Gravesande about Neuton’s philosophy’, only to find three months later that Boerhaave had also written extensively on chemistry and that he had to seek in Paris a copy of his *Elementa chemiae* that he could have bought easily in Leiden. In his library at Ferney after his death there were copies only of Freind’s *History of physick*, in a French translation, and of his defence of Peterborough’s conduct of the war in Spain.\(^6^5\) From the latter Voltaire had adopted Freind’s position in his account of the war in his *Siècle de Louis XIV*.\(^6^6\) He had, however, not forgotten Freind; in 1766 his old companion Thieriot was reminding him of Freind’s typically conservative recommendation that ‘green tea is a gentle diaphoretick and admirable diluter’.\(^6^7\)

In 1743 his Newtonian credentials secured Voltaire election to the Fellowship of the Royal Society, but after Émilie’s sudden death in childbirth in 1749 his enthusiasm for natural philosophy waned. He then published many of his polemical pieces in the form of *contes philosophiques* in which a narrative or dramatic form was often used to sweeten a serious argument, as, for example, in *Candide*. It is, however, remarkable that, nearly 50 years after Freind’s death, Voltaire made him and his ne’er-do-well son the principal characters in a theological discourse, *L’Histoire de Jenni*.\(^6^8\) Throughout his life Voltaire had argued against the theology and what he saw as the tyranny of the Catholic Church in France, but now he was also under fire from the other side as Diderot, Holbach and other atheists in Paris reproached him for his lack of support for their position. The *Histoire de Jenni* is his attempt to defend the middle road of his belief in deism, without revealed religion, a belief that he had probably held since his days in England. The principal characters in this *conte* are John Freind and his son, the ‘Jenni’ of the title. In the English version of this work the anonymous translator writes: ‘I cannot pretend to say how the author who had resided in England, should have forgot our proper names. As the name James, however, approaches nearest to the original the translator has adopted it.’ Voltaire often mangled foreign names, generally choosing to follow pronunciation rather than correct spelling (for example, ‘Ren’ for Christopher Wren), and it
seems likely that he was aiming here for Johnny as the name of Freind’s son. The title page ascribes the work to an obviously fictitious ‘M. Sherloc’, a name possibly borrowed from that of Thomas Sherlock, a Bishop of Bangor in Voltaire’s time in England, and later Bishop of London, although it seems that Voltaire had Lord Hervey in mind as his supposed narrator.69 The conte opens in a frivolous way at the end of Peterborough’s campaign. Freind is described as the ‘Chaplain to our army’, and later as a Member of Parliament. Voltaire acknowledges that no one could hold both these two posts but dismisses the problem by saying ‘that he is the only person who has been permitted to exercise these incompatible functions’. There are several touches that reveal his awareness of English affairs, such as that Locke ‘re-established the coinage of England’, and ‘These disputes of Ephesus do not concern us and the Royal Society never meddles with them’. A more surprising invention is the statement that ‘I was informed that Dr. Freind was of a tolerating spirit, and that he was descended from a daughter of William Penn’. The last assertion cannot be defended but it is worth noting that some Dissenters, and Penn possibly among them, did sympathize with the Jacobites, because Dissenters were also discriminated against by the Established Church in England.

After a light-hearted opening the story concerns the misdeeds of Johnny and the arguments between the deistic Freind and Birton, his son’s atheistic companion. All comes well in the end, with Johnny accepting his father’s arguments and marrying a Miss Primerose, a young heiress educated by Lady Hervey, whom Voltaire clearly remembered with affection from 50 years earlier. Miss Primerose had survived a near-fatal poisoning by Johnny’s former mistress, and the wedding takes place in the house of Dr Mead, who, Voltaire probably recalled, had been an expert on poisons. He had only recently acquired a French edition of Mead’s physical and medical works.65 The whole work, Voltaire’s last in this vein, is not of the standard of Candide. It was dismissed by the English reviewer in the Gentleman’s Magazine as not worthy of the author—‘the dregs of a long life might have been much better employed’—but the reviewer does confirm earlier evidence that Johnny would have been a disappointment to his father, remarking that he was ‘no better than he should be’, and had died young.70

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank for their help Dr Penelope Bulloch at Balliol College, Mrs Joanna Cordon at the Royal Society, Rev. Rosie Hewson, Vicar of St Mary’s, Hitcham, Ms Emma Shepley at the Royal College of Physicians, and Ms Jacqueline Thalmann at Christ Church.

