

Repository Royal College of General Practitioners GB2134
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Admin-biog history

Douglas G French (1909-1981) practiced as a general practitioner at Kidsgrove, Staffordshire. His early education was at Durham school, he moved to Gosforth to complete his schooling, when his father, a general practitioner at Esh Winning, County Durham died. French got his MB from Newcastle University in 1939. After qualifying French spent a year as a houseman as the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle before acquiring a general practice at Silksworth, County Durham, his motive being simply to acquire a home and an income with which to marry the eldest of four beautiful sisters who lived in the house opposite his in Gosforth.

When the Second World War started French joined the RAMC and went out to Egypt. As a result of a directive by General Montgomery in 1942 that anybody not fit to go from El Alamein to the Sangro River should be weeded out he was invalidated home with osteoarthritis. Back in England, he decided that there was not enough scope at Silksworth so he acquired a practice as Kidsgrove where he stayed for the rest of his life.

In 1949, he was awarded an MD from Durham University based upon his personal research into intravenous iron in anaemia. He started carrying out research in this subject because he found a lack of satisfactory descriptions from text books.

In October 1951 Drs Rose and Hunt sent a letter to the Lancet proposing a college of general practice. French sent a letter in support of this idea citing the MD syllabus of Durham University as an example of how general practitioners could be trained, together with other ideas for the college on postgraduate training, research, health centres and publications. French became a founding member of the fledgling college and was elected to the Foundation Council in 1952 [representing the Midlands faculty]. He was also an active member of the Research Committee.

In 1952 he won the Sir Charles Hastings prize for "Hyprochromic Anaemia of Pregnancy" and the gold medal of the Hunterian Society for "Management of Hypertension in General Practice. This was followed by in 1958 with the Charles Oliver Hawthorne clinical prize for "500 Haemoglobin levels". All of this research was done personally whilst working as a full time general practitioner with a electrocardiograph he purchased in 1951.

French was an active member of BATS, a Geordie dining club of ex- Royal Victoria Infirmary residents; and a founder member of the British Heart Foundation.

Collection Description

Thesis, articles, correspondence and photograph of D G French (1909-1981), member of Foundation Council.

Bound typescripts copies of authors thesis and research work on hypochromic anaemia of pregnancy, together letters from Dr R A Scott Murray concerning research work, syllabus of University of Durham medical school 1944; and graduation photograph of French.

Name of creator

Douglas G French

Associated material

See letter from French to The Lancet 29 December 1951 re founding of the College of General practice, reprinted JRCPG vol 22, 1972 page 749. Papers of the Royal College of General Practitioners Central Records, Council minutes, Research committee minutes.

Archival history

Deposited by Donald French son of Douglas French via Douglas Garvie October 2001.

language

English

Accruals

None expected

Arrangement

Record type

Level of Description

Fonds

Access Conditions

Access is at the discretion of the Royal College of General Practitioners.

Requests for access should be made in writing to The Archivist, Royal College of General Practitioners, 14 Princes Gate, Hyde Park, London SW7 1PU.

Rules or Conventions

National Council on Archives, Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names, 1997; ISAD(G), Second Edition, 2000.

Note

Thesis and articles transferred to library.

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01 November 2001

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30 July 2008

Initials

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