

founded; if not, there is an inconsistency between the College's intentions as stated by Dr Irvine and the methods of selection of trainers in Dr Irvine's own region.

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COLLEGE ARMS

Sir,
I would like to correct your correspondent (April *Journal*, p. 251) on the

subject of the college crest, in which I have a particular interest.

The bird does indeed appear to be a long-eared owl; a species which is distributed not just in the Palaearctic but very widely in the boreal or temperate zones of both old and new worlds. There are additional isolated populations in Africa and China. It is unfortunately a scarce species in mainland Britain and appears to have been replaced in many localities during the last century or so by the tawny owl (*Strix aluco*). It remains, however, the commonest owl in Ireland, where the tawny does not occur.

The little owl (*Athene noctua*), and

not *Carine noctua* as stated by your correspondent, is common in Greece where it was the emblem of Pallas Athene. It is not native to Britain but was introduced during the nineteenth century and has now spread to most of England and Wales, though not to Scotland or Ireland.

Few people can, however, object to *Asio otis*, which is most people's idea of what an owl ought to look like; whereas Athene's own much less distinguished bird could well be mistaken for a tie full of chattering sparrows.

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OBITUARY

D. S. Napier, FRCGP, C.ST.J

Dr D. S. Napier, who retired from general practice less than a year ago, died at the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital on 20 February this year.

Duncan Scott Napier (Dick to his friends) was born in Edinburgh on 18 April 1906. He was educated at Watson's Academy and qualified MB, CH.B at the University of Edinburgh. Apart from the war years when he served in the RAF as a squadron leader, he spent the rest of his career engaged in general practice in Norwich. During that time, there was hardly a medical committee of importance that he did not serve in the office of chairman, which he did with great wit, charm, grace, and efficiency. Among the committees on which he served were the local medical committee and the Norwich branch of the BMA, of which he was President from 1957 to 58. He was also County Surgeon of the St John's Ambulance Brigade and was elected President of

the Norwich Strangers Club, where he entertained the Mexican Ambassador during his year in office.

He was always quick to realize the need for change and took an active part in reorganizing his practice to achieve greater efficiency. With his lifelong interest in his profession, it is not surprising that he was a founder member of the College of General Practitioners, the first Provost of the East Anglian Faculty, being awarded the fellowship in 1972. He was, I believe, one of the first authorized trainers, many years before the days of the vocational training scheme, and there are at least ten principals who owe a lot of their early training to his keenness.

His patients will remember him as a kindly and compassionate family doctor, and my partners and I will remember him as an amusing, energetic colleague. We shall all miss Dick.

A. S. WOOLSTONE