

# Da Elizabeth Blackwell ad oggi, donna e chirurgia: un rapporto conflittuale?

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Era il 1993 quando dalle pagine della rivista americana *Archives of Surgery* Claude Organ, famoso chirurgo, denunciava la necessita' di aprire le porte della chirurgia alle donne vedendo nel genere femminile una risorsa tutto sommato nuova e ancora inesplorata in una disciplina in cui la presenza maschile è numericamente schiacciante.

**Toward a more complete society**

C. H. Organ Jr

*Arch Surg.* 1993;128:617

**Women as leaders in organized surgery  
and surgical education. Has the time come?**

O. Jonasson

*Arch Surg.* 1993;128:618-621

**Women in surgery. An ancient tradition**

J. A. Pastena

*Arch Surg.* 1993;128:622-626

Nel 2005, dodici anni dopo, sulle pagine della stessa rivista un editoriale dal titolo “Le donne in chirurgia” firmato da Jo Buyske, una donna chirurgo di fama internazionale, sottolinea come l’appello lanciato da Organ dopo tanti anni non abbia avuto grande riscontro nella comunità medica.

SPECIAL ARTICLE

## Women in Surgery

*The Same, Yet Different*

*Jo Buyske, MD*

**I**n 1993, Claude Organ, MD, wrote an editorial in this journal on the subject of women in surgery.<sup>1</sup> In that editorial, he expressed the hope and expectation that in the near future there would be no need for such editorials. Over a decade later, I am as surprised and disappointed as Dr Organ to find that there remain “women in surgery” issues of sufficient gravity to warrant discussions, committees, lectures, research, and, yes, editorials.

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L'accesso alle Università  
è stato aperto alle donne  
come docenti e studentesse

1860 Svizzera

1870 Inghilterra

1876 Italia

1880 Francia



Elizabeth Blackwell  
nasce a Bristol (GB)  
il 3 febbraio 1821.....



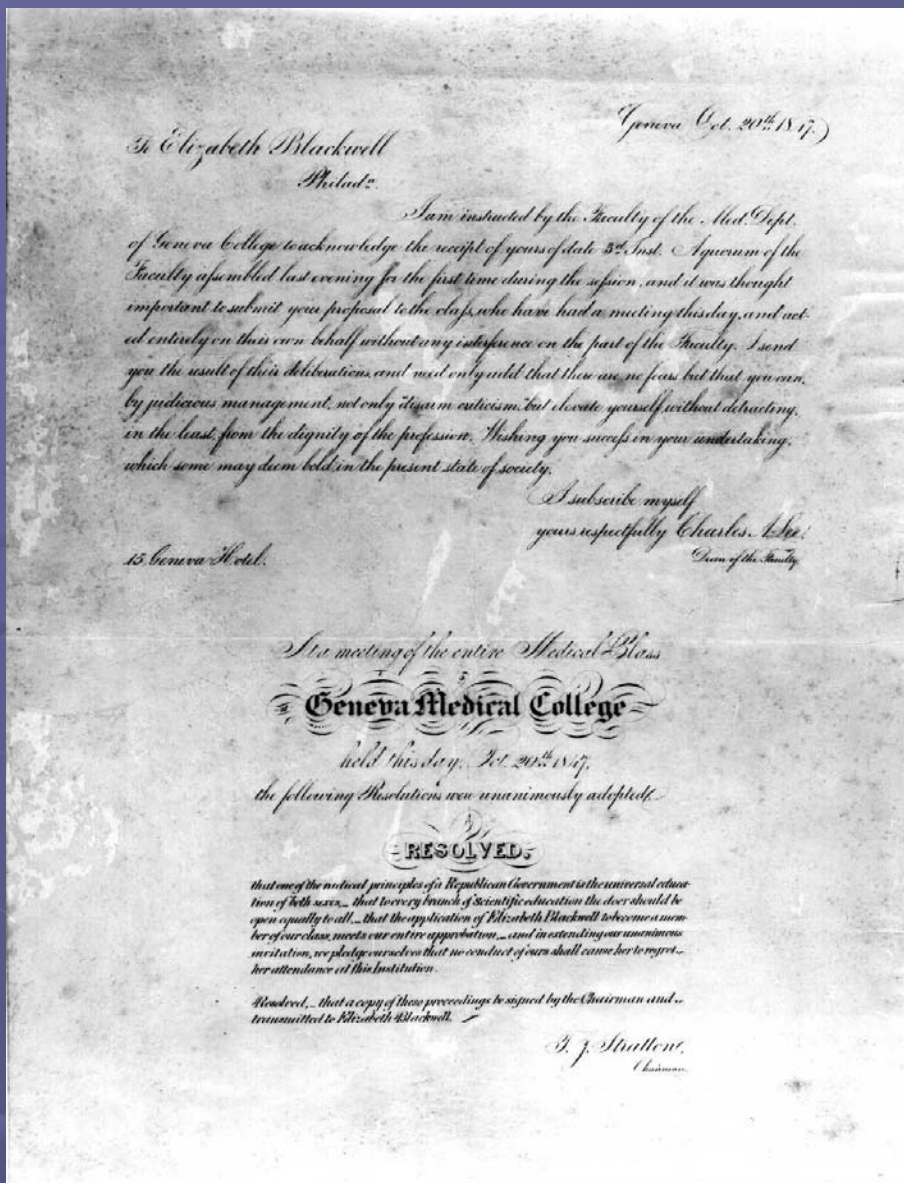
La casa del Dr. Samuel Henry Dickson in Charleston, SC.,  
fondatore del Medical College of South Carolina

