

RETIRAL OF DR REG PASSMORE AS DEPUTY EDITOR OF PROCEEDINGS



Dr Passmore at the reception held in his honour talking to Dr E.L. Lloyd, Assistant Editor.

Dr David H. A. Boyd writes:

I first had the privilege of working with Reg Passmore after I became editor of the *Chronicle* in 1982 and Reg was editor of College Publications. Up to that time the *Chronicle* had been ably edited by Chalmers Davidson, then by Ernest Jellinek and lastly by Alastair Wright. The first issue in January 1971 consisted of fifteen pages of comment on the Fellowship and Membership and educational and social activities within the College. The cover with its bold, dark green and white and College façade design became well known and regarded over the next sixteen years. I have always thought that the excellent lectures and symposia organised in the College should reach a much wider audience. Those attending such events represented a small fraction of the Fellows and Members and those requesting copies of the St Andrew's Day symposia publications (the responsibility of the editor of College Publications) were relatively few and becoming fewer. It seemed tempting to use the *Chronicle* to solve this problem and in May 1983 it contained for the first time material of a purely professional or scientific nature. This was an account of the Collegiate Members' symposium and the text of the Croom lecture for 1982. Permission was granted to reduce the number of College Publications by increasing the scientific content of the *Chronicle* of which Reg Passmore became the Science Editor. In my association with Reg I learned more of the art of assembling material and being an editor than I had in my life until then. The transition to *Proceedings*, the change in format and the improved quality of scientific papers might have occurred earlier with Reg solely at the helm but I persuaded him that the College would be

more likely to accept evolution than revolution. In effect, a revolution did take place but I like to think it was relatively bloodless. I resigned the editorship in 1986 and under Bill Sircus's guidance *Proceedings* became a remarkably successful publication. But who can doubt the immense importance of Reg Passmore's erudition, patience and cheerful hard work in this achievement?

Professor B. M. Hegde (India) writes:

My first contact with Reg Passmore was through the College *Proceedings*. It was sometime later that I met this pleasant 'young man' in his eighties in the editorial office of the College. He soon greatly impressed me as an able and understanding editor, and I liked his courtesy in proffering criticism and cajoling changes that were necessary. From these beginnings a cordial friendship has developed.

Reg visited us in Mangalore two years ago with his son Giles and he quickly won the hearts of our young physicians in training and my colleagues at the medical school. Medicine has become international and in this fast shrinking 'global village' the Edinburgh College has a key role to play. Reg has made his contribution as a cultural ambassador for the College. We also salute him for his yeoman services to the Indian Medical Service during the Second World War. The worldwide influence he has exerted over many years in nutrition and medical education is well recognised.

One admires Reg's vast store of learning, his mastery of the English language and his voracious appetite for new knowledge. These attributes combine elegantly in all his editorial work. In his selection of manuscripts for publication he was adept at separating the wheat from the chaff.

At a time when the ideals of medicine are gradually being displaced by market forces, editors like Reg help to retain the highest traditions of British medicine which have dominated the medical world. *Proceedings* is the best link between the College and its overseas Fellows and we owe a particular debt of gratitude to Reg for enabling this link to be forged more closely and more effectively.

It is a pleasure to pay tribute to a man in our midst who exemplifies Shakespeare's words:

*What a piece of work is a man!
How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty!*

Dr Andrew Doig writes:

Edinburgh was fortunate when Reg Passmore was appointed in 1947 to the post of Senior Lecturer in clinical and industrial physiology in the Department of Public Health and Social Medicine of the University of Edinburgh Medical School. I was one of his early students and I appreciated the innovative teaching of a man who had trained at Oxford's Honours School of Physiology. He had recently returned to Britain after serving for ten years as a clinician and a nutritionist in the Indian Medical Service. We had little inkling of the success Reg would achieve during the next five decades in physiology, nutrition and medical education.

Reg's move to the Physiology Department of the Medical School in 1951 provided increased opportunities to pursue the applied aspects of his discipline. They were often the subject of memorable clinical demonstrations before junior students and they resulted in many well-designed studies in human physiology in which

honours and research students were usually his co-workers. His fruitful collaboration with clinicians in nutritional research helped to break down the resistance to such co-operation, then displayed by several leading British physiologists.

Reg's wide influence in medical education stems largely from his activities as an author and an editor. Because he was educated at a university concerned with scholarship and with a ruthless capacity for judging scholarship, his skills in logical thinking and communication were honed at an early stage. His aptitude for editing soon became evident and was considerably enhanced by the experience which he gained with Sir Stanley Davidson in co-editing *Human Nutrition and Dietetics*, Britain's leading textbook in the field for almost forty years. In Reg's largest editorial venture, *A Companion to Medical Studies*, published in three volumes between 1968 and 1974, his co-editor-in-chief was his distinguished physician colleague, J.S. Robson. This comprehensive work succeeded in giving both undergraduates and graduates an interesting, intelligent and exciting account of modern medicine and medical sciences. Fellows of the College who contributed to the *Companion* will recall the hive of editorial activity in Blackwell's Edinburgh office where every available surface was piled high with manuscripts and printer's proofs - Reg had discovered that editing was the most companionable form of education.

