

News, Notes and Queries

DESCRIPTION OF WELLCOME TILE*

The tile is an elongated octagon in shape. It has a blue tinted glaze, and bright blue decoration with the motto in maroon. The sides of the tile are chamfered, and the glaze on the back is in irregular patches.

The design of the Society of Apothecaries' Arms—with ribbon-like scrollwork to the sides of Apollo, who has an unusual 'Red Indian' headdress—is quite distinct from the common versions of the Arms on such tiles.

The Fitzwilliam Museum tile has exactly the same dimensions as the Wellcome tile (30 x 24.6 x 1.4 cms.), the Drake tile being fractionally smaller (29.8 x 24.1 x 1.4 cms.). Both tiles have the blue tinted glaze, unusual chamfered edge, and the partially glazed back characteristic of the Wellcome tile. The motto on the Fitzwilliam tile is in maroon, that on the Drake tile in black.

A point of interest about the Wellcome tile is the poor quality of the decoration, there being so much disparity of detail between the left hand and right hand sides that they appear to have been drawn by different artists, possibly the work of apprentices. This is further support for the view that the tiles were not custom made (see above). Furthermore, the almost identical size and shape of the three tiles suggests an element of mass production.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to Professor E. Stieb for sending me full details of the Drake tile.

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description) and Matthews has pointed out (fn. 1) that the Society of Apothecaries used an identical or closely related design in 1746 and 1817. During this period tin-glazed ware was produced widely outside London, notably at Bristol and at Liverpool, and at present a provincial provenance for the three tiles cannot be ruled out. (A useful discussion of the various factories occurs in A. Ray, *English Delftware Pottery in the Robert Hall Warren Collection Ashmolean Museum Oxford*, London, 1968).

It must be added that many eighteenth-century tiles, especially those bearing a tree on the back of the rhinoceros, are attributed to Liverpool. It is especially interesting that the size and chamfered edging of the Wellcome tile are similar to another tile in the Collection bearing the tree decoration (see *Catalogue* op. cit. fn. 1, tile 11, p. 148).

* A fourth tile, in the possession of D. B. Newbon, Esq. has been found. It has virtually the same dimensions as the Wellcome tile, and similar, poor quality decoration.

PORTRAITS OF HIPPOCRATES

NO PHYSICIAN has matched Hippocrates in terms of respectful recognition. In the National Library of Medicine's main card files, for example, over 350 citations are listed regarding Hippocrates, his writings and teachings. Innumerable articles have discussed virtually every aspect of the man over the ages. Only Aristotle and Galen, other renowned ancient scientists, rank even close in receiving our respect and awe.

But popularity, respect and awe do not guarantee one a lack of controversy and Hippocrates is no exception in this regard. To begin with, it is still debated just which of the writings of the Hippocratic Corpus were genuinely written by the master himself and which by his School of Cos. As if this were not enough possibly an even more perplexing question has tantalized historians of medicine for generations and this is, what did he look like? It is my purpose to discuss the latter problem.

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Hippocrates was born on Cos, an island off present-day Turkey, around 460 B.C. and he died approximately a century later. Extant biographies on his life and times did not appear for some 500 years (second century A.D.), one of the best being that of Soranus of Ephesus. Undoubtedly other material was written about Hippocrates during this interval from which Soranus extracted his data but this is not available to us today. During the same century in which Hippocrates was born the art of sculpturing portraits began. Both stone and bronze were used and by the beginning of the Hellenistic age in the last quarter of the fourth century B.C. this art had expanded and grown so that not only was the outward appearance of the individual represented but an attempt was also made to reveal the inner life and intellect.

According to Richter¹ it was probably toward the end of the third century B.C., with the full-blown realism of the Hellenistic age, that many of the great sculptured portraits, busts or herms were produced including those of Hippocrates. Beginning with the first century B.C. the Romans began copying the portraits of the Greeks. These were used for their courts, gardens, and homes much in the way we use paintings or statues today.

Portraits were copied by a pointing process which is discussed in Richter's book,¹ Essentially it was the same process as used today in copying sculpture. Numerous copies from one statue could be produced in this fashion although each one was somewhat different and in this sense unique. It is believed that virtually all of the existing portraits in our museums today are Roman copies of the Greek originals.

