IN MEMORIAM

JOHN LAING Mc Donald
1895-1967

John Laing McDonald died on December 10, 1967, eleven months after a cerebrovascular accident. The son of Allan McDonald and Jessie Atkin, he was brought up near Dresden, Ontario, on a farm granted by the Crown to his paternal grandfather. After completing his preliminary education in Dresden, he entered the University of Toronto Medical School in 1911 and graduated with honours in 1916. With most of his class he enlisted immediately in the Canadian Army Medical Corps, serving with distinction in Great Britain and Salonika. He returned to Toronto in 1918 with the rank of Captain and remained in the service until 1920, attached to Christie Street Veterans’ Hospital.

As an undergraduate he had preferred surgery to medicine, and this instinct was encouraged while he was at Christie Street Hospital by the late W. E. Gallie. After leaving the army he took surgical training at the Middlesex Hospital under Gordon-Taylor, at the Mayo Clinic, and at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. He joined the staff of the last institution in 1923 and resigned in 1946 to become chief of staff of the Wellesley Hospital, then newly recognised by the University of Toronto as an affiliated teaching institution. When he retired from his teaching appointment in 1955 he had attained the rank of Associate Professor of Surgery in the University of Toronto.

In common with his colleagues at the Children’s Hospital, he practised general surgery but with a strong orthopaedic bias, and it was not until his move to the Wellesley Hospital that he confined himself to orthopaedic problems alone. Early in his career he became orthopaedic consultant to the National Board of the Shriners’ Hospitals. He particularly enjoyed this association and remained actively interested in it until his final illness. From 1942 to 1949 he acted as surgical consultant to the Workmen’s Compensation Board of Ontario. This appointment, which reflected his keen interest in reconstructive surgery, began when Ontario’s surgical ranks were depleted because of the war and imposed a heavy additional burden on him.

Dr McDonald was a master of Lane’s “no touch” technique and was meticulous, sometimes to the point of exasperation from the viewpoint of his assistants. But none who had the privilege of training under him suffered from the experience, for he had much to teach of the craft of surgery. His publications are few, but his true quality is reflected by the vast family of patients who knew him first when they were children and who continued to consult him as adults until illness obliged him to close his practice in 1966.
He was a devoted supporter of Canadian orthopaedic surgery from its fledgling days. While president of the Canadian Orthopaedic Association in 1955, he put forward the concept that the members should support a Trust Fund, the income from which was to be used to support orthopaedic training and research in Canada. This trust, now called the Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation, has become of more than modest size and is used to support, amongst other things, the biennial visits of the Travelling Fellows to Canada.

"J. L." is remembered as a warm human being, a loyal friend and an excellent teacher. He was predeceased by his wife. To his two sons, Kent and John, we extend our sympathy.

W. R. H.

BARTHOLOMEW OSCAR BARRY
1921–1968

Oscar Barry, until recently Professor of Traumatic and Orthopaedic Surgery in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, has died in Canada. Most of Barry's professional life was concerned with Ethiopia. After qualifying from Edinburgh in 1945 he went there in 1947 with the Sudan Interior Mission. Later, after studying tropical medicine in Liverpool, he returned to Ethiopia as a general surgeon with the Church Missionary Society. This included a short spell in the Sudan: the Sudan and the western borders of Ethiopia march together for many miles in one of the most inaccessible areas of the world.

Once again he left Ethiopia and returned to Edinburgh to further his training in general surgery. During this period he acquired the F.R.C.S. and made his first acquaintance with orthopaedic surgery when he worked briefly in the department in Edinburgh. At this time the post of surgeon-superintendent of the Princess Tsahai Hospital became available. Speaking Amharic, with both surgical and administrative training, he was an obvious choice for the post. It was during this period that Barry first took practical steps to deal with the immense orthopaedic problems of Ethiopia. Sylvia Pankhurst, who died in Addis Ababa, had started a fund for the disabled and he continued her work and his own surgical contributions. Ethiopia, a country with over twenty millions without a trained orthopaedic surgeon and with leprosy, osteomyelitis, poliomyelitis and untreated trauma, presents an almost unimaginable problem. Barry developed the first workshop to produce artificial limbs; from local wood, scrap aluminium from aeroplanes and plastic glue very good limbs were made. He also became interested in the rehabilitation of lepers, for whom a return to normal life and work is still difficult because of local prejudice.

Although a general surgeon, Barry's perception of the problems of rehabilitation, his local knowledge and his administrative experience made him seem the ideal person to be the Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery in Ethiopia, then to organise, develop and maintain a university department to be staffed by secondment from Edinburgh of men who would teach and care for patients. For various local reasons this intended development never materialised. Barry during this time was Academic Secretary to the Medical School. He was also the Founder and Editor of the *Ethiopian Medical Journal*. Although many of his ambitions and ideals were never achieved he contributed much to Ethiopian and African problems in rehabilitation. He was awarded the O.B.E. in 1961. Barry leaves a family based in Scotland.

J. I. P. J.