

Arthur Eyre-Brook died on 16 August 1999, aged 91 years.

He was an outstanding personality and a leader in orthopaedic surgery. He was born in Inverness, a son of the manse. His family moved to South Devon on the retirement of his father and he went to Colyton Grammar School as a day boy. Later, the family moved to Portishead. He attended medical school in Bristol as a day student and also took the examinations in London as an external candidate, qualifying in both Universities, with honours, in 1932.

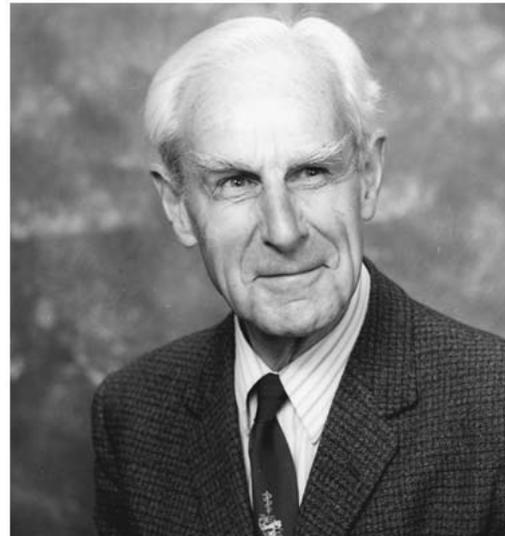
He was a distinguished student and gained the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of England and a Mastership degree in 1934.

Eyre-Brook became the Senior Resident Officer at the Bristol Royal Infirmary. He was strict and he laid down rules. The junior staff, headed by him, went into dinner at 7 pm, and he carved the joint! He was punctilious, diligent and somewhat rigid in attitude but with a high moral sense. One of his favourite sayings was “Can I do it, or should I do it?”

His postgraduate training in general surgery was at the Royal Cancer Hospital in London, in orthopaedic surgery at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Stanmore and also as a Nuffield scholar at the Wingfield Morris Hospital. He was guided by Professor G. R. Girdlestone who arranged for a further period of training for one year at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York. There he became private assistant to Dr Phillip Wilson from whom he learned “much, including how to write a sound article for a professional journal”.

He was initially appointed as a Consultant General Surgeon to the Bristol Royal Hospital for Sick Children in 1938. At the same time he was an Orthopaedic Registrar for the Fracture Service and allowed private practice at the Bristol Royal Infirmary.

During the Second World War he served in the Emergency Medical Service at Winford Hospital until February 1942, principally looking after casualties from the bombing of Bristol in association with his great friend, Ken Pridie.



He then joined the RAMC and was Surgeon-in-Charge of a 1000-bed base hospital in Oribi near Petermaritzberg in South Africa, and in 1944, as a Lieutenant-Colonel, he became Adviser in Orthopaedic Surgery to the 21st Army Group based in Brussels.

After the War he was the first orthopaedic surgeon to be recognised as such in Bristol and later became Senior Orthopaedic Surgeon to the Bristol Royal Infirmary, the Bristol Royal Hospital for Sick Children and Winford Orthopaedic Hospital.

We first met after my appointment to Bristol in 1964. He became a personal friend and I could not have wished for a kinder and more helpful senior colleague, guiding and firmly leading the development of services to patients and of the teaching of undergraduates and, especially, post-graduates. His enthusiasm and drive were legendary and he was always ‘in the thick of it’. He was a practical, single-minded man of great integrity, respected by generations of colleagues and registrars in both the UK and overseas. Junior surgeons of all grades owe a great debt of gratitude for his loyalty and support. He was friendly and always approachable. He was blessed with a characteristic twinkle in his eye and an impish sense of humour.

Although he was a general orthopaedic surgeon with wide experience his main interest was in children’s ortho-

paedics. He was the only orthopaedic surgeon at the Bristol Royal Hospital for Sick Children, where he generated a great feeling of care and reassurance to the young mothers with their handicapped and deformed children.

He loved the happy and friendly atmosphere of Winford Orthopaedic Hospital. He was a man of great vigour and tireless energy, a careful, painstaking surgeon who paid enormous attention to detail. He was a great surgical teacher and had the ability to make everyone in the team feel valued.

He contributed over 30 authoritative publications to surgical journals covering a wide variety of subjects including recurrent dislocation of the shoulder, bone tumours and, particularly, children's orthopaedics. A classic article on septic arthritis of the hip and osteomyelitis of the upper end of the femur in infancy discussed the various sequelae which may result. He was particularly interested in problems of congenital dislocation of the hip and produced the results of a small personal series in which surgical treatment was begun after the age of three years. He was one of the founder members of the Bristol Bone Tumour Registry, a panel of clinicians, radiologists and pathologists. He became a highly-respected and thoughtful clinical opinion and was a frequent contributor to debate, both locally in the south-west and at national meetings.

He gave many eponymous lectures, both in the UK and overseas. Probably the most well-known was the First Kenneth Pridie Memorial Lecture, delivered in Bristol at the British Orthopaedic Association meeting in 1965. Pridie had been his closest colleague for 25 years and the lecture struck a note of friendship, cheerfulness and vigour which was a delight to listen to.

From the early 1960s to his retirement in 1973, E-B, as he was affectionately called, had many demanding commitments in addition to the heavy clinical load. He was Deputy Chairman of the Bristol Royal Infirmary Hospital Planning Committee which guided the opening of the large new building in 1970. The Orthopaedic Library was named after him in recognition of his great services. He was President of the Bristol Medico-Chirurgical Society in 1968 and one of the founder members of the South-West Orthopaedic Club.

He was a member of the Court of Examiners of the Royal College of Surgeons for six years from 1965 to 1971.

Arthur was a staunch supporter of the British Orthopaedic Association. He was a member of the Executive Committee, later Vice-President and finally President in 1972-1973. The Annual Meetings were held in Bristol on three occasions during his time, demanding meticulous planning and organisation.

E-B always had a strong desire to travel and in his earlier years visited the USA as a postgraduate student, South Africa during Army service and the South-West Pacific at the invitation of the Colonial Office. Retirement in 1973 gave an opportunity to develop his interest in orthopaedics in developing countries. He believed that this entailed living in a country for at least three months and working with its population. Over the next 13 years he visited widely.

He was one of the leading figures involved in the birth of World Orthopaedic Concern and at the Singapore meeting of 1975 he took an active part in clarifying its principles. He spent two and a half years in the Sudan, followed by shorter periods teaching and operating in Malaysia and Burma. From 1977 he concentrated his efforts particularly on Malawi and Bangladesh. He made six annual visits as a volunteer for Rotary International for the Malawi against Poliomyelitis Appeal, becoming a member of the Lilongwe Rotary Club.

He gave up work after suffering a small stroke in 1986 in Bangladesh when aged 78. Later, he published a book *Travels of a surgeon* (1990) which describes some of his experiences on these journeys. E-B had a deep compassion for the trials, tribulations and poverty of the lives of the populations of these countries. He was an upright man with deep Christian beliefs. At the conclusion of his record of these experiences he wrote:

"I can certainly recommend these activities as a most enjoyable and broadening experience to any doctor who is being retired. To be able to continue to work in such rewarding fields of endeavour is appealing to many who find the medical world in the west becoming somewhat overcrowded."

Arthur was married to Meriel for 53 years and they were very proud of their six children and 13 grandchildren. She was a faithful companion on many of his journeys and a devoted helpmate in his latter years.

He will be remembered for his compassion and caring, integrity, drive and high endeavour.

AHCR