While the most reliable identification of a portrait has been the name inscribed in the stone or bronze and many have been identified in this way probable identifications have also been based on the statue's or herm's location of discovery, the date they were produced and, in certain instances, inscriptions of famous sayings. Both Aristotle and Hippocrates fall into the category of probable identifications.

No early documents are known which describe the erections of any stone portraits of Hippocrates although there are recordings of bronze sculptures none of which have ever been found. On the Island of Cos, during the Roman period, however, a coin (Figure 1) was used which bore the inscription $I\pi$ (for Hippocrates) as well as a serpent staff. Based on this likeness several sculptured portraits have been thought to be Hippocrates. Included among these have been busts later positively identified as Chrysippos and Karneades, third- and second-century B.C. philosophers.

Thus, with a 500-year span separating the time when Hippocrates lived until the appearance of his extant biographies and portraits, it is no wonder that much confusion has been the one common denominator of trying to arrive at a judgment of his true likeness. This uncertainty seems to have perhaps ended by the discovery of a bust (Figure 2) in Isola Sacra at Ostia (near Rome) in 1940.² Although the preferred and clinching evidence of the inscribed name is lacking the circumstantial evidence is so strong that most museums and scholars of the subject confidently accept it as his true likeness. The one exception is Professor P. Mingazzini, who has proposed the herm represents Pindar.³ This bust was found in a tomb erected for a physician named Demetrios who lived in the first century A.D. On one of the pedestals on which it stood was the inscription beginning 'Life is short', the initial words of Hippocrates' most famous aphorism. The remainder of the inscription was not the same as the



Figure 1

Roman coins such as this were used on the Island of Cos in the first century A.D. The letters stand for Hippocrates. This coin is located in the British Museum.

(By courtesy of Miss G. Richter and Phaidon Press.)



Figure 2

Bust found near Ostia in 1940. There is strong circumstantial evidence this is a true representation of Hippocrates. It was probably a Roman copy of a Greek original.

(By courtesy of Ostia Museum, Rome.)

