

Owen Lyndon Wade

Clinical pharmacologist who revolutionised the *BNF*

Professor Owen Wade's greatest legacy is the *British National Formulary (BNF)* in its current format, which is regarded as the bible by prescribers and dispensers and is now used by almost all doctors, pharmacists, and those training to be prescribers in the United Kingdom. Owen was one of the founding leaders of clinical pharmacology and therapeutics in the UK. He created two new departments, in Belfast and Birmingham, and played a key role in the training of many medical students.

Modern paperback

From 1948 to 1978 the *BNF* was a dull, hardback publication that explained how to make old fashioned and largely ineffective remedies. It was published about every three years and used many Latin terms and 19th century measures. In 1978 Owen became chairman of the formulary committee. He led the team that by 1981 had transformed the *BNF* into its modern, paperback format, published every six months and used by thousands of doctors in the UK and in many other countries around the world.

Owen's career in clinical pharmacology and therapeutics started in 1957, aged 36. After only five months as a senior lecturer and with no specific training, he persuaded Belfast to offer him a chair in clinical pharmacology. The department had one senior technician but no other staff, and Owen's clinical work started with access to a few beds on the medi-

cal professors' ward. Owen was trained at Cambridge and University College London and had become an experienced clinician and competent researcher in chest and heart medicine.

Owen set about devising a course, putting together a lecture programme, and planning practical classes, having never done anything like this before. He gave all the lectures and ran all the practical classes. He soon complemented the lectures with interactive road shows, discussing the management of specific patients with a panel of students while the rest of the class listened, learnt, and joined in. These were clinically relevant and became popular. In the early years Owen's clinical work prospered, and he became the first consultant to have beds in both teaching hospitals in Belfast.

By 1961 it had become clear that taking thalidomide in pregnancy caused severe and often fatal abnormalities in the fetus. Many babies were born with no arms and no legs (phocomelia). He tried to find out how much thalidomide had been prescribed in Northern Ireland and by whom. This proved impossible, but he was able prospectively to quantify all the drugs prescribed by each general practitioner in Northern Ireland. Subsequently, Owen worked with colleagues to obtain comparable data for Norway, Sweden, the Czech Republic, and West Germany.

He made innovative application of the computer based system used to pay pharmacists in Northern Ireland to produce numerical data on drug use. This fed his interest in adverse drug reactions, and he wrote some of the earliest papers and books on this subject.

The nation was horrified by the thalidomide disaster. At that time there was no legal framework for assessing new drugs; no system for monitoring the safety of drugs already on the

market, and no means to communicate rapidly with prescribers about safety concerns. In 1963 the government set up the Committee on Safety of Drugs. Owen was a founding member and subsequently went on to chair the Committee of Review of Medicines and the adverse drugs reaction subcommittee, and he became a member of the Medicines Commission, which set up and oversaw the regulatory committee structure.

A smallpox problem

Owen was dean of Birmingham Medical School from 1978 to 1984. By midday on the day his deanship started, 1 September, he had had to shut half the medical school and his professor of virology had cut his own throat and was dying. The problem was smallpox. Some research was being undertaken in the medical school, and a photographer in the anatomy department had become ill in August. She was diagnosed as having smallpox on the 24th and died from the disease soon after—the last person in the world to do so.

Trade union power in 1978 was at its peak and the Association of Scientific, Technical, and Managerial Staffs made life difficult. However, Owen took command, learnt all about smallpox, took expert advice, kept the relevant documents in good order, and looked after

his staff, who gave him much support. The medical school was battered but unbowed. Four of his professors at Birmingham became presidents of their respective royal colleges.

Owen Wade achieved a great deal. He ascribed this to being cheerful and optimistic, his capacity to get on well with colleagues, his ability to sleep well, his wife, and a strong stomach.

He leaves his wife, Margaret, and three daughters.

Owen Lyndon Wade, clinical pharmacologist (b 1921; q University College Hospital, London, 1945; CBE 1983), died 10 December 2008 from carcinoma of the prostate

Martin Kendall

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He led the team that ... transformed the *BNF* into its modern, paperback format, published every six months and used by thousands of doctors



Muna Hassan Alwaidh



Former consultant paediatrician Whiston Hospital, Liverpool (b 1956; q Baghdad 1979), d 2 January 2009. After qualifying and working as a junior doctor in Baghdad, Muna H Alwaidh moved to the United Kingdom in 1983. She had a career break during 1983-8 to bring up her children, before working at Liverpool Women's Hospital as a registrar in neonatal medicine, and as a research registrar and a senior registrar at Alder Hey Hospital. She became a consultant paediatrician in 1997 at Preston Hospital, moving to Whiston Hospital in 1998 until she retired in 2006 owing to ill health. She published extensively in epilepsy and neonatal medicine, and did a lot of charity work for her hospital. She leaves a husband, Dr Wallaa Sadik, and three daughters.

