Christopher Hayles Cameron (“Chris”) had a remarkable career: as a youth he spent much time on a sheep farm in the Lammermuir Hills, where his parents had a summer cottage, to such effect that the farmer, having no heirs, offered him the 800 acre farm as a legacy.

He turned it down and entered the arts faculty of Edinburgh University to study languages, but after a year changed to follow his father into medicine (his father, Ernest Cameron, had been a distinguished ophthalmologist in the city): having no relevant school science background, he found the first year basic sciences course “pretty heavy going,” as he put it. He got through the course and went on to graduate, having formed the intention of entering general practice in the Scottish Borders. As soon as he could, he set about fulfilling this ambition and in due course came to Kelso, where he stayed for the rest of his life. The combination of a spell of poor health and a rising dismay at the changes being wrought in the NHS (and particularly in general practice) led him to take early retirement, which allowed him to return to university.
and acquire an MA in Russian (he had discovered a long lost branch of his family in St Petersburg). He then combined his interest in ornithology with his linguistic skills and gained an MSc “magna cum laude” by thesis on “The colloquial names for birds in South East Scotland,” the work for which combined his love of birds and language as well as giving full scope to his penchant for conversation, which arose from his love of people and the interactions with them. His love of words and language found other outlets in writing, particularly in poetry; he had works published not only in the Society of Medical Writers’ journal, but in anthologies for general circulation.

He was a talented musician and played violin for many years, before moving to the viola; this he kept up not only in informal chamber settings but in the Border Orchestra and, between 2006 and 2010, as a member of the European Doctors’ Orchestra, which took him to several of the European capitals.

But running as a constant current in his life was his love of the countryside, particularly the Scottish Border Hills, his rambles giving him an intimate knowledge of that beautiful but not-well known part of the country: he took delight in sharing that love with all who would join him—and keep up with him.

He continued his music until his progressive dementia made it impossible, as it did his physical activities.

He leaves Isobel, his wife of 52 years, whom he met while working as a resident in Taunton; three children; and four grandchildren.