

Obituaries



SIR DOUGLAS RANGER (1916–1997)

Sir Douglas Ranger, otolaryngologist and head and neck surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital and Dean of the Middlesex Hospital Medical School died of myocardial infarction on 22 December 1997. He was born on 5 October 1916 in Dalton-on-Furness, then in Lancashire. At the age of 3 his family emigrated to Australia and settled in Queensland. Educated at the Church of England Grammar School where he distinguished himself as head prefect, captain of rugby football and was a proficient golfer. He won a scholarship to the University of Queensland but this was not taken up because the family returned to England via South Africa in late 1935. On arrival at London Docks his father who was then suffering from bilateral lobar pneumonia was admitted to the Middlesex Hospital. Later in 1936 Douglas Ranger entered the University of London, took first MB and in the autumn started at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School. There he won many prizes and gained both a second MB and a primary FRCS in 1938. His clinical studies lapped into the Second World War during which in

1941 he qualified MRCS, LRCP and MBBS. Two years later in 1943 he became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in England. He was commissioned into the RAMC in February 1945 and was posted to India Command seeing service in the Far East. He was demobilized in late 1947 and early the following year became Registrar in ENT at the Middlesex Hospital and Consultant at the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital, Welwyn for one session a week on a Saturday afternoon. With the start of the National Health Service in July of that year he was regraded as a Senior Registrar and in 1950 he was appointed as Consultant ENT Surgeon to the Middlesex Hospital. He later had Consultant appointments at The London Chest Hospital (1952), and Mount Vernon Hospital (1958).

Douglas Ranger was Director of the Ferrens Institute of Otolaryngology from 1965–1983 and over the same time was civilian Consultant in Otolaryngology to the Royal Air Force. Douglas Ranger was one of the five consultants who joined forces in the early 1960s to initiate the British Academic Conference in Otolaryngology which has continued to attract large international gatherings every four years. He served as a Member of the Court of Examiners of the Royal College of Surgeons (1966–1972) and also as a Member of Council (1967–1972). He was Consultant Adviser in Otolaryngology to the Department of Health from 1971–1982. Of his many contributions at the Middlesex Hospital it was perhaps as Dean of the Medical School that he made his greatest impact. His main interest in ENT was in laryngology and head and neck cancer in which he performed pioneering work involving pharyngo-oesophageal replacement with stomach and colon. He was President of the Association of Head and Neck Oncologists (1974–1977) and of the Section of Laryngology of the Royal Society of Medicine (1976–1977). He was created Knight Bachelor in 1978.

He retired from the Middlesex Hospital in 1983 and wrote the History of the Middlesex Hospital Medical School 1935–1985 to celebrate the School's 150th Anniversary. He finally retired to Cheltenham in 1995.

Douglas Ranger was kind, open-handed, fair-minded and had a great sense of humour. He had been blessed with a high intellectual ability, he had abounding energy and enthusiasm and a very keen sense of duty. He married Betty Draper in 1943, she survives him together with their two sons, Philip and Michael.

NEIL WEIR