

NORWEGIAN SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE

THE Society held its first meeting of the year on 13 April, when Miss Mirsten Bergh read a paper on the trials for witchcraft held in Norway from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. Miss Bergh dealt especially with the series of trials which took place about 1670 in Finnmark county. In the small town of Vardoe no less than twenty women were burnt as witches during a period of five months.

At the same meeting Mr. N. A. Sverre read a paper on the historical relations between the physician and the apothecary.

BERNHARD GETZ

News, Notes and Queries

THE MILITARY GENERAL SERVICE MEDAL AWARDED TO BRANSBY COOPER (1792-1853)

by

K. F. RUSSELL

IN 1848 the survivors of those who had served in the war with France received belated recognition from the Queen. Hostilities had ceased in 1815 with the battle of Waterloo when the Prince Regent had immediately authorized the issue of a medal for all ranks present at this battle as a mark of esteem from a grateful government. It is true that the Duke of Wellington and his senior officers had received many distinctions for their services in the campaigns preceding Waterloo but the junior officers and rank and file were forgotten. There is plenty of evidence to show that the Iron Duke himself strenuously opposed the award of any distinction to the very men who made victory possible.

It was entirely due to the efforts of the Duke of Richmond in arousing the sympathy of Queen Victoria that this injustice was removed by a General Order being published on the 1st of June, 1847 authorizing the issue of a medal to all ranks of both Army and Navy. The Military General Service Medal covered fighting during the period 1808-14, later to be extended to include the campaign in Egypt in 1801; the Naval General Service Medal was for Service from 1793 to 1840. Thus at long last the survivors were able to wear with pride some tangible evidence of their long and arduous service, and many thousands made good their claims.

Among the many medical officers to receive the Military General Service Medal was Bransby Blake Cooper (1792-1853) so well known as an anatomist and surgeon