

Rahere set to work first to build the church and then a priory. Having no money to pay for the building, he adopted a singular expedient. Wearing his cap and bells, he started men carrying stone and mortar as a jest. The humor of the thing spread, and vast numbers joined in the joke of erecting a building under such conditions. Though constructed in this way at a minimum of cost, part of the original building, dating from 1102, remains intact to this day.

The original hospital was a part of the priory. On the dissolution of the monastery under Henry VIII., it passed to the Crown, but at the instance of Sir Richard Gresham, then Lord Mayor of London, it was reestablished as a hospital, with a royal endowment. Damaged by the great fire in the reign of King Charles II., it was rebuilt at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and has been added to since. Harvey, who discovered the circulation of the blood, was for thirty-four years physician there.—*Marquise de Fontenoy*.