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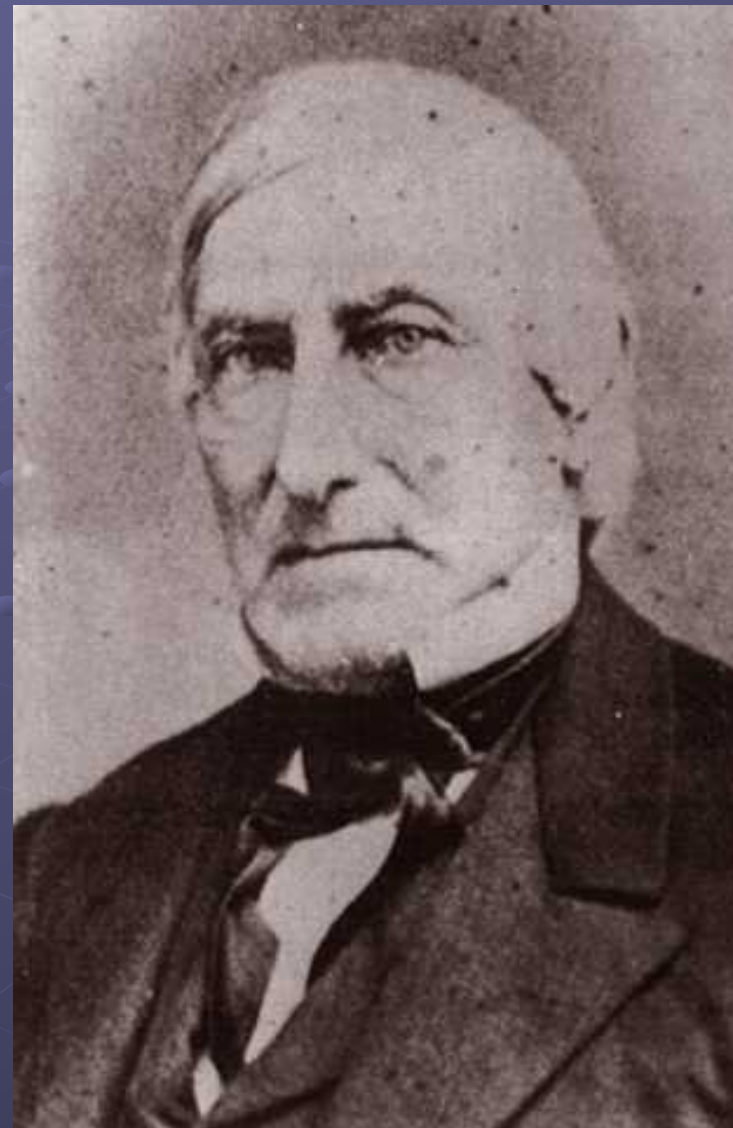
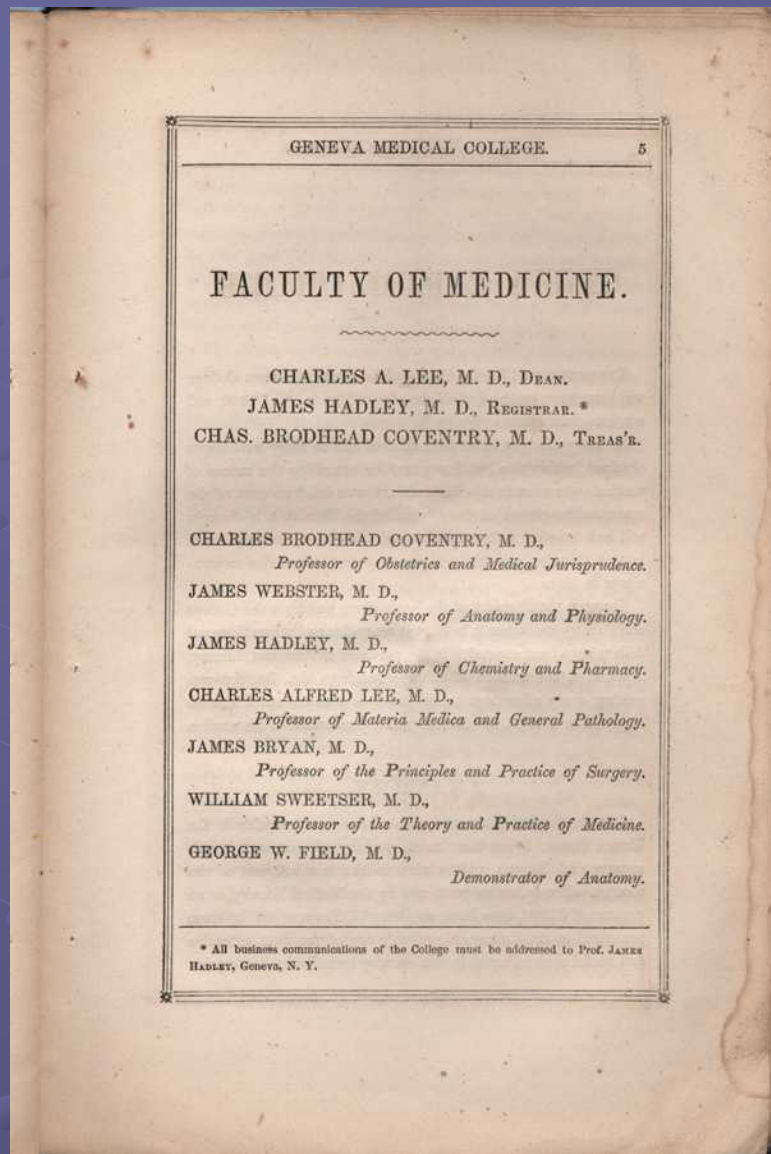


