

IN MEMORIAM

SIR REGINALD WATSON-JONES

1902-1972

H. C. B. writes:

May I add a few words of respect to the memory of Sir Reginald Watson-Jones? My first thoughts go back to 1936 when, at an annual meeting of the British Medical Association at Oxford, his methods of treating fractures of the neck of the femur by internal fixation were opposed by Royal Whitman. In those days one got the impression that he was more of a prophet outside his own country than within it. No young medical officer who attended his lectures at Hammersmith in the early part of the second world war will ever forget this experience. He had us leaning forward on our toes at the end of three hours. These, I respectfully suggest, were his finest hours. His lectures and the Book that went with them had an influence which permeated every corner of the Commonwealth. He came to Australia on one occasion only, as Sims Commonwealth Professor in 1950, but his stature in my country is comparable to that of Winston Churchill, who never visited Australia. Everything he wrote attracted immediate attention and commanded unqualified respect.

What irony of fate that he should later sustain a fracture of the neck of the femur. I was fortunate to be present when he entertained Dr Austin Moore and thanked him for the prosthesis which stood him in such good stead for the rest of his life. There were other highlights: parties when he would skip and dance and challenge his friends to pick the bad hip. And finally, a sad visit only a few weeks before his death. If there is one outstanding feature of his personality which many will remember, it was his capacity to stop and listen to everyone and to make the enquirer feel both at ease and elated. His passing will be felt almost as keenly in the antipodes as in Oswestry or London.

IVOR MURRAY ROBERTSON

1902-1972

Ivor Robertson died at the age of seventy on April 7, 1972, after a short illness. Loyal, kindly, tolerant and wise, he was the ideal colleague, to whom one could always turn for a sympathetic and helpful view of one's problems. This was perhaps partly because of his wide outlook and experience outside orthopaedics, to which he came comparatively late.



After qualifying from St Bartholomew's Hospital in 1927 he spent three years at Sheffield Royal Infirmary, part of this time as Resident Surgical Officer. His surgical ambitions were frustrated by financial considerations, and he went into general practice at Watford. There he met S. L. Higgs, who was much impressed by his ability and personality. Despite the claims of practice he obtained the Edinburgh Fellowship in 1940, and when Higgs found the need of an assistant in the St Bartholomew's Orthopaedic Unit at Hill End it was to Ivor that he turned.

Here, in the Emergency Medical Service, his sterling character, dexterity, mature judgement and capacity for hard work soon made their mark. His

work in the treatment of chronic osteomyelitis by the excision of all dead bone, followed by the closure of the cavity by skin flaps and grafting, was perhaps his greatest contribution to knowledge, but he was also a pioneer in the use of penicillin and of cancellous bone grafts.

After the 1939–45 war he became orthopaedic surgeon to Croydon General Hospital, and later Director of Orthopaedics to the Group, but was happily able to continue an out-patient appointment at St Bartholomew's.

He was orthopaedic surgeon to the Royal Ballet and the Royal Ballet School. Michael Wood, director of the School, wrote that Ivor was "the friend, comforter and guide of several generations of dancers". His understanding of their special problems, his sincerity and insight into the way of life and outlook of these dedicated people enabled him to be of the greatest value to them and to the ballet in general.

In his short retirement he was ideally happy, engaged in his hobbies of painting, gardening and travelling with his caravan, and sustained by the love and companionship of his wife, son, daughter and grandchildren.

H. B. L.

WILLIAM FRAME WHITE

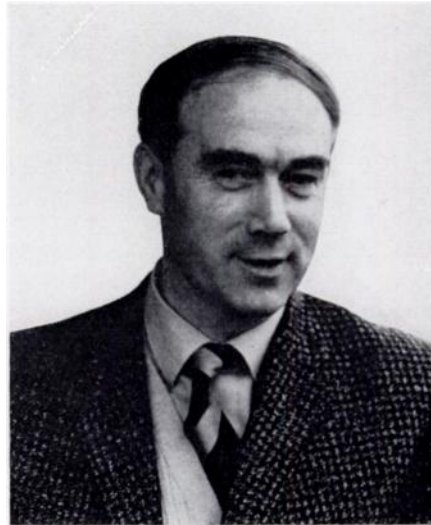
1917–1972

W. F. White, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon in the Southern Lanarkshire Group of Hospitals, died on Wednesday, November 22, aged fifty-five, of injuries sustained in a road accident on November 5.

Bill White's father was a much respected head teacher and rector in schools in Lanarkshire, including Hamilton Academy from which school Bill himself went on to Glasgow University, graduating in 1940. He inherited a lifelong interest in education and an unusual faculty for remembering names of patients, nurses and colleagues.

