

Ian Martin-Scott

1913 – 9 October 2002

Dr Ian Martin-Scott died, peacefully, on October 9th 2002, aged 88. Born near Glasgow in December 1913, he graduated in 1936 from Glasgow University, winning the Cullen medal for best student of the year.

Abandoning, with the outbreak of war, the idea of specialising on obstetrics, he joined HMS Furious at Campbeltown. The converted carrier was having problems finding a convenient land base on the Clyde for its aircraft and, as a 'native', he was asked to go with his CO to help. The previous year he and some friends had been summoned to court locally for deciding, after an enjoyable lunchtime, that the local policeman's helmet could be useful as a rugby ball. Fined 5/- (25p) each, they were admonished by the local Procurator Fiscal – who was now leading the landing-strip negotiations on behalf of the locals! He remembered Ian, the ice was broken, and what is now Machrihanish Airport was the result.

Building an interest in dermatology throughout the war years, when peace returned Ian was interviewed by Sir Archibald Grey at UCH. Admitting that before the war he had been in obstetrics, not dermatology, Sir Archibald said that he, too, was doing obstetrics then and could Ian start the following Monday! Within a couple of years he succeeded Dr William Goldsmith as consultant at several Hertfordshire hospitals (UCH having moved there in the war years) and became the youngest consultant in the new NHS when it was formed in 1948.

Over the following 30 years, Ian maintained his contact with UCH, and with the London School of Tropical Medicine, running postgraduate courses in histology; he developed a new medium to grow lypophilic organisms; treated the alopecia of

Guy the Gorilla, one of London Zoo's more famous inmates of the 1950s; he published a layman's book on 'Baldness & Care of Hair' and featured in his real life role as 'a Harley Street consultant' in a TV commercial for 'New Lux with Dermasil'. He also undertook the research and clinical trials into infantile eczema that led to the production of Neutrogena soap and E45 cream, and his contributions to the development of 3M's Micropore was well employed in his work as Honorary Consultant to the Ileostomy Association. He published, in all, over a dozen papers.

After retirement from the NHS, he maintained an interest in dermatology, writing and reading papers, his last, at UCLA in California in the mid-1970s, being on crusted (Norwegian) scabies, a then unidentified variant. Finally, retiring now also from private practice, Ian spent much time successfully propagating plants from his garden, first in Hertfordshire, then in Somerset. He also sat on the Board of the Medical Council of Alcoholism for nearly 10 years, into his early 80s, and was delighted to be able to witness, at last, an increase in the number of teaching hours devoted by medical undergraduates to this issue.

He was married to Nancy, who predeceased him in 1999, the year of their 60th wedding anniversary, and leaves a son and three grandsons.

Stephen Martin-Scott

Son

There is always a sadness attached to obituaries, a feeling of what the family and the wider community have lost, and how we will miss a lifelong relative, friend or colleague. However, it is no surprise that the obituaries column in the BMJ



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is the most commonly read feature of that learned publication, and not just for us to check that we are still alive. For it is often only in retrospect that we realise what interesting lives our predecessors have lived, and what contributions they made to our speciality, and to the medical and wider world as well. Dr Martin-Scott is the perfect example of this phenomenon. He was a part of a generation of Dermatologists that included Paddy Hare, Clifford Evans and Renwick Vickers – all great contributors to the development of modern Dermatology. It is difficult to imagine that a current specialist could have as varied a career, with as broad a range of interests. It is a pleasure and a privilege to publish his obituary here. The same is true of Patrick Hall Smith, who was nearing the end of his career when I entered Dermatology, and was one of the great characters of his era. It is important that we acknowledge the passing of our members in this way, so do make sure that the BAD offices are aware of any obituaries that we should be publishing.

Dr Mark Goodfield

Honorary Secretary