

# From the pen of

by Jerome Whitney HLCCH



Jerome has been actively involved in homeopathy since 1970 as a student of Dr Thomas Maughan and the South London Group from which emerged the early founders of contemporary homeopathic education. Over the years he has developed a series of presentations and workshops designed to further the understanding of homeopathy. He continues to research and teach at homeopathic colleges, participate in the Homeopathy Course Providers Forum, and is a member of two ECCH education working parties. Jerome lives near Crystal Palace, and enjoys hiking and biking, when the sun shines.

The saga of Hahnemann's handwritten annotated 5th edition of the *Organon of the Art of Healing* has taken on a new life almost 170 years after its completion in 1842. The manuscript for the 6th edition, which was not published until 1921, is now available for all to read on the World Wide Web.

Additionally, the availability of the manuscript has provided *Homeopathy in Practice* with the opportunity to commission a professional graphologist to analyse samples of Hahnemann's personally penned notes that he inserted within it. We did this in order to glean further insight into the innate nature of his character, ambiance and manner as manifested via his handwriting. The resulting report that follows, later in this article, demonstrates the inherent consistency of his character and performance throughout his lifetime.

The background to Hahnemann's authorship of the 6th edition, and the subsequent extended interval prior to its acquisition in 1920 by the American homeopaths James Ward and William Boericke, has long been a fascinating history in its own right that has now been augmented by its journey into digitalisation. The following is a summary of that journey accompanied by the graphological analysis of Hahnemann's handwriting.

## Changes introduced in the 6th edition

Unlike the conservative, stringent rules of the 4th edition, the 1833 5th edition of the *Organon* represented the introduction of a degree of controlled flexibility and guidelines that is extended and enlarged with the revisions and additions that Hahnemann penned into the 6th edition. In the margins of his personal copy of the 5th edition, and on interleaved scraps of paper, he advises the practitioner to formulate the remedy in liquid form – an approach that allows the practitioner to:

a) repeat the remedy during improvement in order to accelerate

- the time for cure
- b) tailor the repetition to the nature of the illness: frequent for acutes; days or weeks for chronics
- c) provide for intercurrent remedies
- d) alter the dynamisation of the remedy with succussion prior to each administration
- e) alter the size of the dosage: i.e. the quantity of liquid of each administration
- f) only utilise repetition with liquid remedies; if dry remedies are to be prescribed then the rules listed in the 4th edition apply.

Note also that the above guidelines appeared prior to the introduction of the millesimal or LM series of potencies that he later introduced in the 6th edition and became known only on its publication in 1921.

## The result of the marriage to Melanie

The background context, within which Hahnemann's increasing flexibility appears in the 6th edition, is simultaneous with him meeting and later marrying Melanie d'Hervilly in 1835, and their subsequent move from Kothen, Germany, to Paris. This placed Hahnemann in the position of

being far more readily accessible to patients and his disciples who, by then, had spread around the globe. Melanie practised alongside him during the final innovative years of his life, thus providing not only companionship but also an ongoing dialogue regarding homeopathy. Although not the cause of Hahnemann's innovation in the 6th edition, Melanie's presence and supportive role provided the opportunity for it to flower.

## The 78-year delay in publication of the 6th edition

Later, however, as the inheritor of Hahnemann's estate, it was Melanie who initiated the 78-year delay in the publication of the 6th edition, a delay that has had repercussions right into the 21st century. Melanie's reluctance to allow the working manuscript of the expanded and annotated 5th edition to be published was based on a number of excuses, including the fear of alteration of the text and meaning from that intended by Hahnemann.

According to Haehl in his 1922 biography of Hahnemann, Melanie replied to an inquirer in about 1877 to the effect that ...

... her husband had repeatedly required of her a solemn oath that all copies of his works should be made under her supervision, 'so that no malicious and deceptive alterations of the text' could take place. As to the publication of the works, she was to wait until the rancour of his contemporaries had subsided.

Haehl, in the biography, elaborates an ongoing series of promises by Melanie to loan various manuscript documents as well as the 6th edition; however, she reneges repeatedly so that none are ever forwarded. As

# Hahnemann!



*Sam. Hahnemann*

early as 1856 Baron von Bönninghausen, Hahnemann's friend and father of Melanie's adopted daughter's husband, had suggested publication of the 6th edition but to no avail. Meanwhile, over the years, Melanie held negotiations with various American homeopaths. At one point she was asking for \$50,000 which is the equivalent of \$1,330,000 today.

