

GEOFFREY DUNCAN CHISHOLM
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Geoffrey Chisholm was born at Hawera, North Island, New Zealand on 30th September 1931 of Scottish ancestry, and died in Edinburgh on 10th November 1994.

His early education was undertaken at the Scots College in Wellington, New Zealand, and when his parents moved to London after the 1939-45 war, he was sent to Malvern College in Worcestershire. From school he entered St Andrews University where he graduated MB, ChB in 1955. At that time clinical studies by St Andrews medical students were undertaken at the Medical School in Dundee, where in due course he held house appointments in the medical and surgical professorial units.

The direction of his future career was reflected in his early surgical qualifications of FRCS Edinburgh and London, and in 1965 he graduated ChM at St Andrews with high commendation for his thesis on recovery from ureteric obstruction. At an earlier stage of his postgraduate career he had moved to London where his appointments, with a brief diversion into orthopaedic surgery, were concerned with general surgical and urological themes, with a strong academic component. Much of this formative phase of his surgical career was based on appointments in the academic department of surgery at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School at the Hammersmith Hospital, at a time when haemodialysis was still an end in itself, and before renal transplantation had become a practical proposition with the development of immunosuppressive techniques, more specific than those provided by corticosteroid therapy.

From 1961 to 1963 he visited the USA and held research appointments first in the Brady Urological Institute at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, under the direction of Professor W W Scott and later at the White Memorial Hospital in Los Angeles, where he came under the influence of Dr Roger Barnes, a pioneer of the technique of transurethral resection of the prostate gland.

When he returned to the Postgraduate Medical School in London in 1963 haemodialysis was still a major preoccupation of urologists, a discipline in turn to which he was now totally committed. In 1967 he was promoted to consultant urologist at the Hammersmith Hospital, and later at St Peter's Hospital, part of the Institute of Urology, where he held an appointment as Honorary Senior Lecturer from 1972. Even earlier his contribution to obstetrical and gynaecological practice was recognised by an appointment as Honorary Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the University of London.

Soon after his return from the United States evidence began to accumulate in a wide range of journals of the diversity of his surgical, urological and more purely scientific interests. While the target for virtually all his research was ultimately urological in nature, he tapped into an extensive range of disciplines which contributed effectively and specifically to the objectives he had in mind. Thus the techniques of nuclear physics, microbiology, of immunology and many branches of pathology, of endocrinology and biochemistry, all were pressed into service when the need arose. However in the environment in which he worked there was generally available a wealth of clinical and scientific talent as potential collaborators. It was one of his most effective and natural attributes that he found it easy to establish confident working personal relationships with professional and technical colleagues. Indeed one of the striking features of his time at the Postgraduate Medical School and later when he moved to Edinburgh was the number and range of postgraduate students from European, Asian and Antipodean centres that he found it possible to accommodate and train in clinical and experimental urological surgery, as well as in the supportive disciplines. This it may be added was occurring at a time when the rate of development in so many relevant techniques and skills such as endoscopy, fibreoptics, electronics, laser surgery, ultrasound, chemotherapy, nuclear medicine, immunology, endocrinology and transplant surgery was such that too close concentration on any one of these by a departmental head would have restricted progress in the field of urology as a whole.

When he came to Edinburgh in 1977 he succeeded Sir Michael Woodruff in the University Chair of Surgery which was then moved to the Western General Hospital. He was also appointed as Director of the Nuffield Transplant Unit and as Honorary Consultant Urological Surgeon at the same hospital. Thus he had a busy clinical commitment to meet. However two important existing academic appointments in the Department provided most effective logical additions to the available skills in the department, namely Professor Keith James in immunology, and Dr Fouad Habib in endocrinology. A subsequent surgical consultant appointment of Mr T B Hargreave added a special interest and skill in the investigation of problems in male infertility. Thus the department was particularly well equipped to continue and extend the programme of research which Professor Chisholm had established at Hammersmith Hospital and which in the time that remained to him in Edinburgh led to the production of more than 400 papers.

He was clearly endowed with special ability as a communicator. This was apparent in his normal conversation, in his lectures and in his writing. Evidence suggests that this was not only a natural gift, but as much or more the outcome of logical thinking and careful preparation. For 16 years after his arrival in Edinburgh he served as Editor of the *British Journal of Urology*, and for shorter periods as Editor or Managing Editor of *Current Opinion in Urology*, *Urological Research* and the *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*. In addition to this he served on the editorial boards of twelve other general surgical or urological journals, a reflection of his popularity as an informed and effective critic, as an authoritative referee lending prestige to any organisation he agreed to support, and as a tribute to what must be reported as near boundless reserves of energy as well as their efficient use. He served as joint editor of three editions of the *Scientific Foundations of Urology*, of two editions of *Surgical Management*, and as editor of a long series of publications on *Clinical Practice in Urology* and *Postgraduate Tutorials in Postgraduate Medicine (Urology)*.

In 1988 he was elected President of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, having served earlier as an Examiner, a member of Council, and subsequently as Regent, a distinction awarded to a select few. Presidents of the medical Royal Colleges in the UK carry a heavy responsibility not only for the administration of their own organisations, but more particularly representing the views of their College not only at a purely professional level, but also in negotiations with governmental bodies. In addition much travel by the President is now expected by the Fellows of these Colleges living and working overseas, often, but not only, in ex-colonial countries, and also by recently established professional bodies with similar objectives to those of the UK colleges. Formal arrangements for postgraduate medical education and vocational training as well as continuing medical education throughout a doctor's career have now been made an obligation for the individual, but also for the Royal Colleges who are charged with responsibility for organising and supervising training programmes, and for the continuing professional education of their membership.

Geoffrey served the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh for much longer than the period of his Presidency as their representative on the national (UK) body concerned with organising and supervising training programmes in Urology, and later as Chairman of the Joint (UK) Committee in Higher Surgical Training for the whole range of surgical disciplines.

In more recent years the demands on his time from professional bodies in Europe, the Middle East, Southern Africa, Asia, Australia and North America added to existing pressures to maintain and improve the range of clinical services, undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and vocational training, administration, lines of research, and literary commitments which he chose to follow. A characteristic of virtually everything that he undertook was the standard of performance which he set himself and others. Particularly in the literary field this depended greatly on purely personal endeavour. In other fields some sharing of the effort and delegation could be used to enable some extension of the range of activity, provided he was satisfied that the outcome matched his standards. In more recent years many of his visits overseas were in response to requests to deliver prestigious eponymous lectures, to accept membership of urological and other surgical bodies, to deal with some of his editorial advisory obligations, and to provide professional advice particularly where his discipline was in a development phase.

It is generally agreed that the department which he led with much skill and distinction has developed into an outstanding 'centre of excellence' in the field of urology with a world-wide reputation for its clinical service, for the quality of research, for its teaching programme and for the programme of training for postgraduate students who have been attracted from many centres around the world. He was awarded the CBE in 1992.

It may be added that in the light of his intense devotion to such a wide range of academic and clinical responsibilities that little time remained for relaxation, though one gained the impression that he really enjoyed all the various activities in which he was engaged. It is sad to reflect that he did not survive to enjoy the retiral which was not so remote and for which he was evidently beginning to prepare, for example with the purchase of a set of golf clubs! A sensitive palate for fine wines had allowed him to enjoy this indulgence while maintaining his devotion to professional objectives.

He is survived by his wife who trained as a scientist and worked with her husband in the earlier days: this enabled her to share in some of the excitement he derived from his professional work; they had two sons who are both graduates.

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