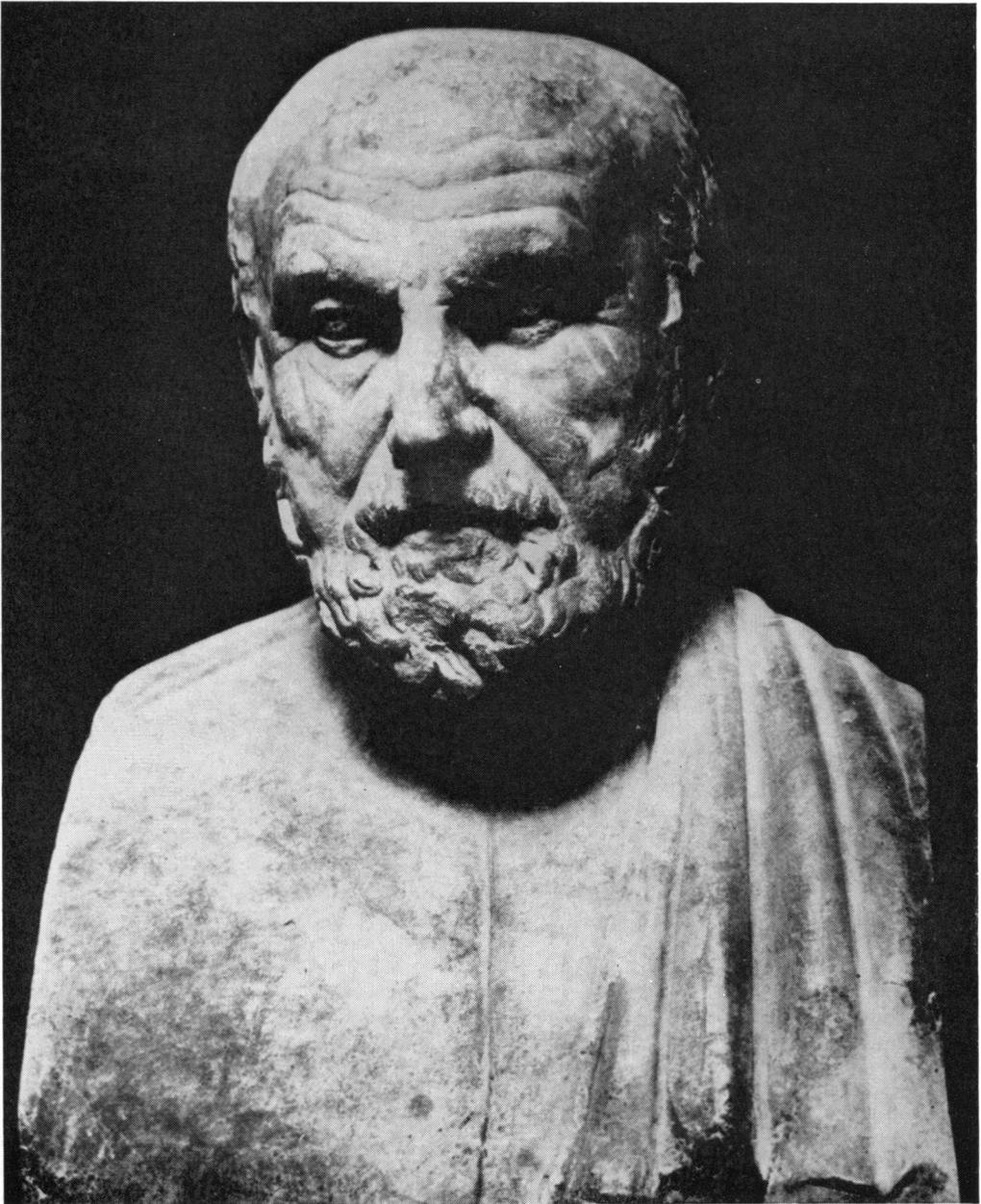


Figure 3

Bust located in the Capitoline Museum in Rome also thought to be Hippocrates at one time. It is probably the same individual as in Figure 4. (By courtesy of the Capitoline Museum, Rome.)



Figure 4

This herm is located in the British Museum and in the past has been called Hippocrates (see text). It is now thought to be Chrysisippos. (By courtesy of *British Museum, London.*)



Figure 5

This statue was found on the Isle of Cos in 1929 and is claimed by some to represent Hippocrates but bears no resemblance to the Ostia bust. Located in the Cos Museum. (By courtesy of *Cos Museum, Isle of Cos.*)

