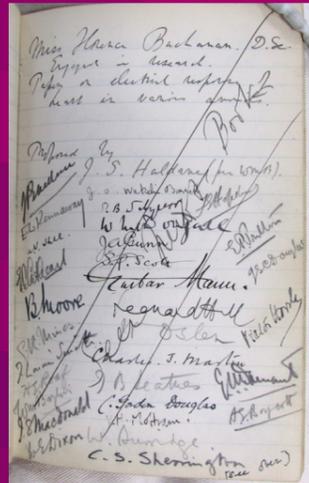


Florence Buchanan and the admittance of women to The Physiological Society



The entry for Florence Buchanan in the Candidates Book from 1912.

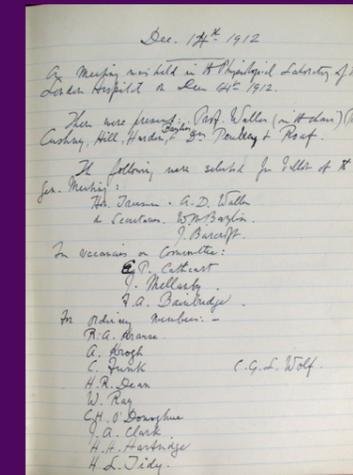
In 1912 John Scott Haldane proposed Florence Buchanan for membership of The Physiological Society

Haldane had been a demonstrator in physiology at Dundee when in 1887 he was invited by his uncle, John Scott Burden Sanderson, the Professor of Physiology at Oxford, to work in his new department. In 1895 Burden Sanderson moved to the Regius Professorship of Medicine and invited Florence, 'a daughter of his old friend Sir George Buchanan', to be his research assistant, carrying out his electrophysiology studies. After his death in 1905, both Haldane (who had a laboratory in his home and resigned his Readership after Sherrington was appointed professor) and Florence Buchanan continued to work in Oxford; they were family friends and the Haldane children are said to have known her as 'Aunt Florence'.

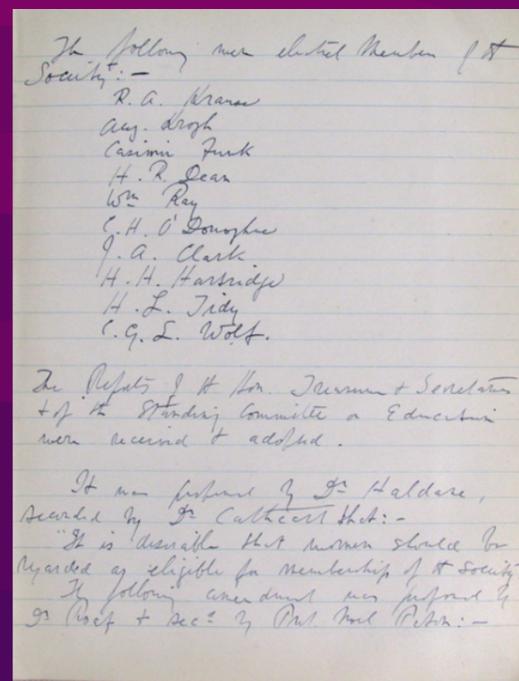
For admittance to The Physiological Society, a person first had to be proposed by a member and entered in the 'Candidates Book'; signatures of support were added by other members. Haldane duly proposed Florence Buchanan, and signatures were added. All seemed well until the next step in the process: the Candidates Book went to the Committee of The Society for them to prepare a list of candidates for a ballot of the membership.

The minutes of the Committee Meeting of 14 December 1912 have a list of 10 names for the ballot, but Florence Buchanan is not among them. The ballot was held at the AGM of 13 January 1913 and the 10 candidates were duly 'elected members of the society'.

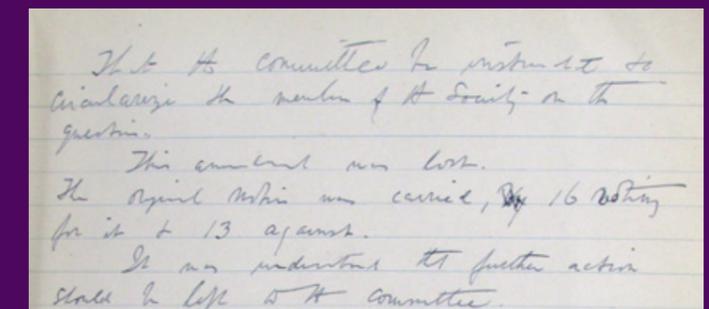
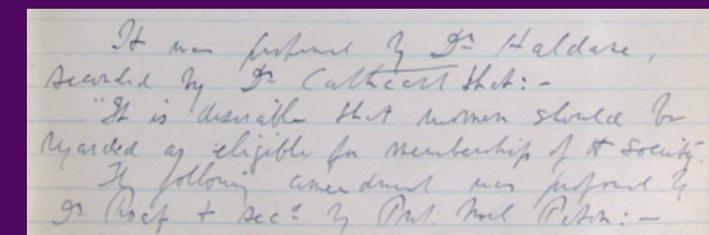
But things did not rest there: after the reports of the Treasurer, Secretaries and Education Committee, the minutes record that: 'It was proposed by Dr Haldane, seconded by Dr Cathcart that:- "It is desirable that women should be regarded as eligible for membership of the society".' It was then proposed that the membership should be 'circularised' on the question, but this was rejected. 'The original motion was carried, 16 voting for it & 13 against.' But it would not be until July 1915 that Florence Buchanan and five other women were finally elected members.



The minutes of the Committee from 14 December 1912 listing the candidates to go forward for the membership ballot. August Krogh is one of them.



At the AGM of January 1913: the names of the successful candidates and the motion from Haldane.



At the AGM of January 1913: Haldane's motion that 'it is desirable that women should be regarded as eligible for membership of the society.'