After his retiral from the University in 1980, Reg became the College's Science Editor; seven years later he accepted the additional duties of Deputy Editor of the *Proceedings*. His wealth of previous editorial experience and his breadth of knowledge and understanding of science, literature and history enabled him to make a major contribution to the successful development of the College's publications. Many of his other personal qualities played a part in this achievement, especially his courtesy and charm, his spirit of enthusiasm and co-operation, and his ability to brighten any new topic with some fresh thought. It must be admitted that there were occasions when Reg uncharacteristically became restless and irritable. These episodes were observed towards the end of unusually long spells of bad weather or editorial work and became known to his colleagues as the 'golf deprivation syndrome'. Three acute health problems, each requiring hospital admission, were straightforward one-off affairs after which he astonished everyone by his rapid return to the editorial desk.

Despite the many demands made on his time by College duties, Reg managed to continue his broad reading in general and scientific literature: few octogenarians include *Nature* and the *New England Journal of Medicine* in their breakfast time reading. Sources of particular pleasure to Reg have been the re-reading of many of the classics of English literature with his grandchildren and revisiting India, Egypt and North America with other members of his family.

The Scottish Enlightenment is one of Reg's main historical interests and it was his idea that the College should mount an exhibition and host a symposium in 1990 to commemorate the bicentenary of the death of William Cullen. The College's publication of a book with an illustrated description of this exhibition and the collected symposium papers has been absorbed into Reg's overall plan to document the important role played by Fellows of the College in the Age of Improvement, a subject which hitherto received scant attention. Reg is looking forward with enthusiasm to continuing this work in his new appointment of College Historian. We wish him continuing success.

Dr W. Sircus writes:

When I assumed editorship of the College journal in 1987 I inherited as my deputy, Reggie Passmore. This was remarkable, as almost forty years earlier, he had been kind enough to accept for publication when he was an editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Physiology*, one of my earliest efforts in research. That alone provides some measure of the temporal span of the contribution to medical literature of this extraordinary man.

No newly appointed editor could have hoped to have his task eased by such an inheritance, and how much it speaks for his personality that he not only so graciously accepted my leadership but that we worked together as equals without a single moment of friction throughout the next decade.

There can be no doubt that in the earlier years of our partnership I learned from him, by osmosis, a great deal about the English language and its use, and about the preparation and presentation of journals; my earlier experience was in the editing and writing of books.

Reggie was born 87 years ago, the son of a general practitioner, and went from Tonbridge School to Oxford to read Physiology. Tonbridge also sired Wilfrid Card, Ted French and John Crofton in the same era, these four together having made a uniquely distinguished contribution to world medicine and the reputation of the Edinburgh school. He left Oxford for St Mary's with first class Honours.

After clinical qualification, in 1937 he joined the Indian Medical Service which was the beginning of a love affair with that country which he has renewed from time to time and has not yet ended. There, perhaps not surprisingly, nutrition, especially the pragmatics of it, became his major interest. Military service provided the clinical experience which turned him into a 'proper doctor': he served in North Africa with the 4th and 5th Indian divisions and, returning to India in 1942 he became a medical specialist and ended up as O/C medical division with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. In 1947 he appeared in Edinburgh as a Senior Lecturer in Social Medicine but translated to the Department of Physiology in 1951, later becoming Reader.

In the following decades his reputation as an inspirational teacher of both undergraduates and postgraduates extended nationally and internationally. His personal and collaborative researches into nutrition include several studies that have become classics. His became a medical household name with textbooks including *Human Nutrition and Dietetics*, edited with Sir Stanley Davidson, and *A Companion to Medical Studies* with James Robson

Since his retirement from the University (this is not a man who will ever wholly retire) he has contributed ceaselessly to the work of the College, especially to the Symposium and Library committees, but also to the production of three of the College's books including the *Proceedings of the Tercentenary Congress*. In recent years, always familiar with the ancient languages, he has leaned more towards historical matters and this has now been recognised by the College in appointing him the official Historian.

A characteristic expression of his innate kindness is his willingness to spend hours ensconced at the College or his home with aspiring authors, especially those elective students whose experiences we have published in *Proceedings*, tuning their compositions and refining the language of their presentation. A gentleman in every way, age has not diminished his sense of humour nor political correctness divorced him from his pipe.

His second great love affair has been with golf, virtually lifelong. A more wily exponent of the art, as well as the science, of that competitive game I have yet to meet. Alas there are too many anecdotes of his ingenuity on the hallowed turf of Gullane for me to more than merely hint at their prodigiousness.

Everyone in their lifetime meets one or two individuals who add lustre and dimension to their lives, for me, such a one is Reg Passmore.

Professor A. Busuttill (Present Editor) writes:

The great pleasure of working closely with Reg has for me only lasted for the last fifteen months. While we both served on the Library Committee, I had known him for a couple of years beforehand, where this outwardly frail doyen of the College had made a great impression on me as an erudite, clear thinking, intellectually robust, incisive and decisive member of that Committee. What I did not know then, but soon learnt to appreciate and enviously admire, was his wealth and freshness of medical knowledge, his encyclopaedic and critical grasp of history, particularly medical history, and his scholarly capacity to write English in a crisp and fluent style and syntax, characterised by simplicity, correctness and clarity.

His ability to convert a mediocre manuscript into an elegant text is not a common attribute among editors; Reg would patiently change and mould, and in an impeccably courteous but firm manner, cajole, convince and rectify the writings of many an undergraduate or consultant physician alike, until the presentation was absolutely right.

Reg's intellect extends further, to innovation and to the generation of new ideas: his mental agility and sharpness puts to shame men half his age.

Reg is indeed a master of the art of editing and an example to emulate and perhaps in some small way come close to after several years of trying. It is therefore particularly gratifying to be able to congratulate him on his translation after many years with *Proceedings* to yet another prestigious post in the College, where his talents would be put to further good use into the millennium and beyond.

AD MULTOS ANNOS!