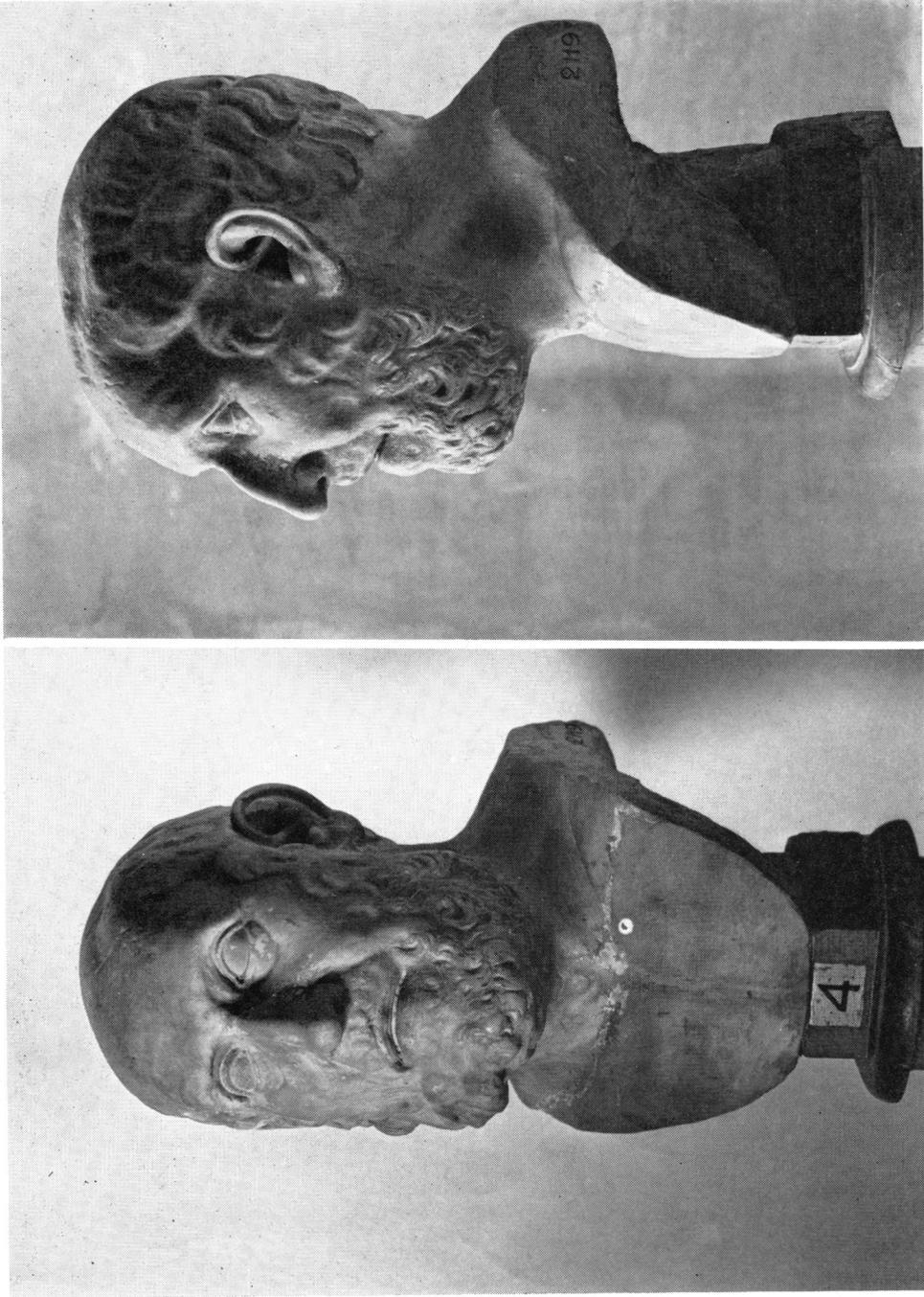


Figure 6

Bust located in the Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican Museum, also thought to be a Roman copy of a Greek original and probably the same one used in copying the Ostia bust. It has been partially restored. (By courtesy of *Vatican Museum, Rome.*)

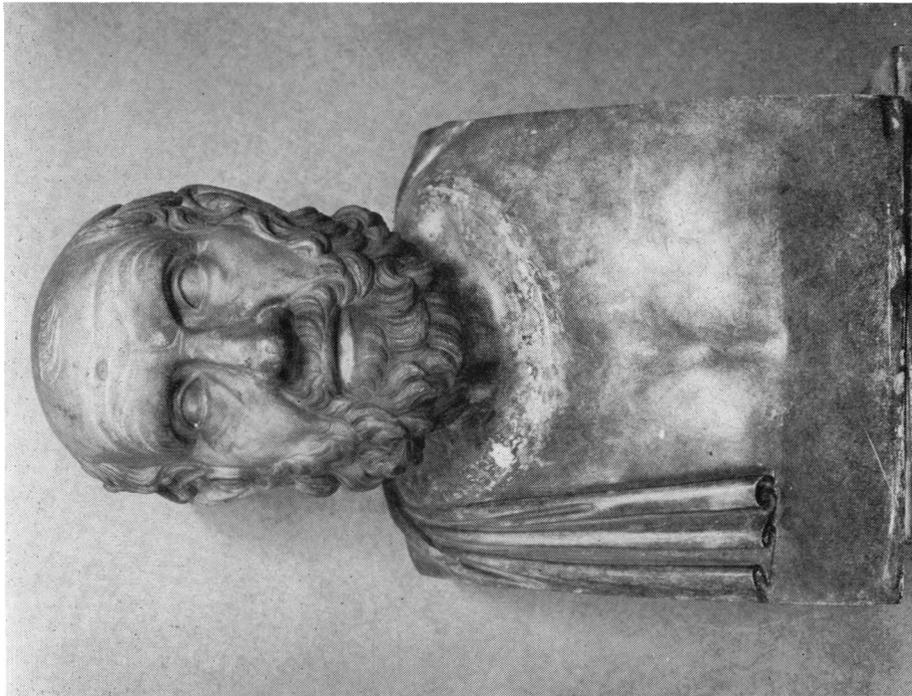


Figure 7

Herm located in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. It has also been partially restored. The similarity to the Vatican and Ostia piece is striking including the forelock and beard.
(By courtesy of Uffizi Gallery, Florence.)



