

The first Fellows of the Faculty

Professor J Norman, Emeritus Professor of Anaesthesia, Southampton

The Faculty of Anaesthetists of the Royal College of Surgeons of England was formed in 1948. Its first Board Meeting was held on 19 March. The Council of the Royal College had elected the anaesthetic members of the Board: there were 21 with Dr Adrian Marston being the Dean. In addition, the President of the College and the two Vice-Presidents were members ex-officio. The first resolution passed by the Board was to express its appreciation of the action of the College's Council in forming the Faculty and in giving permission for a Fellowship of the Faculty to be granted. No Fellows were created at that meeting but the Board agreed that all holders of the Diploma in Anaesthetics granted by the Royal Colleges of Surgeons and Physicians should be eligible for Membership of the Faculty – on the payment of an initial registration fee of £2 2s.0d (£2.10). Other practitioners recognised as specialists in anaesthesia were also eligible for Membership.

The next meeting was held on 23 June. The Board reported there were some 616 Members of the Faculty, each of whom had paid the registration fee. The Board then considered who could be Fellows. It recommended that the 21 elected members of the board be granted immediate fellowships. Thus the first FFAs were the members of the Board. The next business was to create the ground rules for election of other people. There were to be four categories:

- 1 Those who were medically qualified, on the staff of teaching hospitals for ten years, holding the DA and being members of the Faculty, or
- 2 those who were Professors, Readers or Lecturers in anaesthesia or Directors or Officers in charge of a department of anaesthetics of a teaching hospital, or
- 3 were distinguished anaesthetists not on the British (Medical) Register, or
- 4 were persons who had made a notable contribution to the science or practice of anaesthesia.

The Board recommended that Council of the College give permission for up to 150 Fellowships to be awarded in the succeeding two years, the total to include the 21 given to the Board Members. After that time the recommendation was that up to ten Fellowships be awarded each year. The fee on being elected was to be £10.10s.0d (£10.50) but only £8.8s.0d for those who were already members. Finally, the Board presented a list of 81 names for these Fellowships to add to the initial 21 members of the Board.

By 1952, things were changing. The Faculty decided that it needed its own examination. Until then, the only professional qualification was the Diploma in Anaesthetics, the DA, which had been instituted in 1935. The format originally was for a single paper and a single oral examination. It was under the control of a joint board from the Royal College of Surgeons in England and the Royal College of Physicians. In 1948 the format changed to a two-part examination. The first part was an examination of the basic sciences of Anatomy, Physiology, Pharmacology and Pathology. The second was an examination in Anaesthesia, Analgesia, Clinical Medicine and Surgery. The examination was still under the control of the two Royal Colleges. In November 1952, the Board of the Faculty laid down the rules for the new FFA examinations. In essence, the format for the two-part DA was taken over. The subjects for the two parts were the same with two provisos. For the examination in the basic sciences, stress was to be laid 'upon those general principles with which anaesthesia and analgesia are particularly concerned'. For the final examination there was a clause adding 'the application of the Basic Sciences'. Incidentally, one could be admitted to the final examination with the Primary Fellowship of any of the Surgical Colleges. The two-part DA was ended and replaced by a single stage examination.

The stage was thus set for Fellowship to be achieved by examination. However, what was to happen to those who held the two-part DA? Some original suggestions had been made by the Board but were referred back by the Council of the College for further consideration. What was agreed was that for a period of two years following the inauguration of the FFARCS examination, those eligible to receive the diploma without examination should be those holding the two-part DA provided they also matched the criteria given for election in 1948, i.e. they were on the staff of what were now termed 'recognised hospitals' or were academics. After the two-year period, the regulations were to return to those already in force.

There are lists published in the British Journal of Anaesthesia in the subsequent two years of some 903 anaesthetists admitted Fellows without examination.

The first examination was held in November 1953. Dr Zorab and Professor Jones have given some details earlier in the May issue of the Bulletin. There were 52 candidates for the final examination of whom 16 'acquitted themselves satisfactorily'. One had not fully complied with the

requirements so that only 15 names appear as the first fellows by examination. I traced as many of the sixteen as I could. The following brief notes summarise their careers.

Robert Noel Sidebotham (now Hadfield)

Qualified LRCP MRCS from UCH in London in 1944 and passed the MB BS in 1950. He trained as a registrar at UCH, became a senior registrar in Manchester, and a consultant to the Southport and North Liverpool Hospitals. He is now living in Weybridge. He recalls Professor Mushin as one of his examiners who asked about the choices of anaesthetic techniques for some procedure – and continued asking for anything else – 'what about local?' was what he was after.

Peter Wentworth Thompson

Qualified LRCP, MRCS and MB BCh from Cambridge in 1949 with St George's being his clinical school. He went on to be a senior registrar and then consultant in Cardiff. His distinguished career since then includes work for National and International Standards in anaesthesia, being an examiner for the Final FFA, being a member of the Board of the Faculty and its Vice-Dean. He lectures still on the history of anaesthesia for the College courses and will be well known for the clarity of these – plus the bowler hat and the bow tie!

