

[Home](#)[Contents](#)[jameslindlibrary.org](#)**Records**[Title Page](#)[Key Passages](#)[Commentary](#)[Biography](#)[Context](#)

## Tröhler U. Edward Alanson (1747-1823)

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Edward Alanson (1747-1823) was apprenticed to a local surgeon, studied for a time with John Hunter in London, and was subsequently appointed as a surgeon at the Liverpool Infirmary in 1770. The Infirmary had been founded in 1749. Twenty years later, it experienced a substantial medical shake-up when all six of its consultant posts, three surgical and three medical, fell vacant, and six young men with original and enquiring minds were appointed. Some of them were already interested in statistical recording. Throughout his career, for example, Alanson had kept a careful record of all his obstetric cases (which eventually totalled nearly 4,000 between 1761 to 1830). These interests were shared by Matthew Dobson (?1731-1784), appointed as a physician the same year as Alanson, and Henry Park (1744-1830), appointed as a surgeon in 1767 after training with Percival Pott in London and Le Cat in Rouen.

These young men were more than colleagues at one hospital. "There was a remarkably close friendship and co-operation, not only with the surgeons but with the three equally young and brilliant physicians" (Oldham 1977). There was also teamwork, the consultants helping each other in their many research projects. This was the atmosphere in which Alanson, and a little later Dobson and James Currie, wrote.

### Reference

Oldham JB (1977). The dawn of surgery in Liverpool. In: Ross JA, ed. Collected papers concerning Liverpool medical history. Liverpool, Part 2: 14-27.

[Title Page](#)[Key Passages](#)[Commentary](#)[Biography](#)[Context](#)[Back](#)[Home](#)[Contents](#)