

PARRY, EDGAR WILLIAMS (1919 - 2011), surgeon

Name: Edgar Williams Parry
Date of birth: 1919
Date of death: 2011
Spouse: Enid Parry (née Rees)
Child: John Parry
Child: Jane Anne Carr (née Parry)
Parent: Gruffydd Henry Parry
Parent: Helena Parry (née Williams)
Gender: Male
Occupation: surgeon
Area of activity: Medicine

Edgar Parry was born on 1 May 1919 in the Post Office, Salem, Betws Garmon, Caernarfonshire, the second child of Gruffydd Henry Parry, a farmer of Hafod y Rhug, Llanrug, and his wife Helena Parry (née Williams). He had an elder sister Mary (Vaughan Jones) who became a Biology teacher and headmistress. The family subsequently moved to Plas Glanrafon, Waunfawr where Edgar was brought up.

Edgar attended Waunfawr Primary School and then Caernarfon County Grammar School.

He chose to follow a medical career and studied at Liverpool University School of Medicine, graduating MB ChB in 1943. At Liverpool he met Enid Rees, also a doctor, and they were married in 1949. In the same year he became a Fellow of The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.

He continued his surgical training first at the Caernarfon and Anglesey Hospital in Bangor where he had hoped to have a permanent position as a consultant. This did not transpire and he went on to take further training in Bristol. Here he worked in research into venous thrombosis and this was the subject of his thesis for which he was awarded Master of Surgery (Ch.M) at Liverpool University. He had a particular interest in the prevention of post-operative thrombosis. He recognised that sitting in a chair while the bed was made after an operation did not equate to "early ambulation" and he also warned that 'a touch of pleurisy' might well be the warning sign of pulmonary embolism. Following this he went to The Mayo Clinic in Rochester Minnesota, USA to work with Dr Jack Grindley for a year.

On his return to the UK he became a Senior Lecturer in Surgery at Liverpool University working under the direction of Professor Charles Wells and added the qualification Fellow of The Royal College of Surgeons of England in 1955. In 1956 he was appointed Consultant Surgeon at Bootle, Waterloo and Broadgreen Hospitals in Liverpool. He was appointed as a general surgeon which encompassed a very wide field of surgery. Vascular surgery was in its infancy but Edgar Parry would contribute to the development of several new operations in this field. The particular areas in vascular surgery where he had considerable influence were in surgery for aortic aneurysm, carotid artery surgery, thoracic outlet obstruction and in the management of deep vein thrombosis. He began access surgery in Merseyside for haemodialysis and participated in all the initial kidney transplant operations in Liverpool carrying out the vascular anastomoses.

Edgar Parry was renowned for his technical excellence and for his calm and gentle demeanour. He looked after both his patients and his trainees with patience and with compassion. He simply wanted to do the best for his patients and to ensure that the skills he possessed were in turn passed on to the next generation of surgeons. For good reason he was 'the surgeons' surgeon'. The opportunity to work for Edgar Parry was highly sought after and trainees from Australia as well as the UK would vie to work for him. In turn he was invited to lecture in USA, Canada and Australia.

In 1980 he became President of the Liverpool Medical Institution and his Presidential Address was entitled 'Consider the Lily' and was about the Snowdon Lily and the naturalist who discovered it, [Edward Lhwyd](#). He retired in 1984.

Enid and Edgar had a long and happy marriage and they had a reputation for warm hospitality in their welcoming home. As well as medicine they shared interests in music and in art. They had two children: John (b. 1950) is a Urologist, now retired, and Jane Anne (Carr, b. 1955) is a musician who specialises in playing the harp. Grandchildren were a particular joy and a source of great pride.

They retired to Anglesey where their home had a view of Snowdonia and from where he could enjoy his hobbies of golf and gardening and take pride in Welsh Rugby.

He died on 9 February 2011 in Bangor and was cremated in Bangor.

Author

Averil Mansfield

Sources

Averil Mansfield, 'Edgar Williams Parry', *British Medical Journal*, 2011, 343

Family information

Personal acquaintance

Additional Links

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Wikidata: [Q109811832](#)

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