

APPENDIX I

THE DESCENDANTS OF JOHN DEE

When the aged mathematician died at Mortlake in 1608 he left to survive him five or six out of his eight children. Michael, born at Prague, had died on his father's birthday in 1594. Theodore, born at Trebona, died at Manchester 1601. Arthur and Rowland were left. Katherine was his companion to the end. The three younger girls, Madinia, Frances and Margaret, had, for anything we know, survived the plague which was so fatal to their mother, but there is no trace of either of them after that event in March, 1606. Aubrey, indeed, did hear from Goody Faldo of a daughter, whose name he thinks was Sarah, married to a flax dresser of Bermondsey. Dee had no daughter Sarah, and Aubrey does not suggest a name for the problematic husband.

Arthur, the eldest son, we have followed through a childhood of accidents to his selection and setting apart with a solemn rite to be his father's "skryer" in the magic crystal, in the eighth year of his age. We have traced the failure of that ill-advised choice, and have seen the lad of thirteen sent off to Westminster School with a little trunk and his mother's blessing. The next events in his life recorded by his father are his being wounded by a foyné while fencing with Edward Arnold, and the grant of the chapter clerkship of Manchester, in 1600.

He married in 1602, lived for a while in Manchester, and began practising medicine. Wood says he spent some time at Oxford, but his name has so far not been found in any college admissions. In his will he is described as "Doctor of Physic." Probably he took his degree abroad. His marriage to Isabella Prestwich, daughter of a well-known Manchester justice of the peace, took place when he was twenty-two, and it is to be presumed that he continued living on in Manchester until his father left that city some time in 1605 or 1606, after the sad death of his wife. Arthur set up a practice in London some time about that year, although precise dates are not obtainable. He seems to have followed the common usage of hanging outside his door a list or "table" of medicines, and their excellent therapeutic properties, which were said to effect certain cures of several diseases. This attracted the attention of the censors appointed by the Royal College of Physicians, who proceeded against him forthwith, under the powers granted them against empiricks, which they had exercised since the foundation of the College in the early years of Henry VIII. The learned members of the college esteemed this "crime" such an "intolerable cheat and imposture," that they summoned Arthur Dee to appear before them with his remedies that they might impose a due penalty upon his presumption. The rest of the story is unrelated, and we cannot say what fine or order was his reward.

He seems, either through influence or talent, to have made his mark as a doctor. In July, 1614, he was recommended by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chancellor to be elected physician of Thomas Sutton's newly founded hospital, the Charterhouse, and we may presume the appointment was made. In May, 1627, Charles I. recommended him as physician to the Emperor of Russia, and in June it was agreed to send letters out by him or his agent, the stipulation being made that he must sail at once, "or not have passage this year."

He took up his abode at Moscow, if not in the splendour and riches offered to his father, at least sufficiently provided for to maintain his huge family in comfort. Four or five of his twelve children died in infancy; the complete list of them, as given in his father's book of horoscopes in the British Museum, is as under: —

Margaret	born	April 4, 1603.
Jane	“	March 31, 1605.
John	“	July 24, 1606 (died).
Arthur	“	March 16, 1608.
Maria	“	February 24, 1612.
Rowland	“	September 8, 1613.
Isabel	“	September 5, 1614.
Frances	“	October 25, 1615.
William	“	August 27, 1617.
John	“	March 30, 1619.
Edmund	baptised	August 27, 1620.
	buried	September 23, 1621.
Anna	born	January 15, 1622.

Arthur's wife, Isabella Dee, died July 24, 1634. About this time he returned to England and settled in Norwich, near his friend, Sir Thomas Browne, who was then busily engaged in writing down the ethical and theological conclusions which he called the *Religio Medici*. Browne was, of course, the younger man. Writing in 1658, a few years after Arthur's death, to Elias Ashmole, Sir Thomas tells of the many talks about the doings of Dee and Kelley that he had with "my familiar friend, sonne unto old Doctor Dee, the mathematician," who had "lived many years and died in Norwich." Browne sent to Ashmole "the scheme of Arthur's nativity, erected by his father, Dr. John Dee," a copy from the original, made by Arthur himself, with comments added by a Moscow astrologer, Franciscus Murrerus.

Dr. Arthur, in spite, or perhaps because, of his early environment, retained until his dying day a devout belief in the possibilities of alchemy to make projection or transmutation. He had grown up in the fixed idea that the ever-exclusive secret would soon be found out. In fact, he was persuaded that divers workers had indeed discovered the art. The child of seven or eight, who had played with quoits or playthings, which he understood had been turned into gold upon the premises, was likely to retain this conviction. To doubt it would be to cast a slur upon his father's memory. Of Kelley his recollections — the recollections of a boy under nine — could be but dim and hazy, untouched with any possible scepticism or critical judgment. After the February day when Kelley rode off to Prague in 1588, neither Arthur or his father had ever set eyes on this adventurer again.

