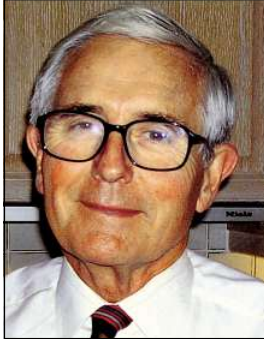




Laudatio

Prof. Sir Norman Browse



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Norman Browse,
Alderney,
Channel Islands

Norman Browse was born in London in December 1931. No one in his family, past or present had practised medicine. In 1940 he was evacuated with his elder brother from London to Brighton and then to Camberley but returned to London in 1942 in order to sit the entrance examination for the local Grammar School. By this time he had already developed an ambition to become a surgeon and to this end studied zoology, botany, physics and chemistry in his senior school years – the subjects required for entry into medical school. In 1950 he was awarded a place at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School, the school of London's oldest hospital, founded in 1123. He qualified MB, BS. in 1955.

After resident posts in surgery and obstetrics and gynaecology he was required to fulfil his two years of National Service but before enlisting he married a fellow student: Jeanne Menage. They have two children.

With the rank of Captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps he was appointed as a surgical resident in the British Military Hospital, Nicosia, Cyprus, where he dealt with many of the gunshot wounds that arose from the terrorist actions of Greek Cypriots seeking "enosis", the union of Cyprus with Greece. For the last three months of his two years of military service he was transferred to be Surgeon-in-Charge of the British Military Hospital in Benghazi, Libya – this was before the advent of Colonel Gaddafi.

After returning to England he obtained a junior resident post in the Bristol Royal Infirmary in the department of Prof. Milnes Walker and Prof. Joseph Peacock. During this appointment he studied the changes of muscle blood flow that occur during and after surgery and their relevance to the development of deep vein thrombosis. He was awarded an MD for this work. In 1961 he was asked to present this work at an International Meeting of Angiologists in Darmstadt where he met Prof. Ratschow. Thereafter his interest in surgical research and all forms of vascular disease steadily grew.

Between 1962 and 1964 he worked as a Lecturer in Surgery at the Westminster Hos-

pital where he studied the use of streptokinase in the treatment of deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism and arterial thrombosis. As a result of this work, and the book „The Physiology and Pathology of Bed Rest“ he was awarded a Harkness Fellowship which allowed him to tour the vascular centres of America and study venous physiology at the Mayo Clinic with Prof. John Shepherd. He returned from this productive experience to be Reader in Surgery at St. Thomas' Hospital, London, where he worked for the rest of his surgical life, becoming Professor of Vascular Surgery in 1972 and in 1982 Head of Department. During this period he was Consultant Vascular Surgeon to the Army and the Royal Air Force.

Throughout these years his clinical and research work covered arterial, venous and lymphatic physiology, pathology and therapy. Sometimes in collaboration with Prof John Kinmonth and Mr Frank Cockett (a Ratschow Medallist in 1989) and always with stimulating surgical research registrars and lecturers. In addition to the 250 clinical and laboratory surgical research papers and chapters in books that he wrote during this period he also wrote, or edited, four specialist textbooks: „Diseases of the Veins“, „Diseases of the Lymphatics“, „Carotid Endarterectomy: a practical guide“ and „An Atlas of Reducing Operations for Lymphoedema of the Lower Limb“ and a basic student textbook „An introduction to the Symptoms and Signs of Surgical Disease“. This book has become required reading in UK medical schools and in many medical schools throughout the Middle East, India, the Far East and Australasia. Its main attraction is that it contains no X-rays or special investigations but concentrates exclusively on the history and the physical signs that can be elicited in the clinic or at the bed side – vital skills that tend to be neglected in modern medical curricula. This book has sold over 300 000 copies over the past 25 years. A companion book entitled „An introduction to the Investigation and Management of Surgical Disease“ is to be published next year.

Frustrated by the delays in implementing



decisions and the restrictions imposed by bureaucrats when working in London University as Chairman of various Boards of Examiners and in the National Health Service as Chairman of many Hospital, Regional and National committees, he became increasingly involved in the work of the Royal College of Surgeons.

The Royal Colleges are independent charitable Institutions that have controlled the practice and training of specialist medicine in the UK since 1540. Being financially independent and free of government control they can implement decisions without external bureaucratic interference and delays.

His involvement in College work led to his election as President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England from 1992 to 1995, the conferment by the Queen of a knighthood in 1994 and from 1994 to 1998 the Chairmanship of the Joint Consultants Committee – the committee that is the link between hospital consultants of all specialities, the British Medical Association and the UK government.

He has also been President of the: British Atherosclerosis Society, The British Surgical Research Society, The Association of UK Professors of Surgery, The Vascular Surgical Society of Great Britain and Ireland, The Venous Forum of the Royal Society of Medicine, The UK Senate of Surgery, and The European Society for Cardiovascular Surgery. During his career he has been made an Honorary Fellow of ten surgical colleges, a Distinguished Alumnus of the

Prof. Sir Norman Browse and Prof. Dr. Eberhard Rabe (left) at the ceremony of handing over the Ratschow Medal in Mainz.



Mayo Clinic, an Honorary Academician of the Academy of Athens (a 2500 years old Institution) and an Honorary Member of eight International Societies. He has given 15 eponymous lectures and lectured in 30 capital city university hospitals across the world.

After his election as President of the College of Surgeons in 1992 his clinical surgery practice gradually reduced and stopped when he retired in 1996. He then retired to his wife's home – Alderney, in the Channel Islands – hoping to escape the never ending hustle of London life and medical politics but in 2002 he was persuaded to stand for

election as President of the States of Alderney. This post is the equivalent of the Speaker of the House of Commons and he is now in his seventh year of office. He has found that controlling a group of argumentative politicians little different from managing a group of independent doctors.

However, he tells me that of his many achievements he regards the award of the Ratschow Medal by the Curatorium Angiologiae Internationalis, coming ten years after ceasing medical practice, to be the most prestigious accolade of his career in surgical science.

Eberhard Rabe, Bonn