NOTES

1 Until 1752 England conformed to the Julian calendar, which was 11 days behind the reformed Gregorian calendar of Catholic Europe. Lady-Day, 25 March, was the start of the year for formal occasions such as the dating of wills and for election to the Royal Society, although the modern usage of 1 January was commonly used for everyday affairs. The date of John Freind’s birth is not known precisely—dates as late as 1677 are quoted—but it seems most probable that he was born in what we should now call the first months of the year 1676, a period that is recorded as 1675/76. In this paper letters from England are dated according to the Julian style, and those from France according to the Gregorian. All three brothers receive entries in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, vol. 20, pp. 944–949 (Oxford University Press); that on John Freind is by Anita Guerrini.
John Freind: physician, chemist, Jacobite, and friend of Voltaire's

2 W. G. Hiscock, Henry Aldrich of Christ Church, 1648–1710 (printed for Christ Church, 1960).
4 D. Crispinus and J. Freind (eds), Ovid, Metamorphoses (Oxford, 1696).

5 Hiscock, op. cit. (note 2), ch. 6. The episode was satirized by Jonathan Swift in a publication entitled A full and true account of the Battel fought last Friday, between the ancient and modern books in St. James's Library (London, 1710), better known as the Battle of the Books.


7 J. Freind, Enmenologia, ... ad rationes mechanicas exiguntur (London, 1703); English transl. by Thomas Dale (London, 1729).


11 John Keill, Introductio ad veram physicam ... (Oxford, 1702); An introduction to natural philosophy: or, philosophical lectures read in the University of Oxford, Anno Dom. 1700 (London, 1720).

12 [George Cheyne] An essay concerning the improvements in the theory of medicine, p. 27, attached to A new theory of acute and continued fevers (London, 1702) in which he acknowledges Freind’s help. For Cheyne, see A. Guerrini, Obesity and depression in the Enlightenment (Oklahoma University Press, Norman, OK, 2000).

13 Freind, op. cit. (note 7), from the unpaginated Preface.


15 Andrew Kippis, Biographica Britannica: or, the lives of the most eminent persons who have flourished in Great Britain and Ireland (London, 1750), vol. 3, pp. 2024–2044.

16 J. Freind, Praelectiones chymicae, in quibus fere operationes chymicae ad vera principia ... rediguntur ... (London, 1709); reviewed in Phil. Trans. R. Soc. 26, 319–323 (1708); English transl. by ‘J. M.’ [unidentified], Chymical lectures: in which almost all the operations of chymistry are reduced to their true principles and the laws of Nature (London, 1712). There was never a French translation, although the book was plundered by an anonymous writer, believed to be J.-B. Senac, to form Nouveau cours de chimie suivant les principes de Newton et de Sthall (Paris, 1723). Freind’s lectures are discussed by J. R. Partington, History of chemistry (London, 1961), vol. 2, pp. 479–482; by A. Thackray, Atoms and powers: an essay on Newtonian matter-theory and the development of chemistry (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1970),


18 John Keill, ‘In qua leges actiones aliaque physice principia traduntur’, *Phil. Trans. R. Soc.* 26, 97–110 (1708); partial transl. by Harris, *op. cit.* (note 10), and ‘De legibus centripetarum’, *Phil. Trans. R. Soc.* 26, 174–188 (1708). The only paper of Keill’s that Freind acknowledges specifically is ‘Theorematum de Vi Centripetâ, *Philos. Trans.*’, but there seems to be no paper of this title; possibly he intended the second of the two above. This contains the claim (p. 185), quite foreign to the purpose of the paper, that Newton created the calculus before Leibniz. It was this remark that re-ignited the great argument between the two men that was ended only with Leibniz’s death in 1716.


20 Remarks and collections of Thomas Hearne (ed. C. E. Doble and others) (Oxford, 1885–1921), 13 October 1705, vol. 1, p. 55; the second letter, also in Latin, to William Cockburn, was published by Peirce Dod in his *Several cases in physick* … (London, 1746), pp. 51–58.


