



IAN SCOTT SMILLIE, OBE, ChM, FRSC, FRFPS
April 15, 1907, to March 18, 1992

Ian Smillie—what a wonderful person. His book entitled *Injuries of the Knee Joint* has demanded publication through five editions. His outstanding work and communication relative to the knee has indoctrinated and stimulated our orthopaedic world. He had a command of the English language through which he expressed his knowledge and observations so clearly. The written material is easy and enjoyable reading. He was a superb surgeon, had “beautiful hands,” and it was a thrill for anyone to observe him in the clinic and in the operating room, where his movements were crisp and precise.

Ian Smillie had a dry wit and a fine sense of humor. He spoke concisely and to the point; he was not verbose. This combination of wit, humor, and vocabulary caused some people who did not know him well to remark that he was sometimes caustic. He was not. He was a very kind person, deep down into his heart.

In our earlier years of putting on postgraduate courses pertaining to the knee (AAOS), he frequently gave his time and efforts to participate with us. Because of his great depth of knowledge of the knee, his presentations may sometimes

have seemed overauthoritative. However, if you knew him well you could discern the humor as well as his subtle prodding to stimulate thinking and rebuttal. On his first occasion to be on the faculty of one of these postgraduate courses, I had been moderating a session and when I came down from the podium I noticed that he was sitting in about the second row, in an aisle seat, and his legs appeared to be tightly and tensely crossed. I asked him if something was wrong. He said yes, that he needed to go to the restroom but was scared that if he did he'd miss something. He appreciated that these postgraduate courses were a great educational process for the orthopaedic surgeon to learn more about the knee and he was most sincere in not wanting to miss out on any little vignette of knowledge that might be dispersed in these presentations.

When the world soccer championship games were in Mexico, England sent Smillie as their team physician and France sent Albert Trillat as theirs. Brazil, however, won the championship. On their trip back home, Smillie and Trillat stopped to visit with us for a few days, and Smillie laughingly noted that their respective countries had probably made a mistake in sending orthopaedic surgeons because the Brazilians won and their team physician was a psychiatrist.

Orthopaedics and the knee were not his sole interest in life. He was a Scot, having been born in Dublin of Scottish parents. He was a fine family man, a farmer with considerable knowledge of sheep, a fisherman who wrote a book on angling for salmon in the Scottish brooks, a grouse hunter with a collection of fine guns, and he was quite knowledgeable of the red deer. He wrote yet another book, *A Guide to the Stalking of Red Deer in Scotland*. I would judge it an authoritative book, reflecting his long-time experiences, just the same, but not as extensive, as his experiences related to us in his books on the knee. I well remember his keen interest as he taught me all I know about red deer during a few snowy and frigid days at Balnessie forest in Sutherland.

He also knew his Scotch whiskies and felt that you could not judge their true quality without touching them with a little of the brown water from the moor.

His attractive, gracious, and wonderful wife Jenny added immeasurably to his greatness. She said that he was crisp and clear of mind until a final stroke at his farm in Perthshire, Scotland, on March 18. With Jenny we share our loss of Ian Scott Smillie.

JCH