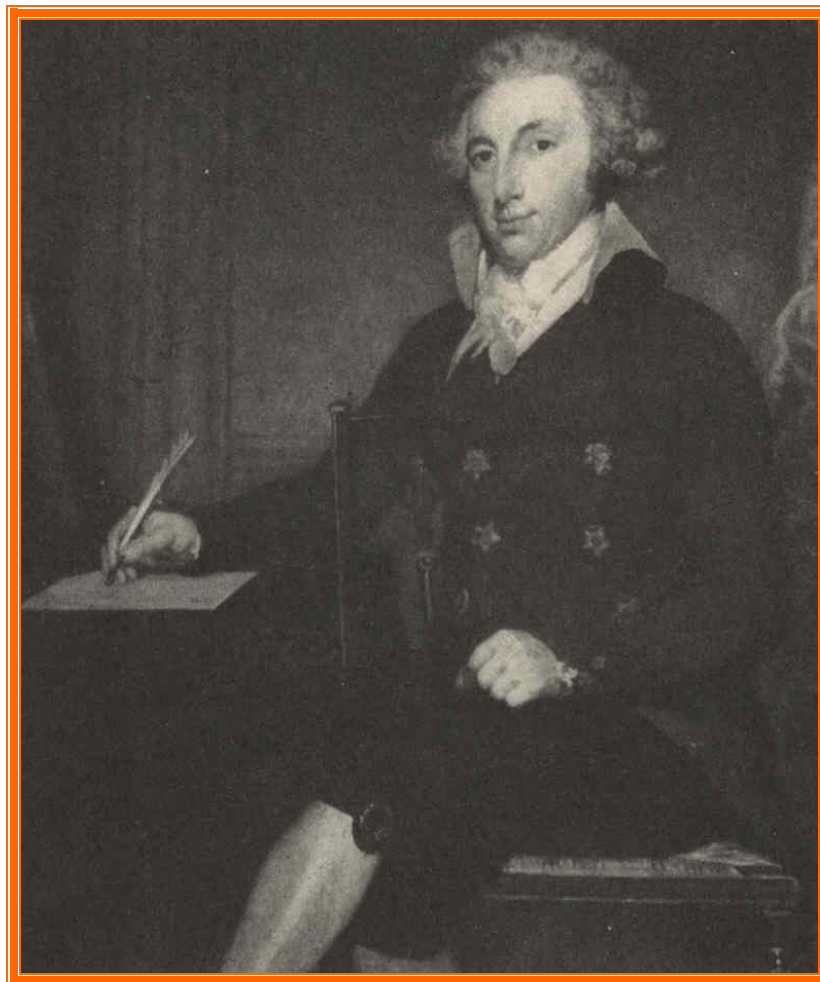




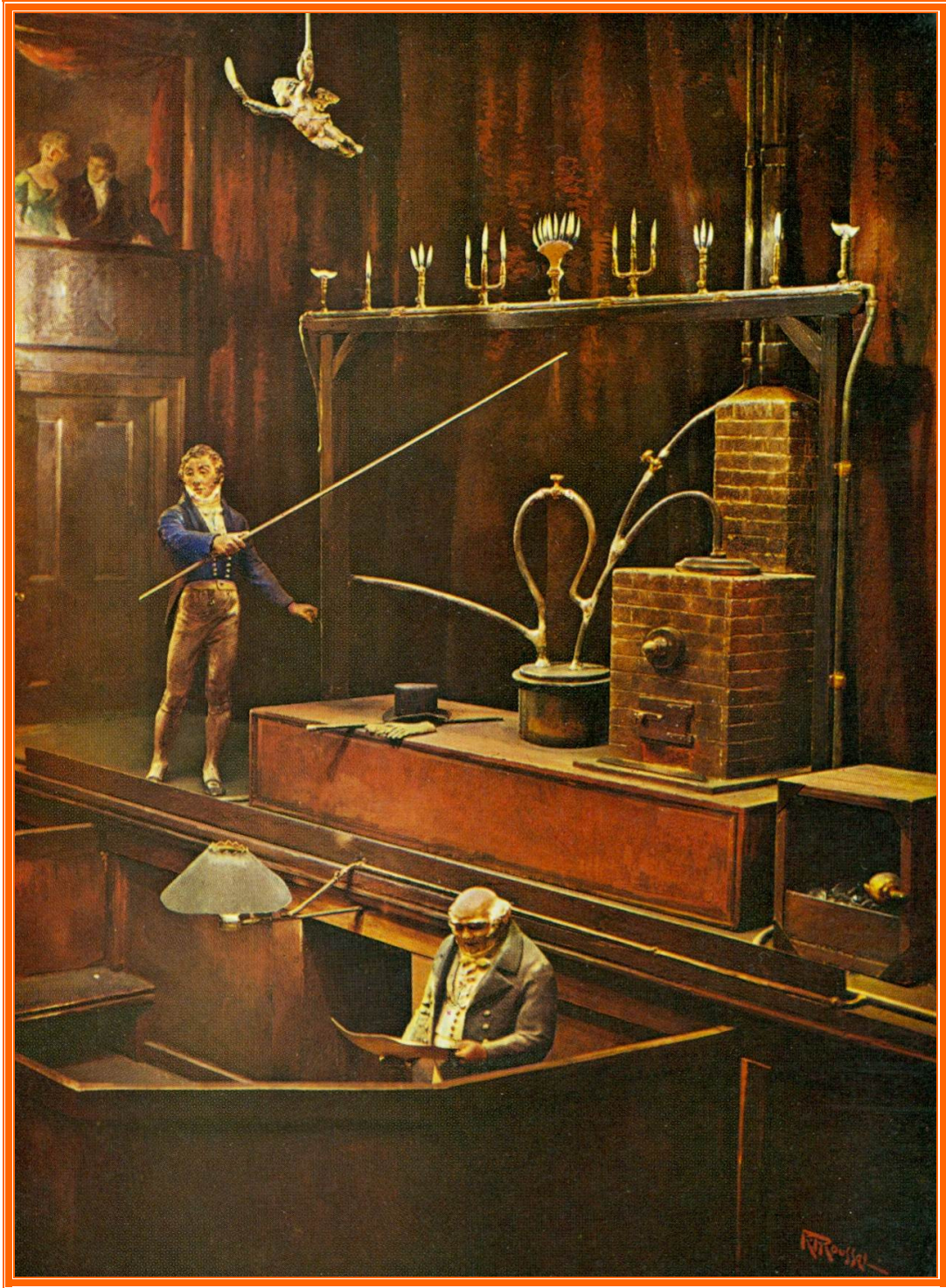
F A WINSOR
1763-1830



Gas Lighting Pioneer

One of the least attractive of the pioneers of gas lighting was a German entrepreneur, F. A. Winsor, who claimed to be the inventor but did little other than some very dubious promotional work which nevertheless provided the impetus from which many early developments were to spring. In 1804 he lectured on 'gas light' at the Lyceum Theatre, London. At least, his English being so poor, he arranged for his lectures to be given for him whenever the alcoholically inclined lecturer was sober enough. A boy distributed prospectuses for 'The National Light and Heat Company' promising profits of £570 per annum on each £5 down payment on 20,000 £50 shares. The coal gas itself, at 15/- per thousand cubic feet, was described as 'more congenial to the lungs than oxygen'. Winsor acquired a house in Pall Mall, London, and on 4th June 1807, the King's birthday, he exhibited lights and a gas-lit transparency along the walls. In 1809-10 his gas company, the first such public company in the world, was well established, but it took three years and many proceedings in Parliament before it became chartered. The Gas Light and Coke Company remained in existence until the industry was nationalized in 1948, but Winsor's original shareholders did not benefit

Mini-Biography (Science Museum)



Winsor Demonstrating Gas Lighting ("Lighting: 2," Science Museum, 1967)



**F. A. WINSOR (1763-1830),
a persistent exploiter and propagandist.**

