Jeff Wolf: 'Becoming an Edinburgh M.D. in the eighteenth century: Ancient and Modern'

In this short paper, I consider the ancients vs. moderns debate in the context of eighteenth-century medicine; more specifically, I explore what an Edinburgh medical student in the 1770s-1780s might have been encouraged to believe about medicine's relationship to its ancient past. I do this by assessing some of the requirements of medical education at the Edinburgh Medical School, and comparing these with more explicit statements delivered in lectures by Professors John Gregory (1724-1773) and William Cullen (1710-1790). The lecture delivered by William Cullen that I consider in this paper has not, to my knowledge, ever been discussed in print before now.