W B Sadik

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John Bennett



Former general practitioner Felixstowe (b 1930; q Birmingham 1955), d 1 January 2009.

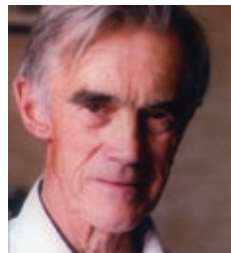
The first student at Hleanor Grammar School to go to medical school, John Bennett joined the Royal Air Force after qualifying, injury keeping him at RAF St Mawgan, Cornwall. His first NHS post was in Plymouth working a 6:7 on-call rota and living at the surgery. He soon moved to Felixstowe, working 1:2, and retiring in 1991. His real contribution was in the unsung role of "being

there." He did rounds at the local hospital, dental anaesthetics, and house calls, as well as providing a home delivery service. He was also chairman of the East Suffolk BMA committee. After retirement he worked with employment medical boards until he was 70. He leaves his wife, Eleanor; four children; and eight grandchildren.

Sean Bennett

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Peter Leslie Masters



Former director of pathology Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, Perth, Australia (b 1920; q Guy's Hospital, London, 1942; DCH, MD, FRCP), died from prostate cancer on 28 July 2008. After house jobs, Peter Leslie Masters served in the Royal Army Medical Corps, 1944-6, in the Far East, being mentioned in dispatches and discharged as captain. He took up his post in Perth, Australia, in 1958, retiring in 1985. His major achievements included screening West Australian newborn infants for more than 30 inherited and metabolic disorders, introducing the sweat test for cystic fibrosis, and developing rapid viral diagnostic methods. His study was instrumental in the reintroduction in 1985 of the pertussis booster vaccine at 18 months that had been withdrawn six years earlier. He leaves a wife, Maria; five children; and 11 grandchildren.

Anne M Masters

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Mohammad Ripon Mustafa

General practitioner Fareham, Hampshire (b 1964; q Dhaka, Bangladesh, 1989; FRCSEd, DFPP, MRCP), died from a heart attack on 28 August 2008.

Mohammad Ripon Mustafa ("Ripon") gained wide surgical experience, mostly in the



Portsmouth area. Although a surgeon at heart, he entered general practice in 2001 and never regretted it. He became an expert in obesity management, setting up clinics and workshops in Fareham, as well as working with the breast team at Haslar Hospital. He was a fun doctor: laughter was a part of his medicine and was often heard coming from his surgery. He reduced his hours to spend more time with his family. He leaves a wife, Sarah, and two daughters.

Sarah Robinson

Barbara Jordan

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Margery Adela Pollock

Former consultant anaesthetist Belfast (b 1922; q Trinity College, Dublin, 1945), d 26 December 2007. After graduation, Margery Adela Pollock trained at the Adelaide Hospital, Dublin, and in Manchester, where she was encouraged to move into anaesthetics. Appointed consultant at Salford Royal Infirmary in 1953, Margery became a consultant at the City and Musgrave Park Hospitals, Belfast, in 1955. Married to Moore Kirkpatrick, a general practitioner from North Antrim, she balanced professional and family life admirably. Sociable in domestic and professional settings, she retired in 1982 to further interests in travel and gardening. Her last few years saw a steady decline in her fine intellect. Predeceased by Moore in 1986, she leaves three children.

Nigel Kirkpatrick

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James Gray Scott

Former general practitioner Southampton (b 1920; q Glasgow 1944), died from pneumonia on 30 December 2008.

Wartime service in the Royal Army Medical Corps with the Airborne Forces took James Gray Scott ("Jimmy") to France, Germany, India, and Palestine before his discharge as captain in 1947. He went into general practice in Southampton, retiring after 37 years as senior general practitioner and former president of the local BMA. He also ran a small maternity nursing home in partnership with his wife, where they delivered 1000 babies. He was a deeply committed Christian and member of the Christian Medical Fellowship. Predeceased by his first wife, Dorothy, in 1990, he leaves his second wife, Valerie; three children from his first marriage; and six grandchildren.

Robert D Lee

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John Winstanley



Former consultant ophthalmologist St Thomas' Hospital, London (b 1919; q St Thomas' Hospital 1951; MC, TD, FRCS, FRCOphth), died from prostate cancer on 4 January 2008. John Winstanley was a distinguished soldier in the second world war before he qualified. He fought at Dunkirk and El Alamein, gaining honours against the Japanese at Kohima. War wounds precluded him from taking up general surgery, but he led St Thomas' on a course of expansion: amalgamation with the Royal Eye Hospital and acquisition of a medical eye unit, a charity, the Iris Fund, and more consultants and academic posts. One of the first to recognise the value of a good medical background for ophthalmology, he was the acknowledged authority on the specialty's history. He leaves a wife, Jane; three children; and five grandchildren.

Michael D Sanders

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