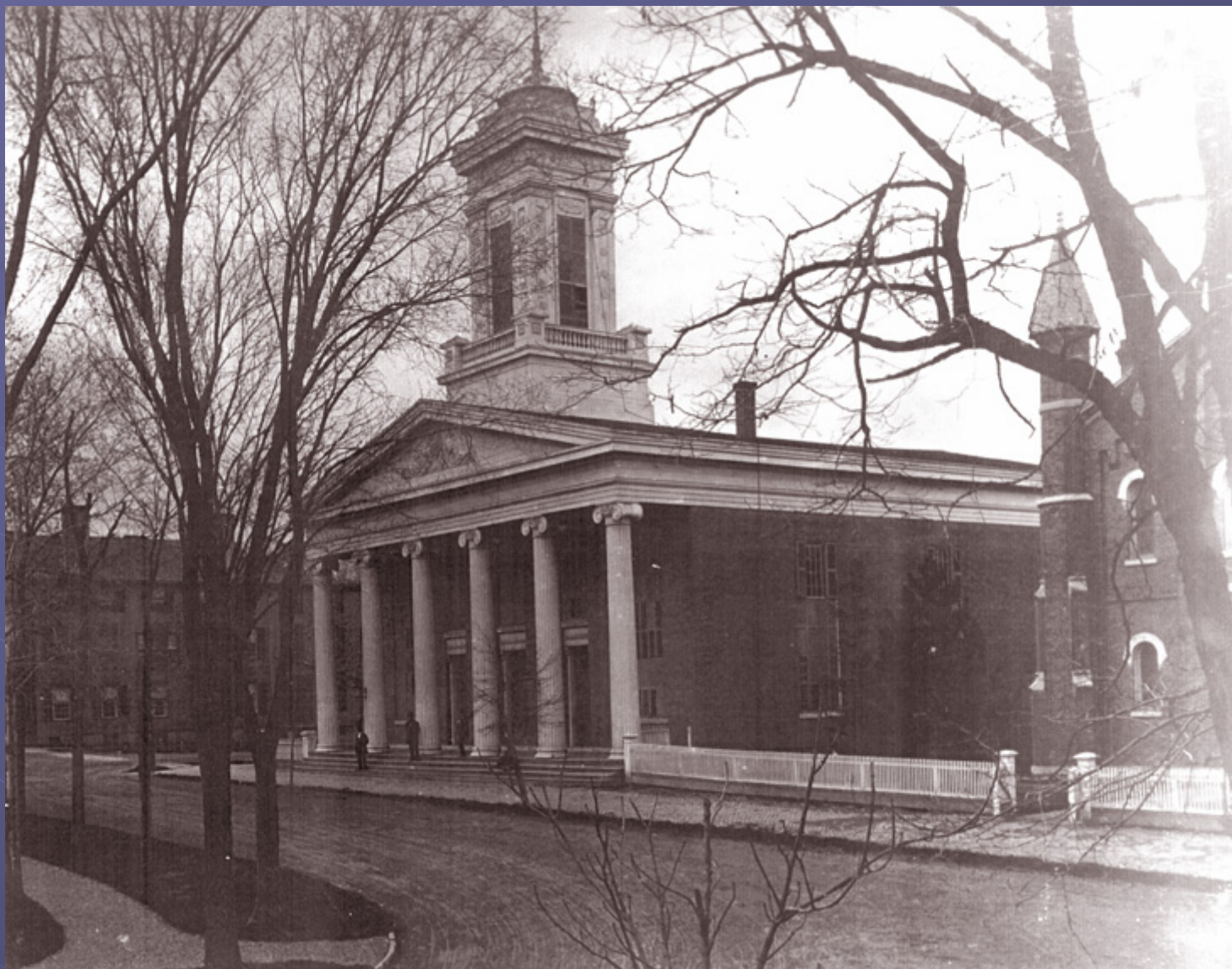
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34. Wed. - 10. 3. *Infilla & nuclea of Shoulder*  
 35. Thurs - 11. 11. - *Thorax. - Pleuritis*  
 36. " - " - 3. - *Brain. - Do - first lady Anthon*  
 37. Fri. - 12. 9. *Do. -*  
 6. 41. *To Rocl. at 10 1/2 a.m. for out. Pat. at 10*  
 38. Wed. - 15. 3. - *Brain. - Do - first in case*  
 39. Tues. - 16. 11. - *Brain & origin of Arteries. - Do*  
 40. " - " - 3. - *Do - See lecture at 11 going away - Do*  
 41. Wed. - 17. 11. - *Heart & Lungs - Do - See at 11 going away*  
 42. " - 18. 3. - *Do - See at 11 going away*  
 43. Thurs. - 18. 11 - *Brain of Alacorum - See at 10 a.m.*  
 44. " - " - 3. *Do - " - Do*  
 45. Fri. - 19. 11. *Do - " - Do - Kidneys &c*  
 46. " - " - 3. *Do, Diaphragm, Great Sumb. Veins & Arteries*  
 47. Sat. - 20. 9. *Muscles of the back. - Do*  
 48. *51. Tues. - 21. 11. - Do - See at 10 a.m. for out. Pat. at 10*  
 49. Wed. - 22. 11. *Natural view of Palat.*  
 50. " - " - 3. *Troch. & P. Pruis*  
 51. Tues. - 23. 11. *Pericranium*  
 52. " - " - 3. *From Organ of Troch. in situ.*  
 53. Wed. - 24. 9. *Exam. To Rocl. 10 a.m. Tues*

*Cateria Medica.*  
*Dr. L.*  
*Letter - end*  
 The circumstances which modify the action of medicines, are, the age, the early life, the nervous system is highly susceptible, much more so proportionally than in advanced life, thus a drop of laudanum will kill a young infant - children are much more liable to convulsions, and to suffer from surgical operations, than a hard life or stiff habit, should never be operated on in any early life - a burn which seems of little consequence, will probably send the child into a comatose state ending in death. Another important circumstance in relation to children, is the excessive delicacy of their nervous system, which may be excited on by coarse substances, hence extremely necessary to be careful in diet, the best exhibition of mild emetics produced to purify the canal organs - modification is common, and the more powerful actions of cathartics by excretion is requisite. The most stimulating remedies are suitable to this age, the tartaric & balsamic, at bottom of opium are suitable.  
 In the female organization, should be considered in administering medicines - the delicacy of system & nervous excitability, require the same precautions necessary as in infancy - a delicate woman should not be dosed like an Indian, enquiry should always be made as to the presence of menstruation, during its continuance, the nervous system is unusually excited, & the female system particularly susceptible, powerful remedies should be avoided at this time, as hysteria, or morbid affection of the nervous system may result. The same care is necessary during the period of pregnancy, abortion having frequently resulted from the use of powerful medicines. During lactation, the same caution between mother & child must be remembered, as medicines administered to the former, will injuriously affect the latter, the quantity of food being a strong action, all mental & physical references tend to this centre. I had known that have long married, have swallowed laudanum, & had it on the child. The change of life, is called for every function must disturbed at that time - hysteria, menorrhagia, are easily induced.  
 In the temperment - those of delicate & highly nervous organization, must be treated with a steady & regular plan from one class, while those around to be treated





