

ANDREW RENNIE HUNTER 1915-1991

An appreciation from Dr Jean M Horton (Cambridge)

Professor Andrew Hunter, an Honorary Member of the History of Anaesthesia Society (HAS) died in March 1991 aged 76, having been progressively disabled for some years with Parkinson's disease. He was one of the founder members of the HAS and a regular attendee at its meetings, his last attendance being at Southend in 1988.

He was born in Cambuslang, near Glasgow, and educated at Hutchinson's School, Glasgow, receiving his medical education at Glasgow University and graduating in 1937. After a House Surgeon post at Glasgow Royal Infirmary, he spent a year at Falkirk Infirmary as resident medical officer and resident anaesthetist. Scotland's finest exports are her people, and in 1943 he was head-hunted and appointed Consultant Anaesthetist to the Neurosurgical Unit (lead by the neurosurgeon Sir Geoffrey Jefferson) at Manchester Royal Infirmary. He was also appointed Consultant Anaesthetist to the Thoracic Surgical Unit at Wythenshaw and Baguley Hospital, and to Cheadle Royal Hospital. Thus his main clinical activities, to which he contributed so much, were in anaesthesia for neurosurgery and thoracic surgery. Latterly he worked mainly at Manchester Royal infirmary (MRI) and although officially retired in 1978 at the age of 63, he continued to work for five years at the MRI as a Clinical Assistant and was Curator of the museum in the Anaesthetic Department, and Consultant Transplant Adviser to the North West region from 1975 to 1981.

These are the bare outlines of the clinical career of a much-loved and admired anaesthetist, a father figure and mentor to many. His interests in clinical anaesthesia were manifold; he was a giant and pioneer in neuro and thoracic anaesthesia. He was one of the first to demonstrate the value of controlled ventilation for craniotomies and pioneered total intravenous anaesthesia with his thiopentone drips.

He must have been one of the few, if not the only anaesthetist with the diploma of FRFPS (Fellow of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow) which he obtained in 1940. In 1942 he was awarded the Glasgow MD for his thesis on 'Postoperative pulmonary complications', and passed the DA. He was elected FFARCS in 1953.

In Manchester, his academic and teaching abilities were recognised by the Faculty who appointed him as Honorary Lecturer in Pharmacology in 1947, (there being no academic department of anaesthetics). He was appointed Honorary Reader in 1961, to a personal chair in 1971 and Emeritus Professor in 1975. He was saddened that he was not appointed to be the first holder of the Chair of Anaesthesia at the University of Manchester. He founded the Manchester and District Society of Anaesthetists, which later became the Section of Anaesthetics of the Manchester Medical Society of which he was President in 1982.

Andrew Hunter's activities were not confined to Manchester or clinical work. He was always to be seen on the first Friday of the month, never failing to contribute to the discussions of the Section of Anaesthetics

of the Royal Society of Medicine which he served as Council Member, Secretary and then President in 1973. He was a Council Member of the Association of Anaesthetists from 1956 to 1959 and elected as an Honorary Member in 1980. In the Faculty of Anaesthetists of the Royal College of Surgeons of England he served as a member of the Board for sixteen years, was Vice-Dean and awarded the Clover lectureship and Dudley Buxton Prize. He was an examiner for the Primary and Final FFA and Chairman of the MCQ and core group and demonstrated to critics that the FFA examination was not competitive.

He was one of the founders of the Neuro-anaesthetists' Travelling Club and a founder member of the Anaesthetic Research Society and Intensive Care Society.

His publications were numerous: three books and many papers and chapters, and when met at meetings he always seemed to be carrying the galley proofs of his most recent work. His first publication was in Volume 1 of 'Anaesthesia' in 1946 on 'Local analgesia for abdominal operations' and his last was also in 'Anaesthesia' in 1984 when he described 'Idiopathic alveolar hypoventilation in Leber's disease'. One of his main contributions to the anaesthetic literature was in his work on the development and success of the 'British Journal of Anaesthesia', which he served as Treasurer, Assistant Editor of Postgraduate Numbers and Chairman of the Board of the Journal from 1959 to 1985.

An appreciation such as this cannot do justice to Andrew Hunter's contribution to the specialty of anaesthesia. For those of us who specialised in neuroanaesthesia, he was our mentor. We will all remember this tall, kind and helpful man through his writings and the fine example and standards that he set.