

Obituary

FRASER MACKINTOSH ROSE

O.B.E., M.B., Ch.B.(Edin.), Hon. F.R.C.G.P.

Fraser Rose made full use of his 75 years. Of Highland stock (his parents both came from near Inverness) he was born on 3 February 1897 in Nova Scotia—the eighth child and youngest son of the Reverend John Rose. When he was 12 the family moved from Canada to the Outer Hebrides where he was educated at the Nicolson Institute, Stornoway.

On the first day of the First World War, aged 17, he joined the Ross Mountain Battery of the Highland Territorial Division. He saw much active service in Gallipoli and the Balkans. He took part in the first landing (at Cape Helles) on 25 April 1915. In June he was wounded; but he was back on duty for the landing at Suvlo Bay on 6 August. From then he was in Macedonia on the Struma front. After the Armistice he was invalided for a back injury.

His medical training began at Edinburgh University in 1919, where he qualified in 1924. In his student days his interest in and flair for, administration was quickly recognised and he was elected secretary and later president of the Student Representative Council. He was house surgeon at Bradford Royal Infirmary and then Resident Medical Officer at the Queen Alexandra Hospital for Sick Children, Brighton. After that he applied for the post of Resident Surgical Officer at Preston Royal Infirmary. He was short-listed with Charles Read, who was later to become president of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. Rose got the job. Little could the adjudicators have guessed that they were interviewing future presidents of two Royal Colleges!

After completing his training he entered a busy general practice in Fylde Road, Preston, where he remained until retirement in 1968. His partners were A. T. Gibb (for two years), R. B. Guyer (for 17 years) and C. M. MacKenzie (for 22 years). He often admitted his indebtedness to his partners, without whose help and forbearance much of his other work would have been impossible.

For a long time he did a great deal for the British Medical Association, being honorary secretary of the Preston Division for 16 years, representative of this Division for ten years,

first president of the North Lancashire and Westmorland branch, and member of the B.M.A. Council for ten years. He also served on ten or more B.M.A. committees including the General Medical Services Committee. In 1950 he was admitted to the Roll of Fellowship of the British Medical Association.

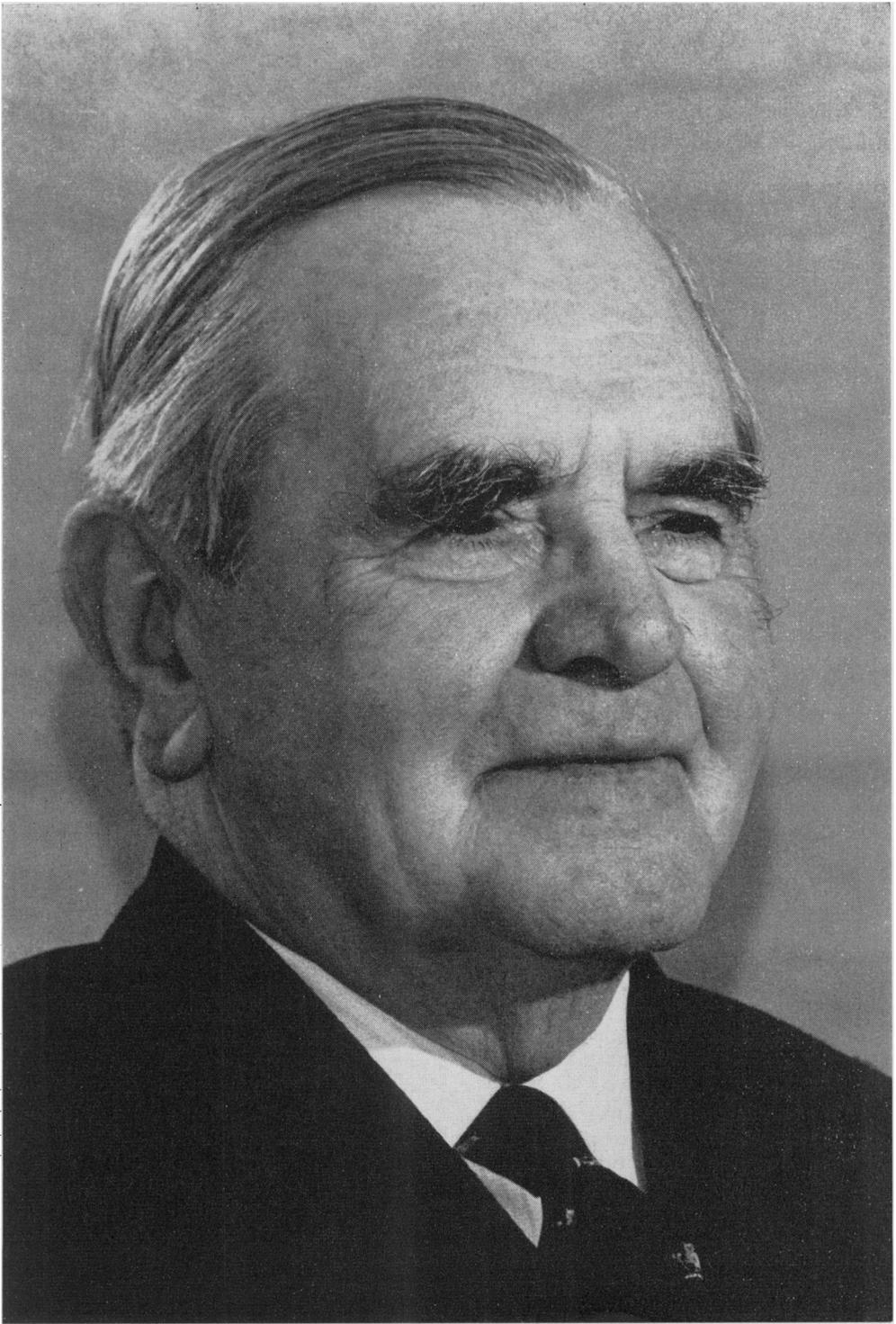
He was a member of 11 or more committees in Lancashire, including both the Preston and Lancashire Executive Councils. In London he served on the Insurance Acts Committee, the NHS Appeals Tribunal, the Central Health Services Council and its Standing Medical Advisory Committee. In 1962 he was made an O.B.E.