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## P. Ricci - La salute al femminile – Campobasso - 15 maggio 2008

(Dr. Elizabeth died  
late to 1849 before she died 49)

Beloved Relatives  
Geneva January 23<sup>d</sup> 1849

The important crisis is past - the great occasion over - the object of so much & so justifiable anticipation has been attained and found as I always feel of the Blackwell's - my familism never seemed to me so reasonable and so perfectly a matter of course as I did this morning when, having escorted Elizabeth into the crowded church & taken my seat beside her - we heard from the music that the graduating class, headed by the Decca Masters Faculty &c were marching in solemn conclave into the aisle - (But wooooo... hold on horse - take your time of do things up regular if you please! - Well then - be still, Paganini! I will commence at the beginning - On Thursday Morning at 15 minutes before 8 - I put up my valise & prodded down to the foot of Quai St. Calving harbor at Geneva & buy a new pocket handkerchief of a swat - wherewith to add relat to Elizabeth's anniversary - In consequence of this instead of being at the pier at one minute before 8 o'clock as I had intended I reached it punctually 8 o'clock - to find the Boat just left & return very indignant to my boarding house - never having been left behind before & not at all pleased with the sensation which it produced - Going up to the Stronioni R. St. Office I found that by that route the cars left at the same time - so I had to wait over till Friday Morning - It was clear weather but bitter cold, we were delayed nearly 2 hours by the ice in going up to Piermont - & after a delightful ride through the Romantic country of Redland & Orange Counties we emerged from the woods

Geneva, January 23d 1849

Beloved Relatives

The important crisis is past - the great occasion over - the object of so much & so justifiable anticipation has been attained ... About half past 10 o'clock E. & I walked up to the church ... it was arranged that Eliz. & I should sit down at the entrance of the left aisle and join the procession as it came up ... We found the church - galleries and all, crowded with ladies, they only having been as yet admitted & of course when we came in there was a general stir & murmur & everybody turned to look at us. By the time the procession came up - all the pews except those reserved for them were filled ... After a short discourse by Dr. Hale the President - the diplomas were conferred - 4 being called at a time - and ascending the steps to the platform the President addressed them in a latin formula - taking off his hat, but remaining seated - & so handed them their diplomas, which they received with a bow & retired. Eliz. was left to the last & called up alone - the President taking off his hat, rose & addressing her in the same formula - substituting Domina for Domine, presented her the diploma - whereupon our Sis. who had walked up & stood before him with much dignity bowed & half turned to retire but suddenly turning back replied Sir I thank you - by the help of the Most High, it shall be the effort of my life to shed honour upon your diploma - whereupon she bowed & the President bowed - the audience gave manifestations of applause - little Dr. Webster rubbed his hands - the learned curators & faculty nodded grave approbation at each other upon the platform & our Sis. descending the steps took her seat with her fellow-physicians in front ...

Yours ever, HBB

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BUFFALO MEDICAL JOURNAL  
AND  
MONTHLY REVIEW.

VOL. 4.

FEBRUARY, 1849.

NO. 9.

ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

ART. I.—*Ship Fever. An Inaugural Thesis, submitted for the degree of M. D., at Geneva Medical College, Jan. 1849.* By ELIZABETH BLACKWELL, M. D.

The summer of 1847 was distinguished by the epidemic brought to our seaport towns by means of the crowded emigrant ships, which arrived in great numbers from Europe. Our hospitals were filled to overflowing with patients in every stage of the disease,—many died in the receiving wards, many more only entered the hospital wards to prove the inefficiency of the resources of medical art. An examination of the nature of this disease, showed it to be a species of Typhus.

Much discussion has arisen in the Profession, in relation to the distinction between typhus and typhoid fever. The majority of French writers, and high authorities in our own country, recognizing a distinct disease, under the latter title, or enteric fever, possessing most of the symptoms which mark typhus, but distinguished chiefly by a violent affection of the intestinal canal, producing diarrhœa during life, and revealing to anatomical investigation, a remarkable lesion of the mesenteric glands, and the glands of Peyer—while the English writers generally consider enteric fever as only a form of typhus, and not possessing those peculiar characteristics, that would entitle it to rank as a distinct disease. This latter opinion has been well stated by Cruveilhier, who in this respect differs from the majority of French physicians,—he says:—

1 No. 9—Vol. 4.

..la pubblicazione della sua  
tesi di laurea sul  
Buffalo Medical Journal...



