

## Frederick Fox Cartwright



Frederick Fox Cartwright died on 22 November 2001 aged 92. When the History of Anaesthesia Society was founded in 1986 Ferdie Cartwright, as he was known to most anaesthetists, was 77 years of age and did not travel much from home. Thus, sadly he was not to grace our meetings with what would undoubtedly have been a presence as delightful as it was erudite. The Society acknowledged his distinction by electing him an Honorary Member.

Over the last 20 years or so there has been a remarkable expansion in the study of the history of medicine. Partly this has been because of the increasing involvement of professional historians, but it owes much to an earlier generation of pioneering scholars within whose company Cartwright must be counted. From the 1950s onwards he was prominent in championing the case for including history both in the undergraduate curriculum, and in the continuing education of doctors. This he did whilst he was a consultant anaesthetist at King's College Hospital, London.

Cartwright qualified at King's in 1930, acquiring a Diploma in Anaesthetics five years later and becoming a consultant in 1937. In 1948 he became one of the first Fellows of the Faculty of Anaesthetists. Whilst practising in a variety of specialties he was particularly interested in ear, nose and throat surgery, working with Sir Victor Negus, who was internationally renowned for major head and neck operations.

The range of his teaching extended from clinical to historical issues, and he established within the Medical school a small department for the History of Medicine. From this base he encouraged students and fellow doctors to acquire some deeper awareness of health issues in times past, not least by entering into dialogue with professional historians. He was President

of the History of Medicine Section at the Royal Society of Medicine from 1975 to 1977, later being elected an Honorary Member. He was active in the Worshipful Company of Apothecaries, promoting the work on continuing professional education pursued by the Faculty of the History and Philosophy of Medicine and Pharmacy. He was their Sydenham Medallist in 1978, before becoming President of the Faculty in 1981 and later Honorary Fellow.

Cartwright's many publications were notable not simply for their scholarship but also for their elegance of prose. His books included *The English Pioneers of Anaesthesia* (1952), well known to members of this Society and one of the earlier books of its kind. He followed this with four other important books and numerous articles on the history of medicine and surgery. To historians he was probably best known for the wide-ranging *Disease and History*, which first appeared in 1972 and was translated into French and Japanese. This he thoroughly updated for a new edition published on the eve of his 91st birthday, having done all the word processing himself.

Ferdie Cartwright is remembered by many younger historians for his courtesy and the personal interest he took in their ideas, often at the Royal Society of Medicine, where he invited them to join him at dinner to further his conversations with them. He was interested in anything and everything, a perfect gentleman in the best sense of that overworked term.

His final home was at Swallowfield in Berkshire, where until his death he presided over the flourishing local history society. He was a knowledgeable gardener, and an equally enthusiastic correspondent to successive editors of *The Times*, who published letters from him across a span of no fewer than 65 years. His last letter appeared eight months before his death. In submitting his obituary to *The Times*, his historian son-in-law, Professor Biddiss, particularly requested that, if cuts were necessary, the editor should preserve the reference to *The Times* itself. He wrote: 'The thought of us making, now, a final allusion to that almost unsurpassed record would, I believe, have given him particular pleasure'. Sadly, *The Times* did not adhere to this request.

Dr Cartwright is survived by his wife Patience, three daughters, six grandchildren, and five great-grandsons.

(I am grateful for the help of Professor Michael and Mrs Ruth Biddiss and Dr T D W Davies in compiling this tribute.)

**Aileen K Adams**

## **C S Ward**

Crispian Stanley Ward was born on 11 May 1925 in Sevenoaks, and died at the Kirkwood Hospice in Huddersfield on 6 June 2002 aged 77. He attended Bryanston School in Dorset, where a good deal of experience in electronics must have stimulated his lifelong interest in engineering. However, he remained nominally an amateur, for he studied medicine at Guy's, qualifying MB BS in 1949 and took up house appointments at Croydon. Called up into the RAF he took a three-year commission, giving anaesthetics. Demobilised with the rank of Squadron Leader, he continued his postgraduate training on the famous Liverpool course, and obtained his FFARCS in 1956. He was appointed Consultant Anaesthetist to the Huddersfield