He was the chief figure in preparing the way for the formation of the first gas company. Pall Mall, London, the first street to be lit with gas, is seen in the background of this contemporary portrait of Winsor.

(From the original in possession of the Gas Light and Coke Co.)

From "Lighting by Gas"



Pall Mall Gas Lighting, 1807



In 1808, the following notices appeared in the "Press." Apparently Winsor had satisfactorily demonstrated his scheme and had worn down unreasonable opposition and prejudice:—

INTENDED LIGHT AND HEAT COMPANY.

Pall-Mall, April 9, 1808.

THE practicability of Lighting the Metropolis by means of Mr. WINSOR'S Gas being now satisfactorily established by the long continued experiment of lighting Pall-Mall, the Committee of the Trustees of the Fund for assisting Mr. Winsor in this and his other experiments conceive its continuance unnecessary. From this motive therefore, and being personally pledged to the Paving Committee of the Parish of Saint James's that the Posts and Lamps, which were by their permission for the above purpose placed in Pall-Mall, should so soon as the Committee was satisfied, be taken down; the Committee thinks it proper to state for the information of the Subscribers to the Fund, that the lighting of this street will cease on the 16th instant.

The Committee state for the further information of the Subscribers to the Fund, that a General Meeting will be called in the next month to receive a report of the proceedings of this Committee.

"Star," April 11, 1808.

NATIONAL LIGHT AND HEAT COMPANY,

For the Introduction of

COKE AND GAS LIGHTS.