Parigi, La Maternité'

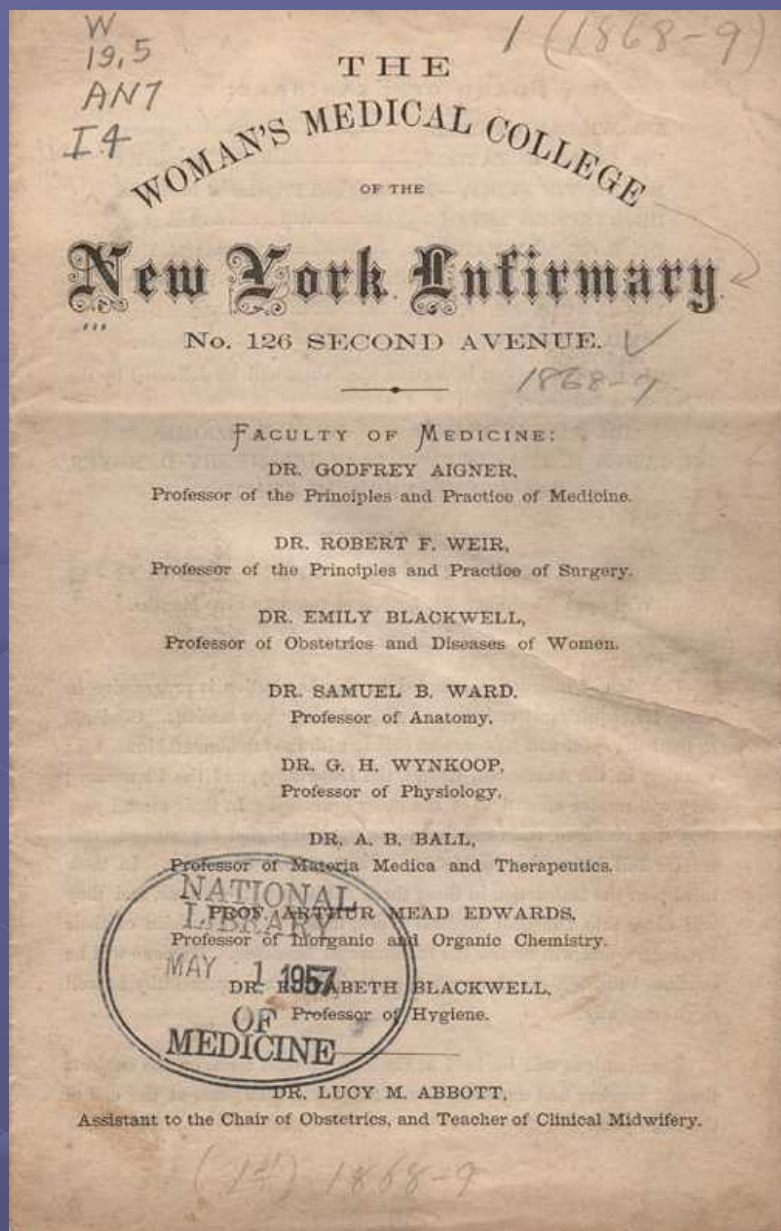
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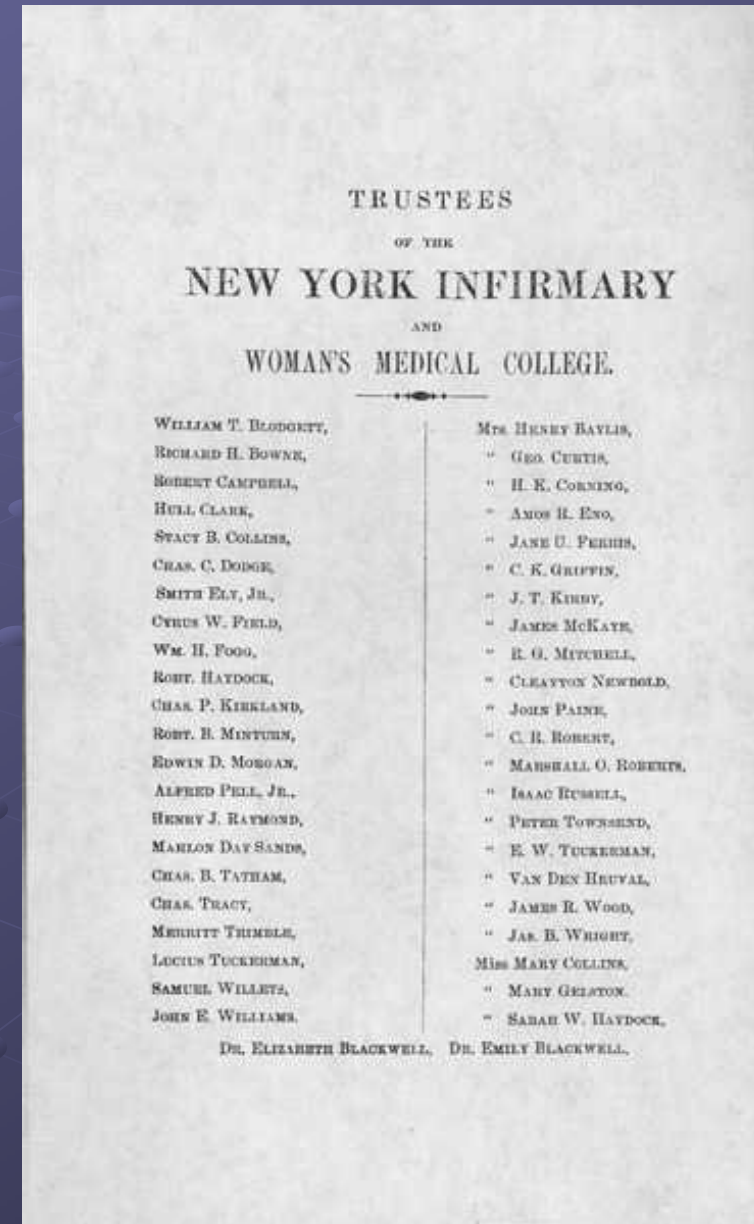
Londra, St. Bartolomew's Hospital