Not content with all these commitments he took a leading part in the formation of our College of General Practitioners. His memorandum to the General Practice Review Committee was dated 23 June, 1951: it was presented, with one other, to that Committee on 3 October. This meeting was followed by a letter, of which he was joint signatory, to the *British Medical Journal* and *The Lancet* suggesting the formation of a College of General Practice and asking for comments for and against this proposal.

A second letter over the same two signatures announced the formation and composition of the Steering Committee, under the chairmanship of the Rt. Hon. Henry Willink, Q.C., of which Rose was one of the first four general-practitioner members. This committee met eight times. He was one of the signatories to the Memorandum and Articles of Association when the College was founded on 19 November, 1952. His many offices in the College included being vice-chairman of the Provisional Foundation Council and of the Foundation Council. At the first Annual General Meeting he said that doctors had joined the College "not because we think we are good practitioners but because we want to be better ones."

He was a member of the first three College Councils, Chairman of Council from 1956 to 1959, and President for the two years 1962 and 1963, after which he was elected an Honorary Fellow of the College.

Several troublesome illnesses dogged him for



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much of this time; including two operations for cataract. Travelling from Preston to London for meetings of the B.M.A. and of the College must have been particularly worrying and difficult for him at times; but over the years he managed to attend most of these meetings. When not travelling back to Preston by train he often stayed the night at the Caledonian Club, Belgravia. He was responsible for two later presidents of the College being elected to that Club. His administrative ability, his many contacts with the B.M.A., his patience and courtesy, sound common-sense and judgment of character were of very great value to the College in its early days.

He was a great reader and owned a large library. His literary interests were wide with a particular fondness for classical and historical works and for poetry. He dealt efficiently with *The Guardian* crossword each morning at breakfast, and there was seldom need to resort to a reference book when a quotation was required. He was a good writer. His story *The Student Years*, privately circulated, is an autobiography of his early life. His death has robbed us of further instalments which he had planned. He was a keen photographer and at one time used his own dark room.

After retiring from general practice he became an enthusiastic and energetic gardener. In his new home he cleared a wilderness and left well-cared-for lawns and flower beds. He was fond of the Outer Hebrides where he liked to spend his holidays.

With his knowledge of literature and travel he was always an interesting companion. He was good in debate. He held firm views, the pinkish tint of which mellowed with time. He was always willing to listen to and try to understand other points of view. His honesty,

strength of purpose and character were appreciated by all those who knew him well. He cared not one jot for a man's status in life and was quite oblivious of social class. He had several political rivals but he always spoke generously of those who opposed him. If he sometimes smiled at others he laughed at himself and his own faults far more.

He had a great sense of 'the family.' In recent years he devoted much time and derived much pleasure from genealogical research investigating, often personally, many a graveyard and records office. Few of his ancestors in Scotland or Canada, born within the last 250 years, could have escaped his scrutiny. His letters, which were witty and amusing, were the means by which family cohesion was kept. His relations, scattered throughout the British Isles, Canada and Australia, would know of each others' activities through his correspondence. He was married twice. His first wife, Jean, gave him two sons and a daughter before she died in 1937.

His second wife, Catherine, gave him two more sons and survives him. Three of his sons are doctors—one a general practitioner in Canada, one a radiologist at Leeds and the third a radiologist at Guy's Hospital; his daughter is a nurse.

We shall greatly miss Fraser Rose. One of my happiest recollections of him was outside my consulting room, wearing his black Anthony Eden hat, sitting with his son John squashed into a one-and-a-half seater 1928, yellow Austin Seven car with the hood down, laughing uproariously as they drove off. A sight which I shall never forget.

JOHN H. HUNT