Adam Stanislaw Adams (formerly Szukawski)

Qualified LRCP, MRCS and MB, BCh from the Polish School of Medicine in Edinburgh in 1949. At the time of passing the examination, his address was in Cardiff. I have not been able to trace anymore about him except that he has since died.

Thomas Hildred Christie

Qualified LRCP, MRCS and MB BS from King's College in 1950. He had represented the United Kingdom in the rowing events in the 1948 Olympic Games in London. His anaesthetic training included time at Westminster and St Thomas's. He worked with Dr Harry Churchill-Davidson using electromyograms to elucidate dual block with succinylcholine, was involved with obstetric anaesthesia and the early days of open-heart surgery. He was a consultant in Brighton and is now happily retired.

Birendral Bhattacharjee

Dr Bhattacharjee must be the oldest candidate. He qualified MB BS from Rangoon in 1935. His address in the College records was in New Delhi. I have not been able to trace any more about him.

James Robert Bryson

Qualified MB ChB from Glasgow in 1940. He had been an SHO in Dunfermline and was later a registrar in Wakefield. He became a Consultant in Clatterbridge. He has also died.

Yeshwant Ganesh Bhojraj

Qualified MB BS from Bombay in 1945. The address in the report of the examiners is also Bombay and I believe he returned there.

David Airey Chadwick

Qualified in 1946 in Manchester. He trained there in anaesthesia and also in Newcastle. He became a consultant in the North and Mid-Cheshire hospitals and is now retired and living in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Josef Lomez

Qualified MB ChB from the Polish School of Medicine in Edinburgh in 1947. He had commenced his medical studies in France and had them interrupted by the Second World War. He became a prisoner of war and escaped across the Pyrenees to Spain. He trained in anaesthesia in the UK but then became a Medical Officer in the Colonial Medical Service. In 1959 he moved to Sydney and was the first Director of Anaesthesia in the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children there. He has now died but was a most distinguished trainer of anaesthetists and supporter of the profession.

Paul Robert Mesham

Qualified MB ChB from Cape Town in 1947. His address at the time of the examination was in Liverpool and he then returned to South Africa.

Thomas Wethnavanam Vanniasingham

Qualified MB BS from Ceylon in 1947. At the time of the examination he was working in London but returned to be a Specialist Anaesthetist in Kandy.

Dorothy Mary Agnes Carr

Dr Carr was the only woman to pass at this sitting. She qualified MB ChB from the National University of Ireland in 1949. She trained in part at the Westminster Hospital and later held various appointments in London. She has also died.

James Camac Clarke

Qualified MB BCh from Belfast in 1949. He trained there and became a consultant to the Ulster and Royal Hospitals. He is still alive. He attributes his success in the Fellowship – after failing the Part 1 of the DA – to attending the College Course and passing both the Primary and the Final Fellowship in one session.

Vernon Bruce Cook

Qualified MB ChB from Otago in 1949. At the time of the examination he was in Oxford but then returned to New Zealand to Palmerston North. He is alive.

Richard Stuart Atkinson

Qualified MB BCH from Cambridge in 1951 having done his clinical work at Bart's. He continued to train there but became a consultant at Southend where he worked with Dr J Alfred Lee. He will be well known for many reasons, notably the invaluable Synopsis of Anaesthesia and his interests in the history of the speciality. As with Dr Thompson, he became an examiner for the fellowship, a member of the Board of the Faculty and its Vice-Dean. Sadly, Dick is no longer with us.

Brian Hall Smith

Dr Smith was the sixteenth successful candidate. He does not remember why his name was not on the initial role – he suspects it may be that the RCS was not satisfied that he had paid the fee! He had qualified LRCP, MRCS and had the MB ChB from Birmingham in 1948. His initial anaesthetic training was in Birmingham but he became a senior registrar in Cardiff before returning to Birmingham as a consultant. Almost as an aside in his letter to me, he let slip that whilst being a medical student in the war, he had been a member of the Royal Observer Corps. In 1944 he was given three months leave from medical school to join the Royal Navy as a 'Seaborne Volunteer' to act as an aircraft spotter on a US Liberty ship. As such he spent several days from D-Day plus one off the Omaha Beach.

These are the remarkable 15 men and one woman who passed the first Final FFA examination. As with subsequent examinations, they represent a good mixture : eight from the United Kingdom, one from each of Eire, South Africa, New Zealand and Sri Lanka, two from India and two from Poland via the Polish Medical School in Edinburgh. Incidentally Drs Bhojraj, Cook, Hadfield, Thompson and Vanniansingham are recorded in the same College minutes as having passed the DA at much the same time.

Of the first Fellows, Professor Cecil Gray was elected being one of the founding members of the Board in 1948. Dr Hadfield was one of the first to pass the FFA examinations. Both attended the College's anniversary dinner in March this year.