Figure 8

Bust located in the National Museum in Naples; also partially restored. This too is thought to represent Hippocrates.
(By courtesy of Miss G. Richter and Phaidon Press.)



Figure 9
Unrestored bust of Hippocrates located in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek in Copenhagen, the fifth true Hippocrates.
(By courtesy of Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen.)

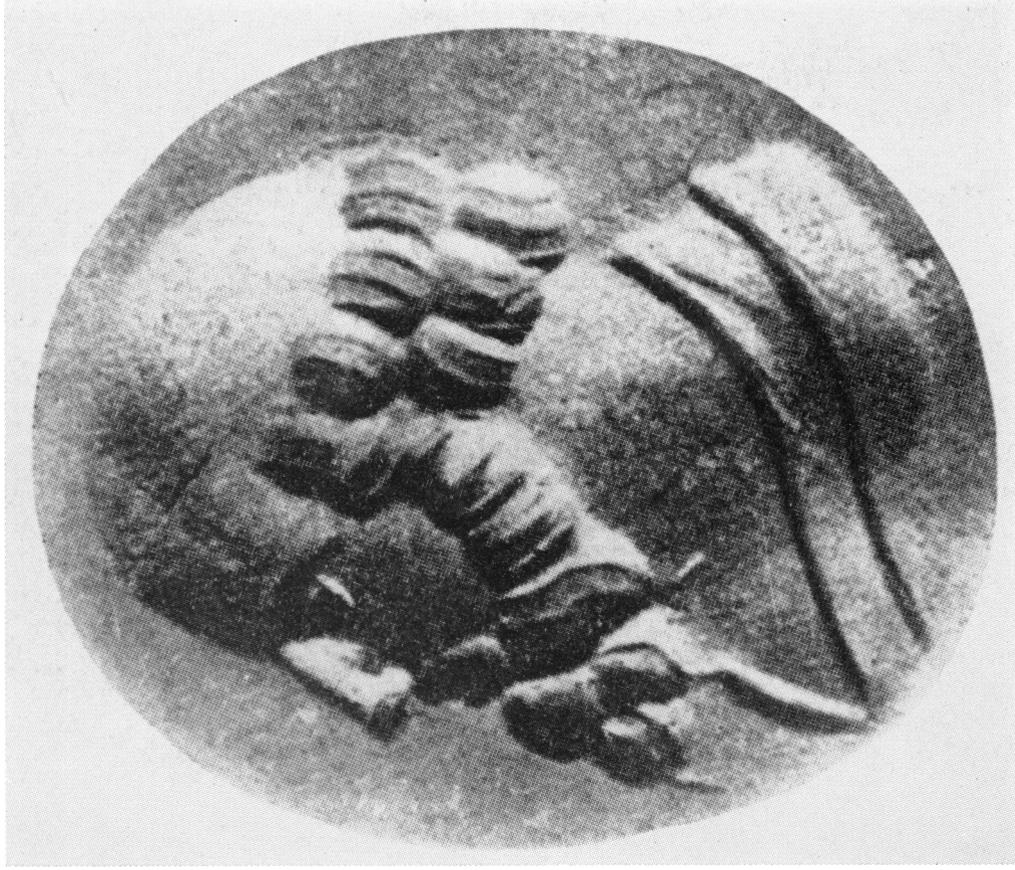


Figure 10
Bust engraved in a ring stone found in the Isle of Cos.
This is Figure 871 in Gisela Richter's book.
(By courtesy of Miss G. Richter and Platidon Press.)

