

During his years at Millbank, Pomfret has kept in touch with many officers who have grown grey and sedate—like himself—with advancing years and long service. They always stopped for a few words, a shake of the hand, and reciprocated good wishes when calling at the Mess.

During the recent war he suffered a sad bereavement in the loss of his wife and his home was badly damaged.

Of late his health had not been what it once was. He began to tire more easily. With his memories going back over so many years he noticed a change in the tempo of life. The younger officers, he noticed, were taking life more seriously than their lighter-hearted predecessors of forty years ago. He realized that "times do be changing" and felt that the time for quiet retirement had come.

Many of our retired officers who share with Pomfret memories of the Hotel Belgravia and St. Ermins will be glad to know that he is comfortably installed in a flat in the immediate vicinity of St. Georges Square where, surrounded by such of his possessions and souvenirs as have survived the war years, he is already enjoying the first of what we all hope will be many years of that peaceful retirement to which we all look forward.

He sends the following message to his old friends:

"On my retirement I wish to express my very sincere thanks to all officers of the Corps (past and present) for the many kindnesses I have received during my Service."

Obituary

Brigadier WILLIAM ANDERSON, O.B.E., F.R.C.S.

It is with great regret that we record the death of Brigadier William Anderson, recently Consulting Surgeon to the Scottish Command and Northern Ireland.

The writer had the good fortune to serve with him in No. 32 C.C.S. at St. Venant in 1916. From time to time, when things were slack, we would pay a visit to Bethune where John Fraser was then operating. It was in this City that Willie, later, cemented what was to prove a life-long and very close friendship with Elliott Cutler whose children idolized him. They met fairly often at Millbank during the recent war. This was a friendship which did much to help the very close liaison between the Surgeons of the U.S.A. and our own.

During this last war—in addition to his normal duties as a Consulting Surgeon—he occasionally relieved the Consulting Surgeon to the Army and sat as a member of the War Office Medical Board. Here he gave sound advice and was still the same kindly soul that he had always been in his dealings with patients and colleagues.

Throughout his life he had never spared himself when there was anything that might be done for others. Even when he took a few hours relaxation on the moors of Aberdeenshire there was always a highly organized signal system to allow of his recall in the event of a surgical emergency.

Of him it might almost have been written:

"My candle burns at both ends,
It will not last the night.
But, Oh my foes and Ah my friends,
It gives a lovely light."

Willie had no foes—now that he has passed on we, who were his friends, miss one of the brightest of the Northern Lights.

No better can be said of him than that the world was a better place for his having been in it.

D. C. M. writes: The recent announcement of the death, at Aberdeen, on November 29 of Brigadier William Anderson, comes as a shock to his many friends and admirers in all walks of life and particularly to his contemporaries in the Corps. Connected with this sad event, there is rather more than the average element of tragedy. In the first place, it was so unexpected as he had been apparently in good health and his usual high spirits just prior to the occurrence. Again, it occurred with dramatic suddenness, while giving evidence in the witness box. Finally, he had recently purchased a new home, and had announced his intention to retire from active surgical practice in the near future, to enjoy a well-merited rest. A distinguished graduate of his Alma Mater, the Aberdeen medical school, he learned the basic elements of his art under distinguished surgical masters, such as Gray and Marnock. During World War I he served with the B.E.F. as a surgical specialist, and it was at this time, when we were operating at adjoining C.C.S.s, that the writer first had the privilege of meeting him. On the outbreak of World War II he was the obvious choice for Consultant Surgeon to Scottish Command and we met frequently at the monthly meetings of the W.O. Surgical Consultants Committee, of which I had the honour to be *ex-officio* chairman. I owe him much for his help, sound advice and co-operation and shall never forget his unflinching optimism and good humour. Gifted with more than the usual amount of that inestimable mixture of Scottish cannyness and sound common sense, which I have always felt tends to characterize the more distinguished graduates of Scottish medical schools, his contributions to the discussions in the W.O. Committee were always listened to with great respect. Indeed, he was a man of great charm of manner with a generous, lovable and kindly disposition. It is not to be wondered at that in his native city and throughout the north of Scotland where he controlled an extensive surgical practice, he was regarded by his patients, rich and poor alike, as something in the nature of a father confessor, big uncle or fairy godfather. An Indian babu would have called him "the father and mother of the poor."

Our deepest sympathies go out to his widow and his family. As for us, while we, his friends and admirers, mourn the absence of "Willie Anderson of Aberdeen" from our midst, let us be grateful for the privilege of having known him, and be thankful that his passing was quick and clean and while he was still in harness and in full possession of his faculties.

J. M. W. writes: I first met William Anderson in the Mess at Millbank shortly after the return from Dunkirk and for the remainder of the War was closely associated with him.

At the monthly meetings of the Surgical Sub-Committee he was a tower of strength; full of common sense he was always ready to speak his mind and to maintain his opinion.

He was a delightful companion on tour when he was Consultant Surgeon to the Scottish and North of Ireland Commands.

