



David Abraham Goitein Galton

Haematologist who performed Britain's first successful leukaemia and lymphoma chemotherapy

David Galton was one of the first medical oncologists and the first in the United Kingdom to produce remissions for patients with lymphoma and leukaemia. In 1957, when he entered cancer research, the life expectancy of acute leukaemia patients was measured in weeks or even days. The outlook for lymphoma and myeloma were equally bleak. By 1987, when Galton retired, acute leukaemia was classified into many types, many curable, and most treatable, with patients surviving months or years. He played a key role in this story, thanks to his acute observance at the microscope, and his ability to correlate these observations with what he saw in the clinic.

As a young doctor at the Royal Surrey County Hospital in Guildford in 1947, he took a microscope slide of a patient's cells to the great haematologist John Dacie at Hammersmith Hospital's postgraduate medical school. This was to sow the seeds of his later career. Throughout his life Galton recorded patients' details in small notebooks, so that when he saw a new

case he could compare it with previous patients and their histology.

In 1947 Galton joined the staff of the Chester Beatty Research Institute (now the Institute of Cancer Research), attached to the Royal Cancer Hospital, now the Royal Marsden. He worked under Alexander Haddow, who had discovered that carcinogens could retard the growth of tumours caused by other, unrelated, carcinogens, and that this might be exploited for cancer treatment. Haddow oversaw a programme of synthesising and testing potential anti-cancer drugs.

Shortly after joining the Chester Beatty, Galton obtained a sample of aminopterin, a potential leukaemia treatment, from America. With the blessing of Haddow, Dacie, and Dacie's boss, Sir John MacMichael, he administered it to a patient with acute leukaemia at the Hammersmith. The patient, who was fully informed, had a three month remission, which was unheard of at the time. From then on, Galton spent two days a week looking after patients with leukaemia and lymphoma at Hammersmith. He published clinical trials of alkylating drugs synthesised at the Chester Beatty. He published his results on busulphan (then called myeleran) for chronic myeloblastic leukaemia in 1953, and on chlorambucil for leukaemia in 1961.

Galton was born in London, the son of a Hungarian-born general practitioner who had changed his name from Goitein. From Hackney Downs School he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, at the young age of 17. He had an entrance scholarship to University College Hospital Medical School when he was 20, and was an exhibitor in pathology in his final year; he qualified in 1946. He tried to enlist in the forces but was rejected as he had pulmonary tuberculosis.

Galton did his house jobs at UCH and the Royal Surrey in Guildford before moving to a joint appointment at the Marsden and Chester Beatty. In 1964 he was appointed consultant physician in chemotherapy and, jointly, reader in chemotherapy at the Institute of Cancer Research. He held honorary posts as consultant haematologist and reader in haematology at Hammersmith.

When Haddow retired in 1966 most people expected Galton to succeed him. He didn't, possibly because of friction between the hospital and the institute. Three years later, when the Medical Research Council Leukaemia Research Unit was founded at the Hammersmith, Galton was appointed director. He had been chairman of the MRC working party on leukaemia since 1959. At Hammersmith he was able to manage patients and test new treatments under rigorous conditions. He attracted top class clinicians and researchers, and the unit acquired a reputation for excellent patient care and innovative treatment regimens. He retired in 1987 but continued lecturing and looking at slides sent to him from around the world.

When Blackwell's launched the *British Journal of Haematology*, the first in its field, in 1950, Dacie was the first editor and invited Galton on to the editorial board. Galton succeeded him as editor during 1966-8.

In 1975 he met a like-minded French haematologist, Claude Sultan. Together with US workers they formed the FAB group—French, American, British—who met annually and exchanged slides and case histories to clarify and classify the disease, so that treatment could be refined. This resulted in the FAB classifications of leukaemia, which held sway for two decades. The group still meets biannually.

Galton was an adviser to the Leukaemia Research Fund throughout his career, and raised funds for them. In the 1970s he became secretary, and later chairman, of the Lady Tata Memorial Trust, which he continued after his retirement.

His recreations were music—early in life he turned down the chance to play the piano professionally—and gardening, particularly water gardening.

Galton was diagnosed with metastatic prostate cancer in 1998. He married Patricia Davenport in 1946. She survives him, along with three sons.

Caroline Richmond

David Abraham Goitein Galton, professor of haematological oncology Royal Postgraduate Medical School (b 1922, q Cambridge/University College Hospital 1946; CBE), d 28 November 2006.

George Lyall Cantrell



Former consultant ophthalmologist West of England Eye Infirmary, Exeter (b 1921; q Manchester 1946; DO), d 2 January 2007.