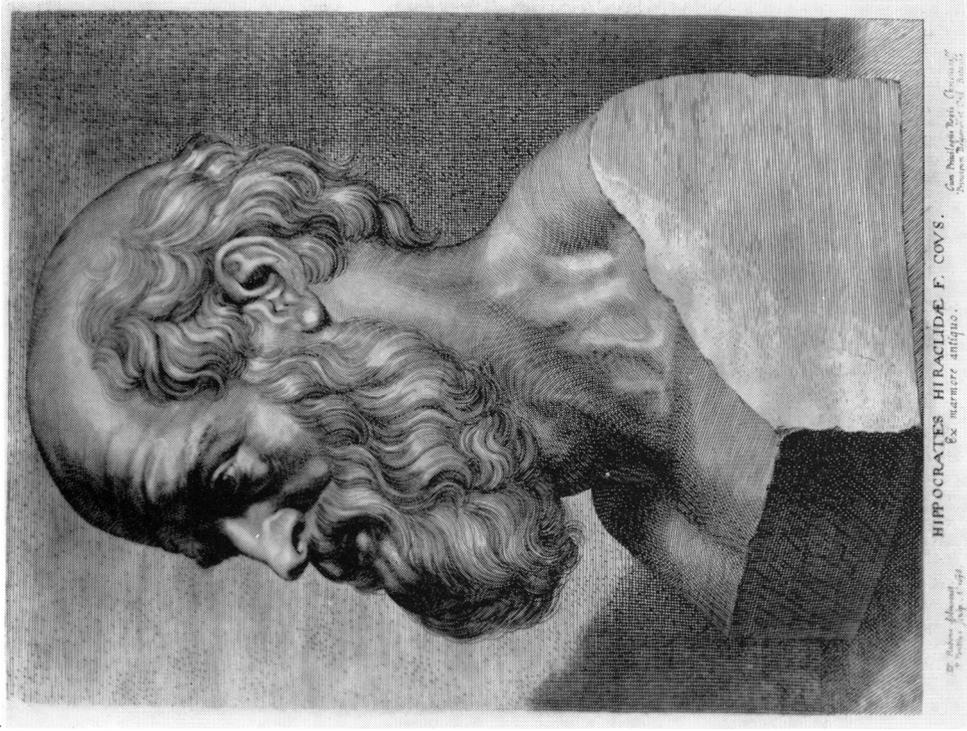


Figure 12
 Rubens' 'Hippocrates'. Note the prognathia.
 (From the Portrait Collection, National Library of Medicine.)

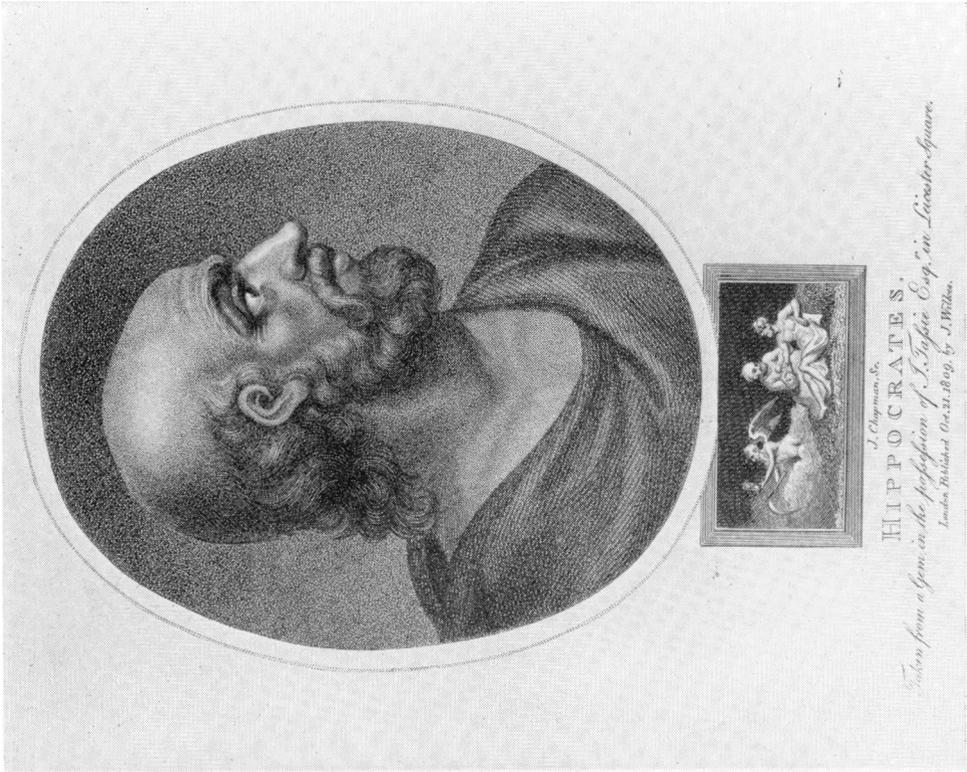


Figure 11
 A representation of Hippocrates published in 1809. It bears a close resemblance to the coins from Cos except for depicting more baldness.
 (From the Portrait Collection, the National Library of Medicine.)

