

Frank Dudley Hart

As a fellow member of the Honorary Editorial Board of *Drugs* since its inception 33 years ago, Sir Frank Dudley Hart was a revered colleague with a long and distinguished career in medicine, not only in Great Britain but internationally. As a 'Father of Rheumatology', emerging as a medical leader out of World War II, he established the first rheumatology clinic of this nascent subspecialty.

He was a leader in identifying ankylosing spondylitis as a unique rheumatic disease with genetic features even prior to discovery of the pivotal HLA B27 connection. With his applied pharmacology credentialing he went on to become a central figure in arthritis and analgesic clinical drug research and development. He was to edit multiple textbooks on the subject, as well as the Adis title *Avery's Drug Treatment*. He helped establish the British Arthritis Research Council, which became a continuing basis for critical peer funding of clinical and basic research. He was the official advisor to the British Ministry of Health on analgesic and antirheumatic drugs.

In addition to his academic and administrative roles, he was throughout a dedicated practicing physician and premier rheumatologist to his death. For his professional career was to span generations. And his personal qualities of warmth and elegance as a

descendant of an ecclesiastical family, husband of a lifelong marriage and father of three formed the persona.

He was a remarkable lecturer, travelling worldwide and always bringing the old flavour of the British Empire with him. A typical vignette was a relaxing interlude after a faculty meeting in Thailand on a boat cruise with us all in bathing attire as Frank arrived in the sweltering heat with his Hong Kong suit, shirt and tie. And not for one moment did he sweat!

As a repeated speaker at my FDA Arthritis Guideline meetings, afterwards he would unfailingly sneak back an Arizona cactus through British Customs like a mischievous boy for his beloved garden in Hampstead.

He remained active professionally throughout his long and remarkable career. Yet he always found time to write unfailingly each Christmas, most recently to share that he was now preparing to retire "at least in part" from his Harley Street practice at age 94! In that letter he was to poignantly share the news of the recent death of his wife. Afterward he would go on to review a paper for *Drugs* on gout just prior to his death.

And so he left us a splendid model of what a physician and rheumatologist should aspire to be.

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