Despite the Americans' efforts to obtain funds by subscription, the sums being asked were never raised, even when Melanie's son-in-law Karl von Bönninghausen lowered the asking price to \$25,000 (\$650,000 dollars in today's terms).

In 1870, at the start of the Franco-Prussian War, Karl von Bönninghausen returned to Germany and the Hahnemann manuscripts were shipped there for safekeeping. The documents were to remain with the Bönninghausens until 1920, prior to their subsequent publication in 1921.

## Purchase of the manuscript in 1920

The purchase by William Boericke and James Ward of Hahnemann's handwritten, annotated copy of the 5th edition in 1920 for \$1,000 (\$10,700 dollars today) represented the culmination of an almost 30-year quest. They had contacted Haehl in 1891 about the possibility of his negotiating with the Bönninghausens regarding purchase of the manuscript. The result of their persistent efforts brought about the publication by Haehl of the 6th edition in German in 1921, and the American edition by Boericke in 1922.

It is worth emphasising that 88 years had passed since the publication of the 5th edition of the *Organon* in 1833. This meant that the 5th edition had become the entrenched bible of homeopathy on a worldwide scale. In the meantime the monumental works and influence of James Tyler Kent had been introduced into homeopathic interpretation, understanding, and practice, dramatically reshaping both the approach to homeopathy materia medica interpretation and repertory symptom search. This had occurred at a time when alternative medicine and homeopathy were declining disciplines in Europe and North America. In the face of these factors, it is not surprising that the 6th edition, although now in the public domain, exerted relatively small influence on the overall practice of homeopathy by many homeopaths.

## The circuitous route to appearance on the World Wide Web

The ongoing saga of the 6th edition manuscript is succinctly described by Cameron and Mix on their web

page *From Hahnemann's hand to your computer screen:*

In 1925, Ward and Boericke placed Hahnemann's manuscript volume in the library of the Homeopathic Foundation of California in San Francisco. The foundation's library was relocated to the Hahnemann Hospital of San Francisco in 1940. At that time, Dr Howard Engle, recognising the value of the *Organon* manuscript volume, placed it in a locked safe. Later, it was moved to a rented safety deposit box in a local bank. In 1962, most of the Homeopathic Foundation of California's library was donated to the UCSF (University of California San Francisco) Library. The manuscript of the *Organon* remained in a safety deposit box.

The transcript copy of the manuscript came to the UCSF Library in 2008, after a librarian at the California Pacific Medical Center happened to find it and contacted UCSF's manager of archives and special collections. In the same box with the transcript was a scrapbook containing photographs of homeopaths and historic landmarks such as Hahnemann's home and monuments to Hahnemann – the illustrations for Haehl's biography of Hahnemann.

When it became known that Hahnemann's hand-annotated copy of the 5th edition was available for researchers to view and study at the Archives & Special Collections of the UCSF Library, a homeopath pilgrimage of such proportion evolved that the decision was taken to make it available on the web:

The high level of user interest in the *Organon* led to the decision to present it digitally on the web. The goal was to create a digital collection of UCSF's homeopathy holdings, using the manuscript volume of the *Organon* as the

➤ cornerstone of the collection. The online collection would showcase the prized manuscript, but also display other materials that are part of the overall homeopathy collection and create a forum for community discussion. The digitalisation and public availability of copious amounts of Hahnemann's handwritten notation has also made it possible to submit copies of his scripts for character analysis.

**Graphological analysis of Hahnemann's handwriting**

We were so excited by the availability of this fascinating work that we contacted the professional graphologist Lorraine Davies for an analysis of Hahnemann's handwriting. As well as examples of handwriting from several pages of Hahnemann's 6th edition manuscript we also sent her a signature that appears in Julian Winston's *The Faces of Homoeopathy*. She performed the reading prior to learning the details of Hahnemann's life story and provided us with the following illuminating

**profile:**

Samuel Hahnemann appeared in his formative years to be a more emotional and expressive person but, in later years, he became more independent and self sufficient in that he withdrew from public life somewhat in order to concentrate on his work. He would communicate with those whom he trusted, exchanging ideas, views, opinions and feelings. Many subjects or topics were discussed and pursued. These conversations added to his own knowledge and, at the same time, enabled him to sift the dross without being too easily influenced by all and sundry.

