

Williams, John (1841 – 1914)

John Williams was born on 2nd July 1841 in Wales. He served what was then termed his apprenticeship under Dr. Imidge. He took the degree of Doctor of Medicine of Edinburgh about 1860. He practised in London for a time, and also in Suffolk (England). His health breaking down he went to America and practised in Chicago. He did not remain there long, but came to Victoria in 1870. He was soon elected resident medical officer at the Bendigo Hospital. After a short term there he became Resident Physician at the Melbourne Hospital in 1875. In 1881 he was lecturer in Materia Medica and Therapeutics at the University of Melbourne, and in 1884 lecturer in Clinical Medicine. John Powell Williams was his son, born c.1896.

An obituary in the Argus reported, "About 1877 he commenced practising in Collins Street east, and soon gained a very extensive clientele. He was a practical physician of the highest rank. On the medical side of the Melbourne Hospital he occupied a position corresponding to that which the late Sir Thomas Fitzgerald occupied on the surgical side. All generations of students have been under his influence and rejoice to call him their master. He finally retired from the Melbourne Hospital in 1904 and was made consulting physician to the institution."

He was president of the medical section of the first medical congress of Australasia, held in Adelaide in 1887. He was for four years joint editor of the "Australian Medical Journal". He was interested in medical education, and was for many years a member of the University Council. He was President of the Medical Society of Victoria in 1887.

In private practice Dr. Williams was very successful, and for many years was one of the leading consultants in Melbourne. Personally, he was of genial disposition and extremely popular both with students and patients. Ill-health compelled his practical retirement for his final few years. He died on 21st April 1914 and was buried at Brighton Cemetery.

Last updated 12 May 2025.

Sources: Obituaries, Trove, Argus, Wed 22 April 1914, p.14; Australian Medical Journal, 25 April 1914, p. 1535.

Compiled by Allan Mawdsley