23 The part of this tree that refers to the Freinds is based on A. J. Jewers, ‘Pedigree of the family of Freind’, *Genealogist* 30, 230–238 (1913–14); 31, 34–44 (1914), and the remainder on other sources now cited in this paper. Several siblings have been omitted. William Morice was the elder brother of Anne Freind, and I do not know that Elizabeth Freind was the elder sister of Anne Cracherode, but it is simplest to show them in these positions.


25 J. Freind (ed.), *Hippocratis De morbis popularibus, liber primus, & tertius* (London, 1717); *De purgantibus in secunda variolarum confluentium fibre adhibendis epistola* (London, 1719).


27 ‘An account, or history, of the procuring of the small pox by incision; or inoculation. As it has for some time been practised at Constantinople. Being an extract from a letter from Emanuel Timonius … dated at Constantinople, December, 1713, communicated to the Royal Society by John Woodward’, *Phil. Trans. R. Soc.* 29, 72–82 (1714–16); J. Pylarinus, ‘Nova & tuta variolas excitandi per transplantationem methodus, nuper inventa & in usum tracta’, *Phil. Trans. R. Soc.* 29, 393–399 (1716).

James Jurin, *An account of the success of inoculating the small pox in Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1724). Volume 23 of the Royal Society’s Classified Papers, 1660–1740, contains much information on the inoculations performed by Claude Amyand (FRS 1716), Princess Caroline’s physician, and others, and about 150 letters to and from Jurin, some of which are printed in *Phil. Trans. R. Soc.* 32, 35–49, 49–52 (1722); 191–196 (1722); 209–212, 213–224, 225–227 (1722); 262–266, 267–269 (1723).

William Wagstaffe, *A letter to Dr. Freind shewing the danger and uncertainty of inoculating the small pox* (London, 1722); S. Brady, *Some remarks on Dr. Wagstaffe’s letter and Mr. Massey’s sermon against inoculating the small-pox* . . . (London, 1722); [Charles Maitland], *Mr. Maitland’s account of inoculating the small pox vindicated from Dr. Wagstaffe’s misrepresentation of that practice; with some remarks on Mr. Massey’s sermon* (London, 1722); Edmund Massey, *A sermon against the dangerous and sinful practice of inoculation, preach’d at St. Andrew’s, Holborn, on Sunday July the 8th, 1722* (London, 1722); Miller, op. cit. (note 28), p. 42.


Guerrini, op. cit. (note 1), p. 945.


Nichols, op. cit. (note 32), vol. 5, p. 100.


Hearne, op. cit. (note 20), 8 December 1727, vol. 9, p. 379.


44 Voltaire, *Lettres sur les anglais*. This book was started in 1728, possibly written partly in English but finished in French in 1733, translated into English by the journalist John Lockwood as *Letters concerning the English nation*, and published in London in English in 1733 and in French in 1734. An additional chapter was added and it then appeared as *Lettres philosophiques* in 1734, apparently from Amsterdam but in reality from Rouen. A recent Voltaire scholar has summarized the evidence of his attendance at Newton’s funeral by saying that the ceremonies were ‘obéqués auxquelles Voltaire a peut-être lui-même assisté’, W. H. Barber, ‘Voltaire et Newton’, *SVEC* (op. cit., note 43), vol. 179, pp. 193–202 (1979).


47 Voltaire, *La Henriade* (London, 1728). The dedication is to Queen Caroline.


49 Will of John Freind, National Archives, Kew, PROB 11.623, quires 235–236.


51 Pope wrote a quatrain that has often been held to refer to Robert’s long tribute to his brother. The modern editors of Pope’s works agree with the ascription to Pope but doubt whether it is intended to describe Robert’s tribute; it is, however, worth quoting:

Friend! For your epitaphs I’m griev’d,
Where still so much is said,
One half will never be believ’d,
The other never read.