He was well mannered, polite, with adherence to the social graces, with no desire to upset anyone and aware of another person's boundaries as such. The element of shyness and reserve stemmed the strong feelings of spontaneity and enthusiasm that he experienced, however occasionally, when speaking; he could become rather abrupt or dismissive.

Hahnemann's fine mind quickly utilised the knowledge gained through

study and concentration upon facts as well as putting theory to practice in the everyday world. This gave him proof of the validity of received information and also his intuition, which he relied upon when he realised it provided correct insight on which to act. Hahnemann being logical and analytical in the mental realms, with a strong desire to reach a conclusion, became irritated when interrupted or disturbed. This continued until he felt he had reached an appropriate stopping point or goal that would allow an orientation towards future thought. Previous experience caused him to plan carefully, as accuracy and attention to detail were important aspects of his work.

In later years, he would become caught up in the finer details of his specialised subject, perhaps to the exclusion of other aspects of his life.

Hahnemann could experience a range of mood swings; when everything was going smoothly, he was a much happier person, but he also experienced disappointment and at some stage in his life even an element

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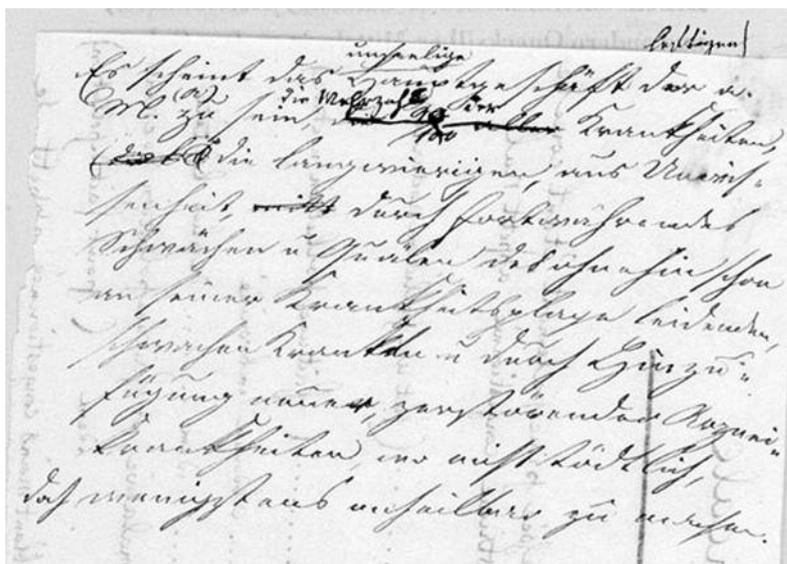
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Sample of Hahnemann's handwriting: Foreword to the 6th edition manuscript of the *Organon*, page V



Far left: Melanie Hahnemann



Left: Baron von Bönninghausen was Hahnemann's friend and father of Melanie's adopted daughter's husband

of fatalism. However, he regained his equilibrium when he achieved success. Occasionally, he would collect and reserve his energies, giving himself time to think more clearly and then proceed once more.

Hahnemann did not wish to depend on other people, apart from welcoming approval of his work. This resulted in an independent spirit who preferred to work on his own, until he needed to share with others. This trait became much stronger in later years. He was a very proud person, and his background was important to him, as well as the traditions to which he adhered in his formative years.

His signature shows his frailty and the highs and lows he still had within his make-up; but generally, he was a very clever and intellectual man with the ability to pursue his own – and others' – goals.

**Conclusion**

The journey of the manuscript of the 6th edition of the *Organon* from the hand of Hahnemann until its publication in 1921 is a fascinating story in its own right. However, that has

now been augmented by the circuitous continuation of that journey leading to its digitalisation and availability on the web in 2009 as outlined in this article.

It is evident that the characteristics attributed to Hahnemann by his associates and others who had direct contact with him, as well as the precision and care he demonstrated in his research and published writings, were clearly evident in the style, quality and characteristics of his handwriting.

Thus the pen strokes of Hahnemann and the manner of his presentation of all six progressive editions of the *Organon* exhibit a consistency of character that demonstrate the essential integrity of his inner being with his outer manifestation and contribution to humanity. In contemporary-speak, it may be summed up as 'What you see is what you get', a refreshing respite in today's digital world!

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Jerome Whitney can be contacted at [jerome@jwhitney.demon.co.uk](mailto:jerome@jwhitney.demon.co.uk). □