In the Royal Army Medical Corps he served in North Africa, Europe and India, returning to Glasgow and the Western Infirmary in 1946. Studying under Sir Charles Illingworth and Roland Barnes, he passed the examinations and was elected to Fellowship of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Colleges in 1948.

An appointment as Assistant Surgeon in Glasgow Royal Infirmary in 1949 with James Patrick saw the start of duties in Law Hospital where he became consultant in 1955. From the Royal Infirmary he obtained a travelling scholarship to America in 1953 and visited centres for hand surgery, including those of William J. Littler and Leo Mayer. Thus began a career in hand surgery which brought reputation and friends in many countries. Publications most remembered were on replacement of the missing thumb and the care of the spastic hand.



From membership of the Second Hand Club, Bill White went on to become a council member of the British Society for Surgery of the Hand and a Fellow of the British Orthopaedic Association. As a speaker and writer he devoted great care in the studied presentation in a deceptively simple and humorous delivery of much clear thought.

The abrupt interruption of such a useful life is a severe test of the faith in which Bill White himself was not lacking. Six years ago he suffered a severe coronary occlusion from

which he nonetheless rehabilitated himself completely. This year as usual on holiday in Arran he climbed mountains and swam in the cold northern waters as was his wont.

Bill White will be widely missed. June White and their family are sorely bereaved.

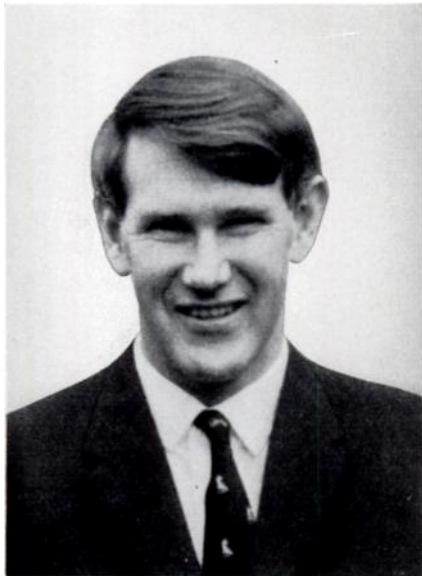
J. G.

GRAEME BALLANTYNE SMAILL

1928-1972

Graeme Smail died in Taumarunui Hospital on September 20, 1972, after a short illness. He was born in Gisborne in 1928 and was educated at Gisborne High School. In his young days he was a keen surf lifesaver and tennis player.

From Gisborne he went to Dunedin in 1947 to study medicine and graduated M.B., Ch.B.(N.Z.) in 1954. Thereafter he spent three years at Wellington Hospital as house surgeon and surgical registrar. Even at this stage he had developed a keen interest in orthopaedics, and he pursued the attainment of excellence in this speciality with a typical single-minded determination. He spent a year in temporary posts to finance himself and in 1959 went to England where he completed the F.R.C.S. examinations with despatch, becoming a Fellow in 1960.



The following two years were spent as registrar in orthopaedics at the Rowley Bristow Hospital in Surrey and then the West Middlesex Hospital. In 1962 he returned to New Zealand to take up the position of senior orthopaedic registrar at Wellington Hospital. He became a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons in 1962 and soon after was appointed full-time orthopaedic consultant at Wellington Hospital, a position he held for four years. In 1966 he entered private practice but continued to serve the Wellington Hospital Board as a visiting consultant up until the time of his death. In 1967 he was instrumental in

setting up the orthopaedic unit at the Hutt Hospital, and he worked as visiting consultant there for two years before returning to Wellington Hospital. Throughout this time he was also the consultant to the Home of Compassion, Island Bay. Despite his short life Graeme Smail made many contributions, and the death of such an active man has left a large gap. Among other things he had a great interest in children's orthopaedics and particularly in congenital dislocation of the hip. He was one of the first in New Zealand to recognise the value of early diagnosis by examination of the newborn, and in 1966 he won the Gillies Medal at the Annual Meeting of the New Zealand Orthopaedic Association for a paper on this subject. His efforts were responsible for the widespread adoption of these methods in New Zealand.

In addition to his large clinical practice he did extensive medico-legal work. He was a keen member of the New Zealand Orthopaedic Association and served on its executive.

As a colleague Graeme Smail was among the best—serious, concerned and totally reliable. Away from the worries of work he was a delightful companion and a good host. His home was landscaped and finished by himself in these last few years to a wonderful standard and he took great delight in building activities. Apart from this he was a keen golfer and skier. He will be sadly missed by his wide circle of friends. We extend our sympathy to his wife Hilda and his four children.

G. R. L.