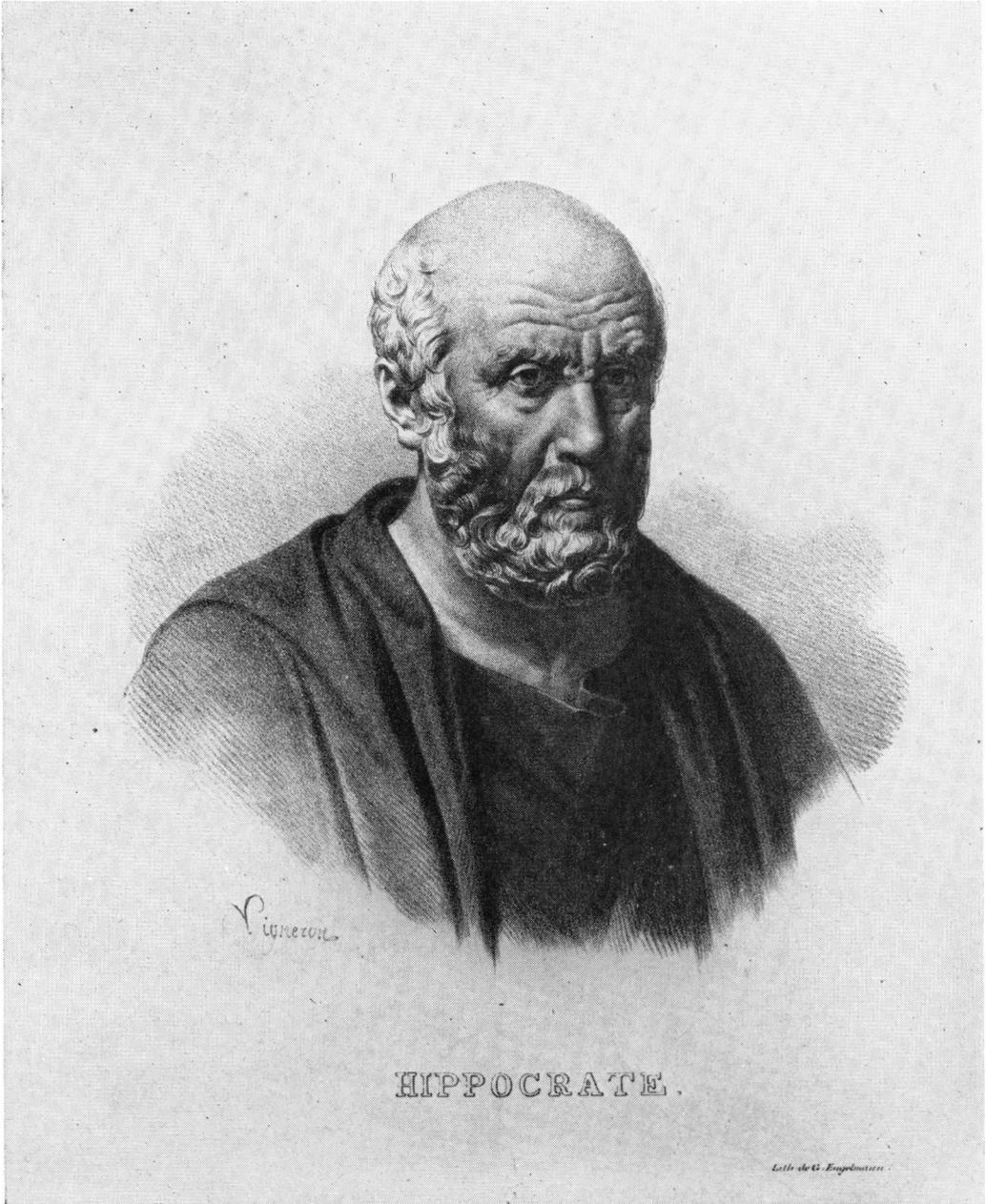


Figure 13
A representation of Hippocrates published in Paris in 1825.
(From the National Library of Medicine.)

rest of the aphorism but since the bust was in the tomb of a physician, since the first line of the inscription began with 'Life is short', and since the bust resembled the coin from Cos it has been accepted as the true Hippocrates.