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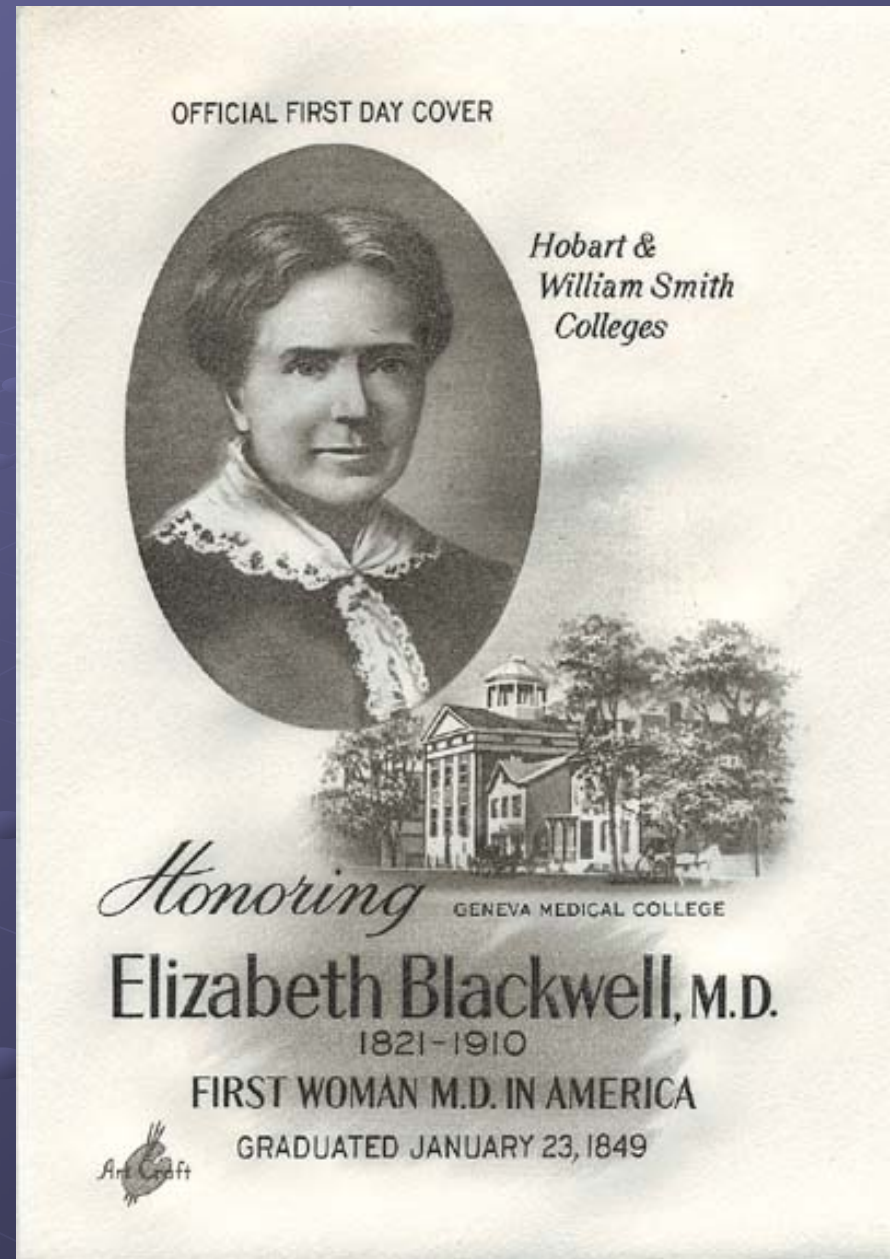


...nel 1857 apre il “New York Infirmary for Indigent Women and Children”.....

...e dopo 11 anni, nel 1868,  
fonda il Women's Medical  
College dove essa stessa ricopre  
il ruolo di titolare della Cattedra  
di Igiene.....



...nel 1869 si trasferisce in Gran Bretagna dove collabora all'organizzazione della National Health Society e fonda la London School of Medicine for Women....



...nel 1875 entra come  
Professore di ginecologia alla  
London School of Medicine  
for Children, fondata da  
Elizabeth Garrett, la prima  
donna laureatasi in Medicina e  
Chirurgia in GB....