Applications from various parts in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, urge me to explain, that by carbonizing instead of burning Fuel, the whole weight and substance is saved in Coke, Oil, Tar, ammonial Liquor, actous Acids and pure Gas (hitherto wasted in nuisible smoke), which alone is worth 15*l.* per chaldron in light. This Gas flows cold and transparent as air, in any tubes to any place, and burns clearer and brighter than wax and oil. It may light all rooms, halls, shops, streets, squares, road, and coasts, and serve as fire and light for every culinary purpose. Hence, it is proposed to establish Public Ovens in Cities; to issue Stoves, &c., for distant Houses and Manufactories, to grant Licences, Instructions, and Drawings throughout the Realm and the Colonies, on a reasonable scale of the size, lights, and products required. The saving is about 20*l.* in every Chaldron of Coal, and as much in proportion from Timber, &c. All modern contrivances to save Heat are reversed, and proved by experiments, elucidating Count Rumford's ingenious principles, how his best Furnaces lost above one-third of the heat generated.

To fulfil my original promise, and satisfy several Country Gentlemen, Subscriptions will henceforth be received at the most respectable Country Banks, whither my Plans, Estimates, and Share Receipts, will be transmitted, and where the Deposits are to remain till called for by the Provisional Committee of Trustees.

Twenty Thousand Fifty Pound Shares constitute a Million of Capital, of which 100,000*l.* disbursements, at 5*l.* Deposits, will only be wanting. The other Calls will be gradually deducted from the Dividends.

Five Shares pay only 3*l.* each; Fifteen, 2*l.* 10*s.* each; Thirty, 2*l.* each; Sixty, 1*l.* each; and Hundred Shares and upwards, 10*s.* each; with a written acknowledgment for the remainder of the Deposit when called for by the Committee. Five Shares to have one vote, Fifteen two votes, Thirty three votes, Sixty four votes, Hundred and upwards five votes. Fifty Shares are eligible for a Governor or Director.

N.B. Several respectable Subscribers after seeing my experiments, have extended their Shares in the above Scales of Deposit.

WINSOR, Inventor, Patentee, and Founder.

97 and 98 Pall-Mall.

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OUTLINE OF HISTORY OF LIGHTING BY GAS

By
DEAN CHANDLER

FOREWORD by
DR. CHARLES CARPENTER, C.B.E., M.Inst.C.E.
President of the South Metropolitan Gas Company



1936 (Heritage Group Collection)

Admission for

To prevent the pressure of Crowd, by several hundreds of Persons coming to one lecture, the Experiments, &c. will be given twice every Wednesday, viz. from 8 till half past 9; and from 10 till half past 11 o'clock. This will suit the conveniency of *early* and *late*, of *near* and *distant*, Visitors.

Mr. WINSOR, the Patentee, most respectfully invites all Members of Parliament to a constant free Admission, every TUESDAY evening, during the present Session, to enable them to speak to Facts, whenever this important National Concern is brought before them as Legislators.

NATIONAL

Light and Heat Company, No. 97, PALL-MALL,

TO BE ESTABLISHED WITH

A MILLION of CAPITAL

In 20,000 Fifty-pound Shares,

At £5 deposit only, as the other £45 is to be made up from the Dividends.

To be under the Sanction of an Act of Parliament.

THE Share Receipts of this lucrative Concern are now delivering at this Office, at the Banks of Messrs. DEVAYNES and Co. 39, *Pall Mall*, and Sir MATTHEW BLOXAM and Co. 27, *Gracechurch-Street*, where Plans and Estimate Tables may be had gratis, as also at LLOYD'S and BATSON'S Coffee-Houses. Official Experiments proved one Chaldron of Coal to contain 23l. 2s. in value; which gives above 242 Millions for the yearly consumption of the realm. The estimate savings are only rated at 114,845,294l. all costs of carbonising, &c. deducted; and if the Company only realize 1-10th of this reduced Sum, each 5l. deposit will secure to the Subscribers 570l. per Ann. Wonderful as this may appear, the Estimates and Experiments will stand the test of the best calculators and chemists. The whole is detailed in Mr. WINSOR'S Pamphlet on the *National Light and Heat Company*.

Many respectable Subscribers, seeing my experiments, have applied for an increase of Shares on the following scale of deposits, which I cheerfully submit to the Public as the most flattering testimony of the encouragement of my plan.

- Five Shares, to pay 3l. deposit each, and have 1 vote.
 - Fifteen Shares, to pay 2l. 10s. deposit each, and have 2 votes.
 - Thirty Shares, to pay 2l. deposit each, and have 3 votes.
 - Sixty Shares, to pay 1l. 10s. deposit each, and have 4 votes.
 - One Hundred Shares and upwards, 1l. each, and have 5 votes.
- Beyond which no vote allowable.

N.B. A Deputation of the Committee have made official experiments with one bushel of Coal, which proved above the value estimated in my table.

. This plan is now rendered so generally beneficial, that every person, commanding 5l. deposit only, may secure a handsome yearly Income for Life, and provision for his descendants, which is the more certain, as the example of the *New River Shares* having risen from 100l. to 13,000l. and upwards, is now before our eyes.