He acted as Consultant Surgeon at the War Office when I went to North Africa and for some time we lived together in the Mess and got to know one another well.

I know that he regretted never having got overseas in the recent War.

He was a great gentleman and I never heard an unkind word said of him. He was always the same—steadfast and cheerful. After the War we corresponded regularly and he leaves an irreplaceable gap.

Lieut.-Col. FRANCIS JOSEPH BROWN, R.A.M.C. (Rtd.)

Lieutenant-Colonel Francis Joseph Brown died on November 20, 1949, in Roydon, Suffolk. He was born in Burton Bradstock, Dorset, on August 7, 1866. He qualified M.R.C.S. England, L.R.C.P. London, in 1888. He was commissioned Surgeon Captain July 28, 1891, and became Major, Royal Army Medical Corps on July 28, 1903. He retired on July 29, 1911, and was re-employed from August 5, 1914, to November 24, 1919. He received a Brevet-Lieutenant-Colonelcy on June 3, 1918.

He served in South Africa from 1899 to 1902 taking part in operations in Cape Colony and the Orange River Colony. (Queen's medal with two clasps; King's medal with two clasps.)

From 1915 to 1917 he served in Gallipoli as A.D.M.S., 52nd Lowland Division and also in Egypt and the Mediterranean.

From August to November 1919 he was on special recruiting duty in the United States and Canada.

Major-General SIR WILLIAM MICHAEL RUSSELL, K.C.M.G., C.B.

We regret to record the death of Sir William Russell in Crowborough on December 6, 1939, in his ninetieth year.

He took the L.S.A. in 1881 and the M.R.C.S. in 1882 and entered the Service as a surgeon in 1885. He rose to the rank of Colonel in 1914 and retired with the honorary rank of Major-General on December 26, 1917, but was retained on the active list until June 1919.

He had been D.A.D.G., A.M.S., from April 1903 to March 1908 and D.D.G., A.M.S., from October 1914 until his retirement.

He served in the Sudan with the Frontier Field Force in 1885, being present at the battle of Ginniss. He received the Medal and Bronze Star.

He again saw active service in the Zhob Valley in 1890 receiving the medal with clasp.

In the South African Campaign, 1899 - 1902, he took part in the advance on Kimberley and operations in the Transvaal and Cape Colony. Twice mentioned in despatches, he received the Brevet of Lieutenant-Colonel, the Queen's Medal with three clasps and the King's Medal with two clasps.

In the war of 1914 - 1921 he was mentioned in despatches, created *K.C.M.G.* and *C.B.* and awarded the General Service Medal.

Colonel PETER MacKESSACK, *D.S.O.*, *M.B.*, *B.Sc.*

In Bournemouth on December 9, 1949, Colonel Peter MacKessack. Born in Kinloss, Aberdeen, August 4, 1872, he took the *B.Sc.* Aberdeen, in 1892 and the *M.B.* Aberdeen, in 1896, and was appointed Surgeon Lieutenant July 28, 1897. Promoted Captain R.A.M.C. July 28, 1900, Major January 28, 1909, and Lieutenant-Colonel March 1, 1915, he retired with the rank of Colonel July 28, 1921. He took the *D.P.H.* Cambridge, in 1907. He served on the Nile in 1898, being awarded the Medal and Egyptian Medal. He was in France from August 1914 till March 1915, in Gallipoli from July to September 1915, and on the Macedonian Front from October 1915 till May 1919. Twice mentioned in despatches, he was awarded the *D.S.O.*, the 1914 Star, British War and Victory Medals.

Correspondence

DEAR SIR,

In his paper entitled "Principles of Surgery in the Field, Including Transfusion" published in the September number of the Journal, Brigadier Fettes, in the second paragraph of the section on Transfusion (p. 113), argues that dried plasma is the best solution to the problem of blood transfusion in forward areas on active service.

In the conditions which will obtain in future wars this may well be the case and indeed, in certain campaigns in World War II, dried plasma was the only transfusion fluid which could be supplied to front-line units. Nevertheless I think it would be wrong to accept this as a principle which has universal application. At first sight it might have been assumed that the difficult conditions which prevailed in the Western Desert and later on the Western Front in Europe would make it impossible to provide whole blood for use in the forward areas. Yet, by the persistence and ingenuity of the Blood Transfusion Service, these difficulties were overcome. Blood was freely available throughout the Western Desert campaigns and was administered in the beach units on D-Day. "Delivery on the doorstep" was the slogan in Normandy, Belgium and Germany and rarely was this unfulfilled.

It is not my intention to enter into an argument on the respective merits of whole blood and plasma and I will merely record that, whatever the theoretical position may be, no doubt existed in the minds of surgeons and blood-transfusion officers in the forward area as to the superiority of whole blood over plasma.

While it is true, as Brigadier Fettes says, that reactions are more common with stored blood than with fresh, they were, in our experience, few and far between and the ill-effects they caused were many times outbalanced by the benefit derived from the blood.