He had succeeded in convincing his old friend of the truth of these recollections, for Browne writes of him as "a persevering student in hermetically philosophy, who had no small encouragement, having seen projection made, and with the highest asseverations he confirmed unto his death that he had ocularly, undeceivably and frequently beheld it in Bohemia. And to my knowledge, had not an accident prevented, he had, not many years before his death, retired beyond the sea and fallen upon the solemn process of the great work."

Continuing the correspondence six months later, when additional matter rises to mind, Sir Thomas writes again to Ashmole, in 1675, with more particulars of the “solemn process.”

“I was very well acquainted with Dr. Arthur Dee, and at one time or another he has given me some account of the whole course of his life. I have heard the doctor say that he lived in Bohemia with his father, both at Prague and in other parts. That Prince or Count Rosenberg was their great patron, who delighted much in alchemie. I have often heard him affirme, and sometimes with oaths, that he had seen projection made, and transmutation of pewter dishes and flaggons into silver, which the goldsmiths at Prague bought of them. And that Count Rosenberg played at quoits with silver quoits made by projection as before. That this transmutation was made by a powder they had, which was found in some old place, and a book lying by it containing nothing but heiroglyphicks; which book his father bestowed much time upon, but I could not hear that he could make it out. He said also that Kelley death not justly by his father, and that he went away with the greatest part of the powder, and was afterwards imprisoned by the Emperor in a castle, from whence attempting to escape down the wall, he fell and broke his leg, and was imprisoned again. That his father, Dr. John Dee, presented Queen Elizabeth with a little of the powder, who having made trial thereof, attempted to get Kelley out of prison, and sent some [persons] to that purpose, who, giving opium in drink unto the keepers, laid them so fast asleep that Kelley found opportunity to attempt an escape; and there were horses readie to carry him away; but the business unhappily succeeded as is before declared. Dr. Arthur Dee was a young man [he was a boy of eight] when he saw this projection made in Bohemia, but he was so inflamed therewith that he fell early upon that study, and read not much all his life but books of that subject; and two years before his death, contracted with one Hunniades, or Hans Hanyar, in London, to be his operator. This Hans Hanyar having lived longin London and growing in yhears, resolved to return into Hungary. He went first to Amsterdam, where he was to remain ten weeks, till Dr. Arthur came to him. the Dr. to my knowledge was serious in this businesse and had provided all in readiness to go, but suddenly he heard that Hans Hanyar was dead.”

During his residence in Moscow, Arthur compiled a book of alchemical notes and extracts, which was published at Paris in 1631 under the title of Fasciculus Chemicus, etc. Ashmole, among his early enthusiastic labours upon alchemical authors prosecuted under the name of “James Hasolle,” translated this into English in 1650. While the book was at press in the beginning of the year, he wrote to Arthur, apparently as a stranger, informing him of his occupation, and putting at the same time a question or two upon his father’s books.

Arthur’s reply, dated Norwich, January 31, 1649 [50], now in the Bodleian Library, begins by expressing regret that “you or any man should take pains to translate any book of that nature into English, for the art is vilified so much already by scholars that daily do deride it, in regard they are ignorant of the principles. How then can it any way be advanced by the vulgar? But to satisfie your question, you may be resolved that he who wrote Euclid’s Preface was my father. The Fasciculus, I must cofess, was my labour and work.” He ends by saying that he will be in London that day week, and if Ashmole wants to see him, he may hear of him in Butler’s Court at the end of Lombard Street, at his son Rowland Dee’s warehouse. The

writing, and especially the signature of this letter, are good testimonies to the care bestowed by William Camden of Westminster School on the boy's handwriting. His father, as we remember, had asked for special supervision of the roman hand, since matter, poor in itself, but set down in a good style, did, in his opinion, often receive more attention than good material badly written and expressed.

Browne had received from Arthur a complete catalogue of all his father's writings, both finished and intended. But there was one not included, viz., the Book of Mysteries. Sir Thomas, writing in 1675, says he never heard him say one word of "the Book of Spiritts sett out by Dr. Casaubone, which if hee had knowne I make no doubt butt hee would have spoake of it unto mee, for he was very inquisitive after any manuscripts of his father's, and desirous to print as many as he could possibly obtain." He goes on to say that Arthur understood that Sir William Boswell, the English Resident in Holland, owned a number of Dee's MSS., which he had collected and kept in a trunk in his Dutch home. Boswell refused many applications from Arthur for leave to print some of these, which the famous mathematician's son considered should not be locked up from the world. Boswell announced his intention of printing them himse, which of course he never did.