52 His tomb in the chancel is covered by a fine slab of black stone inscribed: H[ic] I[acel]/JOHANNES FREIND MD/Serenissimae Reginae CAROLINAE/Archiatrus:/Et hujus Manerij/Dominus/Obijt 26to Julij 1728/Aet. 52


54 Laws and Cracherode may have been colleagues from Freind’s military service. Cracherode (who became his brother-in-law by marriage) served as a subaltern in Spain at the same time as Freind. His first name, Mordaunt, was also the family name of the Earls of Peterborough but there seems to be no connection between the two families. Cracherode was a Captain when Freind died, but he rose to be a Lieutenant-Colonel of marines. He served aboard the *Centurion* on Anson’s voyage around the world in 1740–44, but left the expedition at Canton in December 1742, shortly before the capture of the Spanish galleon, the *Covadonga*. He seems, however, to have profited from the prize money that made the fortunes of the officers. C. Dalton, *George the First’s army, 1714–1727* (London, 1910, 1912), vol. 1, p. 49; vol. 2, pp. xvii, 343 and 408–409; R. Walker [and B. Robins], *A voyage round the World in the years MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV by George Anson ...* (London, 1748), pp. 14–15 and 364. Cracherode’s son, the Rev. Clayton Mordaunt Cracherode (FRS 1785), was one of the early trustees and beneficiaries of the British Museum. John Laws is harder to identify, but Henry Watkins, Secretary to the Duke of Ormonde and Judge-Advocate of the army in Flanders, left in his will £50 each ‘to my dear friends Dr. John Freind and Dr. John Arbuthnot, in consideration of their kindness to me and care of me during my frequent illnesses, without fees’. He left also his watch and his horse to John Laws Esq, and this could well be Freind’s executor; see G. A. Aitken, *The life and works of John Arbuthnot* (Oxford, 1892).
John Freind: physician, chemist, Jacobite, and friend of Voltaire’s

55 John, Lord Hervey, Some materials towards memoirs of the reign of George II (ed. R. Sedgwick) (London, 1931), vol. 1, pp. 66–67. Hervey was one of the few who did not praise Freind’s clinical skill, regretting his sister’s ‘deference to Dr. Freind, which ended, as the faith of a votary generally does, in the ruin of herself and the discredit of her idol’, ibid., vol. 3, p. 967.


57 It is assumed that Freind’s bequest came to Christ Church although there seems to be no contemporary mention of it in any surviving document. Of the executors, two at least were still alive, Robert Freind and Mordaunt Cracherode, and they seem to have been conscientious men. In 1796 the antiquary John Gutch noted the appointment of Parsons ‘on the institution of John Freind and Matthew Lee, D. M. and Students of the House’; see his edition of Anthony à Wood, The history and antiquities of the University of Oxford (Oxford, 1796), vol. 2, p. 886. The year 1750 is always thought of at Christ Church as the start of the process of setting up the lectureship; see H. M. Sinclair and A. H. T. Robb-Smith, A short history of anatomical teaching at Oxford (Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 36–39, and P. W. Kent, Some scientists in the life of Christ Church, Oxford (published privately, 2001), pp. 17–21.

58 J. Freind, Opera omnia medica (William Innys, Richard Manby and John Wright, London, 1733; and another printing by Guillaume Cavalier in Paris, 1735). Innys was the printer to the Royal Society, but the copy in the Society’s Library is the Paris printing.


60 Voltaire to N. C. Thieriot, 23 June 1738, Letter D1531 in Besterman, op. cit. (note 50).

61 Voltaire to N. C. Thieriot, 24 October 1738, Letter D1635, and earlier letters to Thieriot and to Bonaventure Moussinot, Letters D1337, 1349, 1420, 1491 and 1588 in Besterman, op. cit. (note 50). The book by Desaguliers is probably his Course of experimental philosophy, the first volume of which was published in 1734, although the second did not appear until 1744.


68 Voltaire, Histoire de Jenni ou le sage et l’athée (Londres [probably Lyon or Genève], 1775); English translation, Young James, or the sage and the atheist (London, 1776).

69 Rousseau, op. cit. (note 43), vol. 1, p. 94. The Irish traveller Martin Sherlock visited Voltaire at Ferney in April 1776 but this is too late for him to have been the source of Voltaire’s invention; M. Sherlock, Letters from an English traveller (London, 1780).

70 [Anon.], Gentleman’s Magazine 46, 317 (1776).