George Lyall Cantrell served with the Royal Army Medical Corps, mainly in Austria, and began ophthalmic training in Manchester on demobilisation. In 1952 he was appointed registrar and later senior registrar at Bristol Eye Hospital. In 1956 he was appointed consultant at the West of England Eye Infirmary, retiring in 1983 and publishing an account of its history. George was a governor and later trustee of the West of England School for Children with little or no Sight. He was an enthusiastic editor of *Iscatape*, which produced Talking Books for the Blind. He leaves a wife, Celia; three children; and 12 grandchildren.

Walter Rich

William Henry Cochrane



Former general practitioner Clacton-on-Sea, Essex (b Glasgow 1926; q Glasgow 1954; DA, DObst RCOG), d 7 October 2006.

After service in the Royal Navy, William Henry Cochrane (“Henry”) studied medicine at Glasgow in 1948. Having worked in anaesthetics and obstetrics and gynaecology in Glasgow, he moved to general practice in Essex in 1960. He conducted anaesthetic sessions

at Clacton and Colchester Hospitals and for many local dentists, and he became medical officer for the local Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Red Cross, as well as the annual Essex long distance swim. Henry was a founder and chairman of the North-East Essex Doctors’ Emergency Service, attending many road crashes. He leaves a wife, Roma; three children; and six grandchildren.

**Roma Cochrane
Fiona Buckley**

Anthony John Merrifield

Former consultant anaesthetist Royal Air Force Medical Branch (b 1926; q King’s College Hospital 1950; DA, FFARCS), died from a heart attack on 9 November 2006.

Tony Merrifield spent his career in the Royal Air Force Medical Branch, becoming consultant adviser (director) of anaesthetics. He initiated a life support course for dental surgeons, and his suggestion for a joint services resuscitation committee was implemented. He was one of a small band of anaesthetists responsible for the repatriation by air of service and civilian patients with respiratory paralysis. Tony was appointed honorary physician to the Queen, and retired as an air commodore. In retirement he became a guide in Ely Cathedral and a governor of the King’s School Ely, his old school. He leaves a wife, Poppy; two sons; and four grandchildren.

Tony Merrifield

Edward Stewart Newlands



Former professor of cancer medicine Charing Cross and Westminster Medical School (b 1942; q Oxford/Middlesex Hospital 1966; PhD, FRCP), d 13 October 2006.

Edward Stewart Newlands improved understanding and treatment of gestational trophoblastic disease, developed temozolomide treatment for brain tumours, and was the first to demonstrate the value of etoposide in testicular and ovarian germ cell cancers. Although primarily a clinician, Edward also took part in many early stage clinical trials. He was always concerned to try to avoid treatments where possible, pioneering surveillance for stage I testicular and ovarian germ cell tumours. His work combining ondansetron with dexamethasone in patients receiving cisplatin-based treatments revolutionised the acceptability of this highly emetic drug. Edward had a strong didactic sense. Outside work, for example, his love of Mozart was balanced by his loathing of Wagner. He took early retirement in 2004, partly to travel. He leaves a wife, Elizabeth.

**Regent Begent
Michael Seckl**

James Knox Russell



Former professor of obstetrics and gynaecology University of Newcastle upon Tyne and postgraduate dean (b 1919; q Aberdeen 1942; MD, FRCOG), died from a stroke on 27 October 2006.

The first full time professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at Newcastle, James Knox Russell (“Jake”) introduced a new medical curriculum that was widely adopted, and as postgraduate dean he introduced the forerunner of structured training that later became the norm in most specialties. When Dugald Baird retired in 1965, Jake enabled the Medical Research Council unit Baird had founded on problems of human reproduction to move to

Newcastle, where it became the Reproduction and Growth Unit and a centre of professional research and excellence. Jake was farsighted, politically aware, and diplomatic. On retirement in 1982 he enjoyed a rural existence, mastering the art of curing and smoking over two years. Predeceased by his wife, Wendy, in 2005, he leaves three daughters.

Derek Tacchi

David Ainsley Watkins



Former general practitioner Bridgwater, Somerset (b 1921, q St Mary’s Hospital, London, 1945), died from septicaemia, peritonitis, and ruptured colonic diverticulum on 1 January 2007.

As a student, David Ainsley Watkins had the harrowing experience of looking after the returning casualties at the end of the war. He did his national service in the Royal Air Force and joined a practice in Bridgwater (now the East Quay Medical Centre) in 1950. He was a highly regarded traditional family doctor, like his Welsh father before him, and brought many into the world with his midwifery skills. He was a keen sportsman—especially rugby, squash, and sea angling. He was a talented pianist, classical through to jazz. Predeceased by his wife, Joy, he leaves three sons and five grandchildren.

Simon Watkins

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