

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Two years ago, when I first seriously looked at the letters of the Weekes family, they appeared to be merely a box of papers that lived in the back of a safe. They were difficult to read and full of names that could have belonged to either people or places, and being sent between members of a very close family, they often employed family abbreviations. In the style of the time, there was a fine disregard for punctuation, capital letters, and consistency of spelling. The letters are here reproduced as written, without any tidying up.

By the time I had finished I had visited Weekes' houses, and many of the houses which they visited professionally; travelled the same roads that they had, in order to try and recreate their daily rounds, and had become so involved with the family that I felt almost one of them. This would not have been possible without the help of many people. My gratitude to the Weekes family and the present inhabitants of Hurstpierpoint is mentioned in the footnotes. The project would not have been possible without the very generous support of the Special Trustees of St Thomas's Hospital, and the permission to publish from the Dean of St Thomas's Hospital Medical School, in whose library the letters are now kept. Yvonne Hibbott and her staff in that library have given me every conceivable help and made working there a great pleasure. I have also received help from Jean Cook and the Tonbridge School Library, and Megan Adams. Jan Roberts designed and drew the map, without which it would be difficult to make much sense of the Weekes' practice area, and to her I am especially grateful. Most medical historians owe a debt to the staff of the Wellcome Institute Library, to which I particularly add the names of Bill Bynum and Jean Runciman.

The patience of my family has been frequently tried. Michael has helped with research, Christopher with discussion, Jane has taught me the use of a word-processor, but above all, to my wife Rosemary, I can but publicly say "Thank you". To them I affectionately dedicate this book.

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