

Sir Peter Freyer

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In the last article I asked who was given a Lakh (100,000) of rupees for treating the bladder stone of the Nawab of Rampur. The answer is Sir Peter Freyer (Figure 1). Peter Freyer was born on 2 July, 1851 in Co Galway, Ireland. He went to the Erasmus Smith School in Galway and won a scholarship to Queen's College, Galway. In 1872 he obtained a first class honours degree in Arts, winning the gold medal. He then studied medicine for another two years, being a resident pupil at Dr Steevens' Hospital in Dublin.

He won another gold medal for his MD in 1874 and came first in the competitive examination for a commission as a medical officer in the Indian Medical Service. He travelled to India to become acting civil surgeon at Azamgarh in 1877.

In India Freyer became proficient in operating on bladder stone with the blind lithotrite and while based at Moradabad attended the Nawab of Rampur, crushing his stone in 1888. In gratitude for his services the Nawab gave Freyer a Lakh (100,000) of rupees, equivalent to £10,000. Accepting this gift caused trouble with Freyer's superiors in the Indian Medical Service and it became clear he was unlikely to progress any further in the service. He therefore returned to England to set up a private practice at 46 Harley Street.

In London Freyer rapidly established a reputation as a surgeon specialising in the treatment of urinary problems. In particular he became renowned for his treatment of stone. In 598 cases of transurethral lithopaxy his mortality was 1.84%, compared with a mortality of 12.5% for open lithotomy that was common at the time. The staff at St Peter's Hospital for Stone were keen to recruit him and he joined them in 1897.

In December 1900 he first performed a total extirpation of the prostate using a transvesical method at St Peter's Hospital. Although he was not the first to do this, he certainly popularised this procedure. In 1912, he published his first 1000 cases in the *British Medical Journal*. Remarkably, he only had a mortality of 3% in his last 200 cases.

He was made a Knight's Commander of the Order of the Bath in 1917. In 1920, he was elected the first president of the section of urology of the Royal Society of Medicine.

Sir Peter Freyer died on 9 September, 1921.

The next article will be about the very famous man whose name is attached to these (Figure 2). Incidentally, 2012 is the centenary year of his death.

Find out more about the history of urology:

<http://www.baus.org.uk/sections/history>.



Figure 1
(Used with the permission of BAUS)

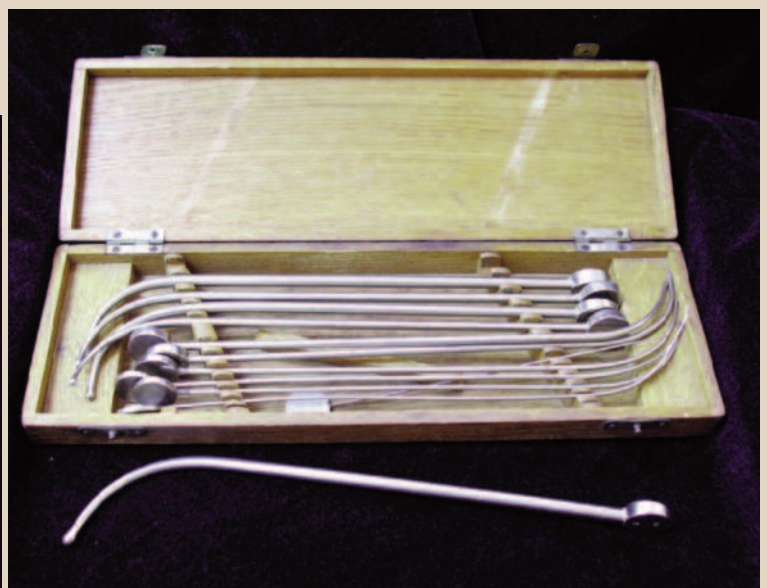


Figure 2