

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/the-police-surgeon-medico-legal-networks-and-criminal-investigation-in-victorian-scotland/>

This video discusses a research project stemming from the author's doctoral thesis at the University of Western Australia, which focused on the history of forensic medicine in 19th century Edinburgh, particularly the contributions of Professor Henry Littlejohn. Littlejohn, a prominent figure, served as a police surgeon for over five decades, a role that intertwined his medical expertise with law enforcement and public health.

The narrative describes his significant involvement in criminal cases, public health reports, and his eventual rise to a knighthood and a prestigious faculty position at the University of Edinburgh. Despite his influential role, Littlejohn remains somewhat overlooked in the history of forensic medicine. The author highlights how Littlejohn's work exemplified the practical aspects of forensic medicine, emphasizing his collaborations with police and legal professionals, as well as the challenges he faced in addressing forensic matters within the evolving legal context of the time.

The author aims to explore more about the intricate relationships between forensic medicine and law enforcement, particularly how these connections shaped criminal investigations and prosecution processes. The research reveals that forensic work during this period was not highly specialized but heavily reliant on practical experience and collaboration among various medical and legal practitioners.

In summary, the text outlines the author's ongoing research into Henry Littlejohn's career, aiming to shed light on the development of forensic medicine and its relationship with the legal system in 19th century Edinburgh, while emphasizing the importance of understanding historical practices through detailed case records and collaborations.