Nor did the Book of Spirits see the light of day during Arthur's lifetime. Perhaps had Casaubon appealed to him as Ashmole had done, it would never have been issued at all. A son would certainly have remonstrated against this revelations, this tearing down the veil from the inner tabernacle of his father's soul.

Arthur died in the autumn of 1651, eight years before Casaubon published his book. He made his will on September 17, describing himself as Doctor of Physick, of the city of Norwich, and leaving a small legacy of twenty shillings to the poor of the parish of St. George Tombland, in which he had lived.

Only three sons out of his seven, and three daughters of the six ar named in the will, all the others being dead, unless it was Arthur, the eldest, who had been a merchant in Amsterdam. There is a legacy of twenty pounds to his wife.

The second son, Rowland, was established, as we have seen, in Lombard Street as a merchant. To him Arthur had already had already given his father's portrait, now in the Ashmolean Museum and reproduced as the Frontispiece to this book; and a painted coat of arms. Sir Thomas Browne, who had often seen it, speaks of an addition made to the coat by grant of the Emperor Rudolph in the shape of a mathematical figure; probably the delta which Dee always used for his name in the spiritual diary. To Rowland's wife there is a legacy of twenty pounds.

"To John Dee, my youngest son," Arthur left one hundred pounds and his gold seal ring with the coat of arms cut in a sapphire. John was a Russia merchant.

There is no mention of his eldest child and daughter, Margaret, who is said to have married another Russia merchant named Abraham Ashe.

To three sons-in-law, "my son Grymes;" "my son Anguish" (this was the husband of his youngest child, Anne); and "my son Fowell," he leaves respectively a plush coat; a saddle and pistol; and a black gown and plush suit.

To each of his three daughters, their wives (none of them mentioned by name), he gives 20 pounds; and to the two elder, his two iron-barred sealskin trunks with long cushions and foot carpets, feather bed, blankets, bolsters and coverlets. He appoints his friend John Toley, of Norwich, his executor, and gives him his watch and silver chain, with a square box of cypress wood, double-leafed, with drawers. His servant, John Sergeant, is to have all the contents of his extensive wardrobe,

consisting of his coloured cloth suit and and cloak; black suit and cloak lined iwth rough bayes (Norwich was the seat of the bay and say industry); his winter pair of boots, and two pairs of summer boots; his “hattes;” his “stokins whatsoever;” his black satin doublet; shirts; six of his “worst-falling bands and ruffs;” and forty shillings due for wages at the Michaelmas following.

Arthur Dee died before October 16 of the same year, 1650, when the will was proved by John Toley.

Rowland, Arthur’s fourth son, married and died in 1687, when his wife was executrix of his will. Rowland’s sons by this wife Jane (d. 1698) were Rowland, born March 25, 1646, married October, 1675; Elizabeth Gardiner of Aldersgate (d. September, 1698); and Duncan, born November 3, 1657. Both were educated at Merchant Taylors’ School on the Bishop of Peterborough’s foundation (see below). Duncan went on to St. John’s College, Oxford, and entered the legal profession. He was chosen Common Serjeant of London in 1700. He defended Dr. Sacheverell for four days of his trial in the House of Lords in 1710; died in 1720, and was buried in St. Mary Aldermanbury. By his wife Mary (d. Stoke Newington, March 24, 1728) he left a son Henry (d. 1725), others having died young.

David Dee, born in Shropshire, of St. Mary’s Hall, Oxford, rector of St. Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield, 1587 — 1605, is said to have been a grandson of Bedo Dee. If so, he must have been either brother or cousin of John Dee of Mortlake, who, strange to say, alludes nowhere in his diary to any relation of the name of Dee, although he speaks often of his Welsh kinsfolk, and of his cousin Aubrey. As he died at Mortlake in 1608, aged eighty and a half, David, who survived him twelve years, must have been his junior. David Dee was deprived of St. Bartholomew, “for what,” says Newcourt, “I know not”; but he was brought back there to be buried on February 3, 1620. By his wife Martia, daughter of John Rogers, David Dee had three sons, of whom Francis, the eldest, was educated at Merchant Taylors’ School and St. John’s College, Cambridge. He entered the Church, held various livings in London and elsewhere, and four years before his death was consecrated Bishop of Peterborough. By his will (dated May 28, 1638), he gave his rectory of Pagham, Sussex, to found two fellowships and two scholarships in St. John’s College, one of which was to be held for ever by “one of my kindred or of my name, from either Merchant Taylors’ School, London, or from Peterborough School.” We have seen that two of John Dee’s great grandchildren were sent to Merchant Taylors’, and one, Duncan, proceeded to St. John’s, probably on this foundation. The Bishop’s eldest son, Adrian Dee, Canon of Chichester, died unmarried, but his younger sons, John and Daniel, left descendants.