## MEDICINE

AS

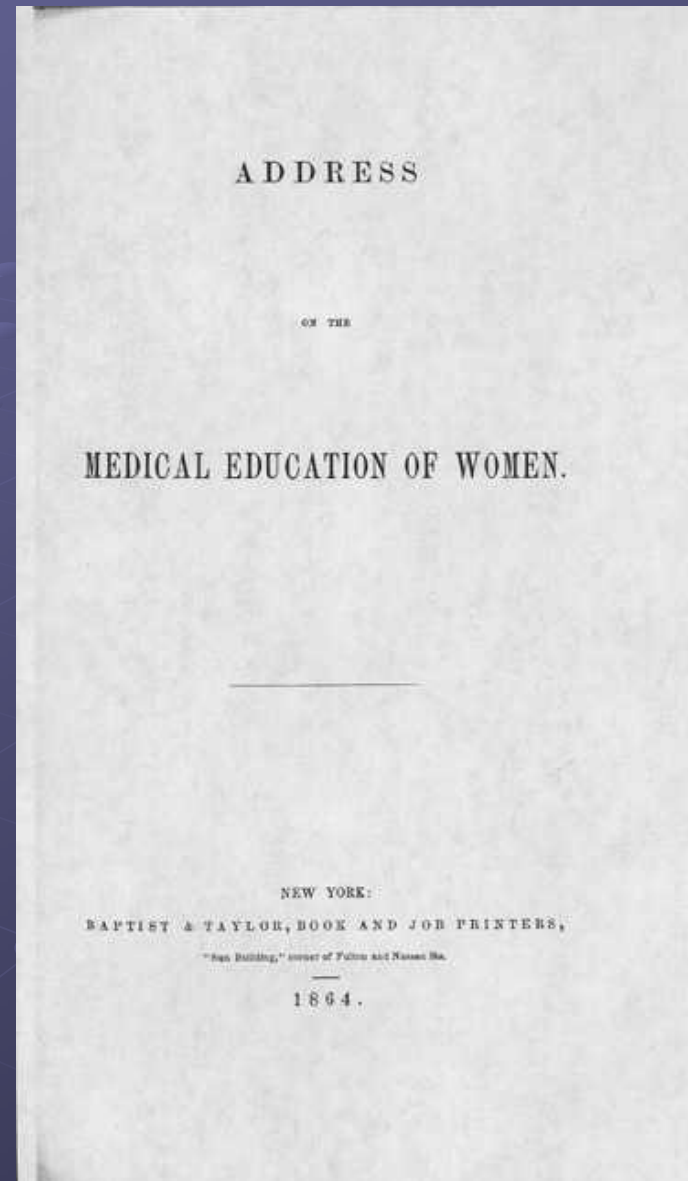
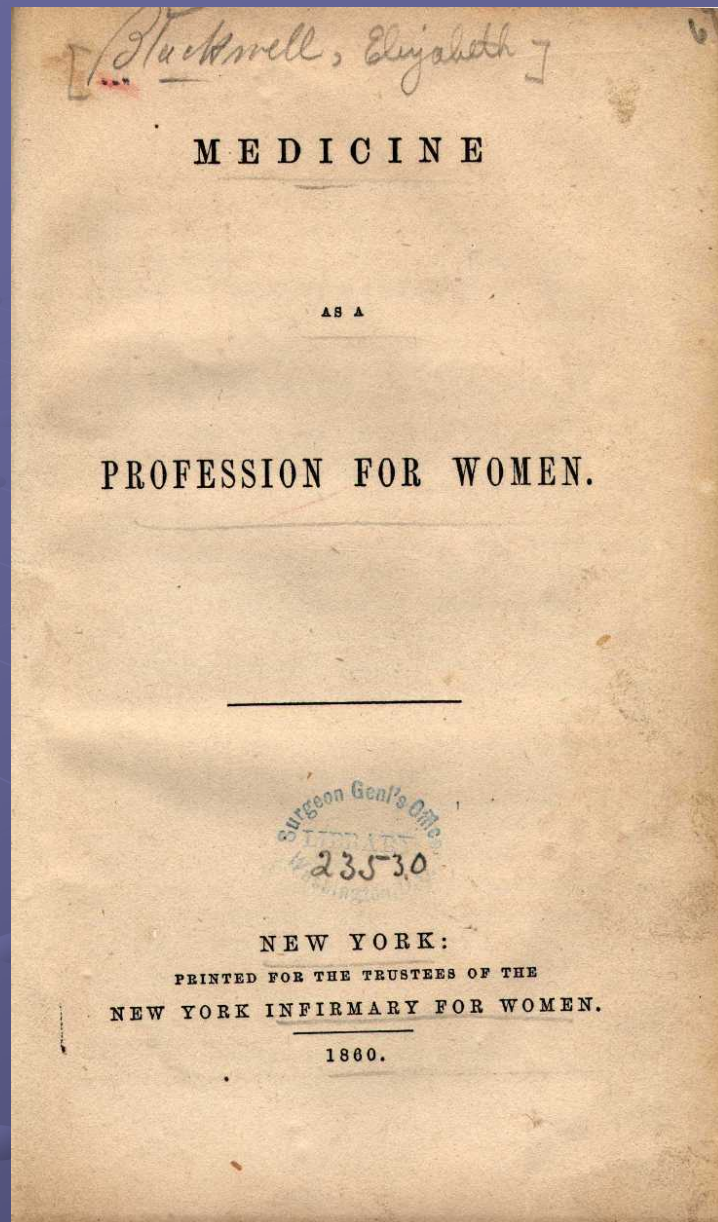
### A PROFESSION FOR WOMEN.

In inviting consideration to the subject of medicine as an occupation for women, it is not a simple theory that we wish to present, but the results of practical experience. For fourteen years we have been students of medicine; for eight years we have been engaged in the practice of our profession in New York; and during the last five years have, in addition, been actively occupied in the support of a medical charity. We may therefore venture to speak with some certainty on this subject; and we are supported by the earnest sympathy of large numbers of intelligent women, both in England and America, in presenting this subject for the first time to the public.

The idea of the education of women in medicine is not now an entirely new one; for some years it has been discussed by the public, institutions have been founded professing to accomplish it, and many women are already engaged in some form of medical occupation. Yet the true position of women in medicine, the real need which lies at the bottom of this movement, and the means necessary to secure its practical usefulness and success, are

\* This lecture was prepared by Drs. ELIZABETH and EMILY BLACKWELL, as an exposition of the effort now being made in this city to open the profession of medicine to women. It was delivered in Clinton Hall, on the 2d of December, 1859, and is now published at the request of the trustees of the *New York Infirmary for Women*.

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...muore nel Sussex (GB)  
nel 1910 all'eta' di 89 anni





**NATIONAL  
LIBRARY OF  
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**History of  
Medicine  
Division**

*"That Girl There Is Doctor In Medicine"*  
ELIZABETH BLACKWELL, AMERICA'S FIRST WOMAN M.D.



James Barry nasce in Irlanda (?)  
nel 1795.....



....e con il sostegno economico dei suoi mecenati, Lord Buchan e Francisco de Miranda.....



....nel 1812, a 17 anni,  
consegue la laurea presso  
l'Universita' di Edimburgo.....

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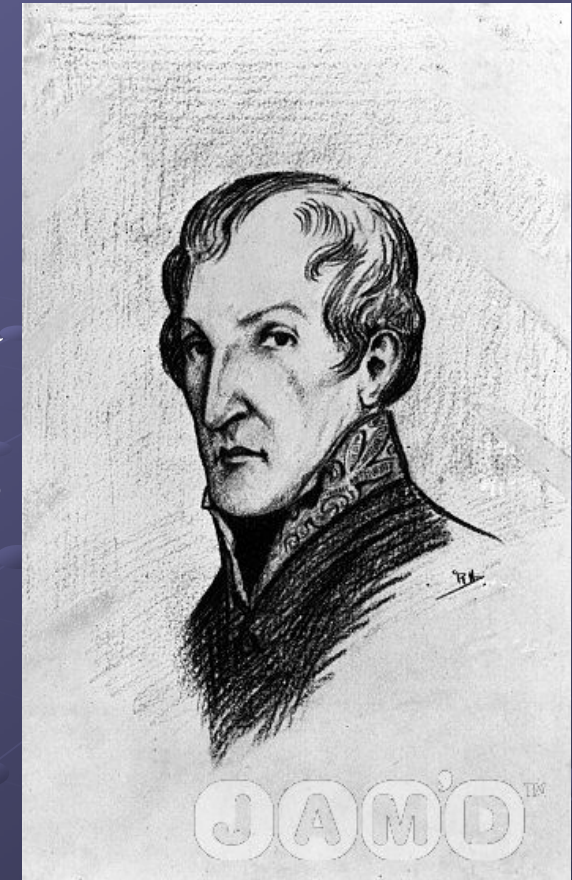


