

## OBITUARY

James Cecil Pedley, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

1905–1985



Cecil Pedley died on 11 February 1985. Born in 1905, he qualified for his M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. at The Middlesex Hospital in London in 1931. From 1935 to 1944, he served in Lanchow, China, where he first began treating leprosy patients. From 1949 until 1955 he worked in Kashmir, Simla, and the Kulu Valley, setting up two rural hospitals, and organizing basic health care delivery in remote areas. In 1956 he joined The Leprosy Mission and served in India prior to working in Nepal. During his 16 years in Nepal, he was associated with the development of the Anandaban Leprosy Hospital and with the United Mission to Nepal. He also undertook leprosy surveys in Afghanistan and, at the age of 69, he began work in establishing a new integrated general medical and leprosy hospital in Bhutan with an associated leprosy control program. In 1974 he returned to England where he continued in general practice until his death.

Cecil Pedley is best known for his contributions as a leprologist. In his years at the United Mission Hospital in Tansen, Ne-

pal, he conducted detailed studies of a large series of patients with Hansen's disease. He repeatedly took skin smears and skin and nerve biopsies, sending the latter specimens to England for examination and report. Slowly he saw the detailed patterns of response to therapy and of some of the problems of resistance and reaction in the complex immunology of leprosy. He probed in all corners, searching out the mystery of the means of spread of the disease. I remember his joy and excitement when he could demonstrate *Mycobacterium leprae* in the milk of an infected mother. Later he repeatedly demonstrated active bacteria in large numbers in the nasal secretions blown out by patients, and thus pointed out a likely major route for the transmission of this infection.

He was a careful physician, keeping watch on his patients, concerned with their physical, social, and spiritual condition. He practiced ophthalmology and removed many cataracts to restore sight. He mastered difficult techniques of reconstructive orthopedic surgery to aid in the rehabilitation of people afflicted with deformities of leprosy. For several years he trekked or rode his old horse "Danny Boy" the 16 miles round trip to a leprosy colony 3000 feet below Tansen. In those days victims of Hansen's ailment had been banished to the densely crowded place, and provided food but not treatment. Cecil Pedley provided the treatment. He included these unfortunates in his study, and kept careful records. He gave the children born there prophylaxis with dapsone, and could show that none of them developed stigmata, despite an exposure hardly matched anywhere in its intensity. He won the respect of the health officials of His Majesty's Government of Nepal, and assisted them to take over the care and treatment of the institution; this care continues today. Cecil attempted to rehabilitate his patients with arrested disease, often going long distances in the hills, afoot

or by horseback, to try to persuade communities to accept their returned old neighbors.

Cecil Pedley was British, and proud of it! He also had a sense of humor that helped him enjoy the banter with equally proud American colleagues, and the graciousness to remain close friends. His high levels of intelligence and patience served him well in performing his long studies. His greatest characteristic was faith. He was a staunch Christian and a pioneer missionary to re-

mote areas of the India-Tibet Himalayan border areas, and to Nepal very soon after the country opened its doors. He will be remembered for outstanding scientific accomplishments and for his many years of dedicated service to unfortunates in remote areas. Yet those who know him well would agree that he would most like to be recalled as a firm follower of his Lord Jesus Christ. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

—Carl W. Fredricks