It is ironic then that, if the above be true, the likeness which has appeared most commonly in books and articles as Hippocrates is indeed not the same man (Figures 3 and 4). These two nearly identical busts, one in the British Museum in London (Figure 4), and the other in the Capitoline Museum in Rome (Figure 3), have served the public as the Great Physician from the early 1800s to the mid-twentieth century. Today both museums deny that they represent Hippocrates and the British Museum believes them to be the philosopher, Chrysispos. The bust located in the British Museum has been the one most often used to represent Hippocrates⁴⁻¹³ although the herm in the Capitoline Museum has been copied frequently also.¹⁴⁻¹⁷ Another claim for Hippocrates' true likeness was issued by the discovery of a statue (dating from the mid-fourth century B.C.) during excavations on the Isle of Cos in 1929.^{6,18,21} This statue (Figure 5) bears little resemblance to either the coin of Cos with Hippocrates' mark or the Ostia head and since there is no better evidence than the fact that it was found on Cos it has now been discredited by most, with the exception of the Museum of Cos, of course.

Gisela Richter (now of the American Academy of Rome and formerly curator of Greek Art at the Metropolitan Museum in New York) also lists four other museums as possessing genuine busts of Hippocrates.¹ These include the Museo Chiaramonti of the Vatican Museum (Figure 6), the Uffizi Gallery in Florence (Figure 7), the National Museum in Naples (Figure 8), and Ny Carlsburg Glyptothek in Copenhagen (Figure 9). She further maintains and offers compelling evidence that these five herms or busts are very likely all Roman copies from one Greek original using the pointing process. If indeed these five (Figures 2, 6, 7, 8 and 9) are the true Hippocrates they all show a distinguished-looking man who is balding and elderly with a lined squarish face and a short beard. They also show three locks of hair in the middle of the forehead and similar features of the hair and beard. Miss Richter's detailed discussions, comparisons and differentiation of these busts from those of Chrysispos and Karneades, the only other two great Greeks with a similar appearance, are convincing indeed. The Ostia herm has been used as Hippocrates in at least three publications^{2,22,23} and the Uffizi herm in at least one.²⁴ Richter also comments on several other portraits or supposed likenesses of Hippocrates in museums from around the world including stones in rings, heads on bas-reliefs and wall paintings. Of these only a bust carved into an intaglio ring found at Cos bears a possible resemblance (Figure 10).

In my research on likenesses of Hippocrates I also found three other interesting pieces in the Portrait Collection, National Library of Medicine. The first (Figure 11) strikingly resembles the coin of Cos except for showing more baldness. The legend at the bottom of the photograph reads, 'Hippocrates. Taken from a gem in the possession of J. Tassie, Esq., in Leicester Square, London, published Oct. 21, 1809, by J. Wilkes.' The figure is quite similar to the intaglio ring (Figure 10) but is not known whether Mr. Tassie's stone is the same one shown in Figure 10. The second photograph (Figure 12) is a Peter Paul Rubens engraving of a sculpture by P. Pontius,

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dated 1638. While it bears a resemblance to the 'true' Hippocrates busts the chin seems very prominent and Richter mentions that this portrait is probably an 'invented one made up in the mind of the sculptor'. The reason for the portrayal of the prognathic chin remains an enigma. The third is a photograph of a lithograph (Figure 13) which appeared in 1825;²⁵ this seems to resemble both the ring stone (Figure 10) and Rubens' representation (Figure 12). It seems likely that this too is an invented portrait.

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SCOTTISH SOCIETY OF THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

AT THE Annual General Meeting of the above Society, the following Office-Bearers were elected: President: Dr. T. R. R. Todd; Vice-President: Mr. C. G. Drummond, M.P.S.; Honorary Secretaries: Dr. H. P. Tait, Dr. A. H. B. Masson; Honorary