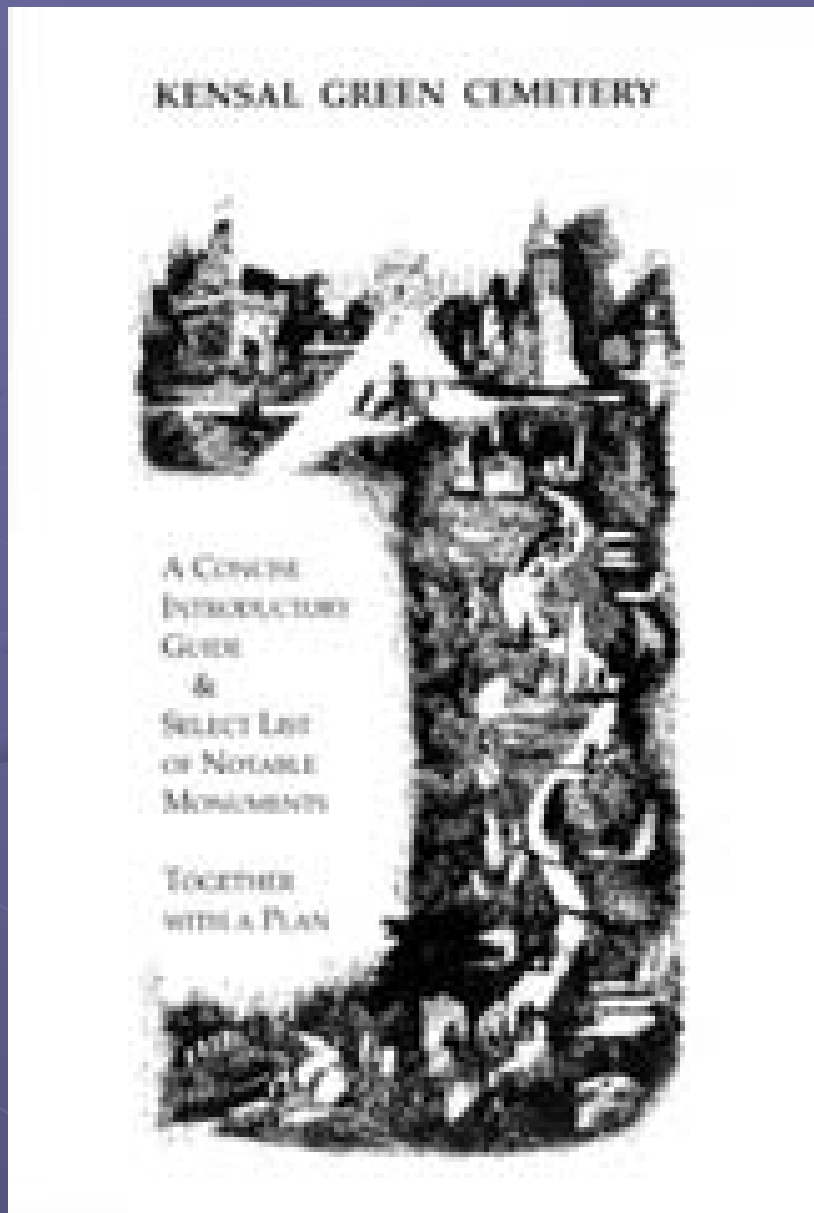
....iscrivendosi subito al Royal College of Surgeon of England.....

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## La sua carriera e le sue destinazioni

- 1815 Plymouth, Waterloo
- 1816 India
- 1817 S.Elena, South Africa
- 1826 Citta' del Capo – primo parto cesareo con doppia sopravvivenza
- 1828 Isole Mauritius, Trinidad e Tobago, S.Elena, Corfu', Crimea, Jamaica
- 1831 Canada (Ispettore Generale)
- 1835 S.Elena (degradato)
- 1838 India
- 1846 Malta
- 1851 Corfu'
- 1857 Canada (Ispettore Generale)
- 1864 Messo in pensione contro la sua volonta', torna in Inghilterra
- 1965 Muore a Londra





....muore nel 1865,  
all'eta' di 73 anni, e  
viene sepolto presso il  
Kensal Green  
Cemetery.....

Durante la Guerra Civile Americana oltre 400 donne si arruolarono travestite da uomini e ben 80 di loro persero la vita.

### Loreta Janeta Velazquez

allo scoppio della guerra' segui il marito travestendosi da uomo e, diventando il tenente Harry Buford, in 4 giorni riuscì ad arruolare ben 236 uomini e a condurli dall'Arkansas in Florida per aiutare il marito nella battaglia. Quando il marito morì, lei continuò a servire la Confederazione nei panni di donna come spia, per poi ritornare a travestirsi e ad essere nuovamente un soldato. Dopo questa vita avventurosa, si rifugiò in Venezuela dove morì nel 1987 dopo aver scritto le sue memorie.



## Qualche domanda:

- Perche' per raggiungere gli stessi risultati di un maschio una donna deve fare molta piu' fatica?
- Perche' ogni conquista, comunque sempre faticosa, debba sembrare quasi una concessione?
- Perche' il potere troppo spesso e' appannaggio solo dei maschi?
- Fino a quando tutto questo sara' ancora una realta'?

.....grazie per l'attenzione.....