

## CHRONICLES OF MEDICAL HISTORY IN AFRICA I

Annals of Ibadan Postgraduate Medicine is introducing a new segment that will focus on the historical aspects of medicine in Africa. This premier edition is starting from home, Nigeria. The History of modern medicine in Nigeria started with the University College Hospital, Ibadan. From ancient times to the present, man has been interested in trying to control disease. The medicine man, the priest, the herbalist and the magician, all are major players in the ongoing battle between disease and man.

A history of medicine thus contributes a review of accomplishments and efforts, false theories and misinformation and mistaken interpretation. It is a study of the evolution of man and human knowledge; of the biographies of eminent individuals who developed medicine. Medicine is built on the best of the past achievements.

The Board of the Annals of Ibadan Postgraduate Medicine wishes to recognize the intellectual contributions of three Giants of Medicine who made indelible impact and left a legacy of excellence for which the University College Hospital, Ibadan is known. Today, we honor these men.

Prof. B. O. Osuntokun, Consultant Neurologist, Department of Psychiatric and Neurology and Professor of Medicine

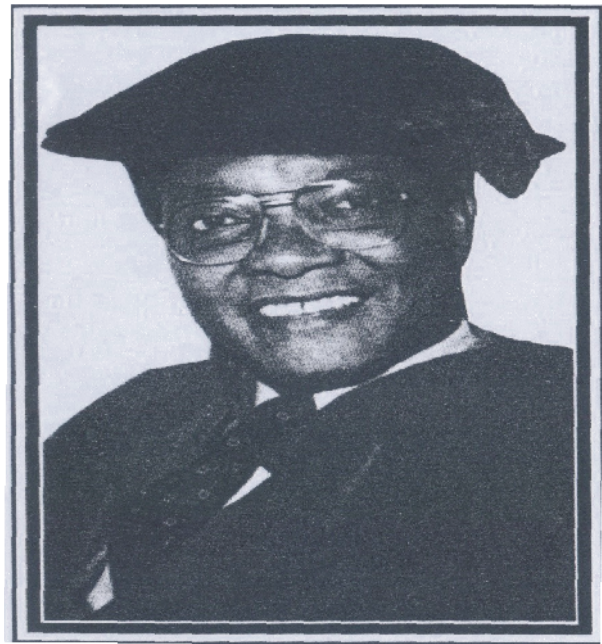
Prof. E. L. Odeku, Consultant Neurosurgeon and Professor of Surgery, Department of Surgery

Prof. R. B. A. Adelaye, Consultant Neurosurgeon and Professor of Surgery, Department of Surgery

The two articles that come after these biographies were reproduced from West African Journal of Medicine of 1965 and 1969 where they were originally published..

**PROFESSOR BENJAMIN OLUWAKAYODE OSUNTOKUN** (O.F.R., N.N.M.A., D.Sc. Hon. (Unimaid.) Ph.D., D.Sc. (Lond.), F.M.C.C.P. (Nig.), F.R.C.P. (Lond.), F.W.A.C.P. (West Africa), F.A.S. (Nig.)

Born in January 1935, Osuntokun started his elementary school education in 1940 at the Holy Trinity School, Ilawe Ekiti, where he was born, and finished it in 1945 at Emmanuel School, Ado Ekiti. He entered Christ's School Ado Ekiti in 1946, the famous and prestigious secondary school which moulded many Nigerians who later won prominence in various walks of life; thereafter, he studied medicine at the University College, Ibadan, then a College of London University. His academic career was a remarkable string of distinctions and honours: he was top of his class at Emmanuel School at Ado Ekiti; in 1951 at Christ's School he passed the London Matriculation Examination and then the Cambridge School Leaving Certificate Examination with several distinctions and in 1961, he graduated in medicine with the MBBS degrees of London with honours in Pathology and in Obstetrics and Gynaecology.



After house jobs at the University College Hospital, Ibadan, and the mandatory stint as Medical Officer in the then Western Nigerian Ministry of Health, Osuntokun went to the Professional Unit of Harold Scarborough in the Welsh National School of Medicine in Cardiff in 1963 as Senior House Officer to study for the MRCP which he passed in London at his first attempt in 1964.

He came under the tutelage of two giants of Neurology: the legendary and avuncular Henry Miller, a raconteur who laced his neurology with wit and wisdom and John Walton, now Lord Walton of Detchant, a man with a penchant for details and depth in neurological knowledge bordering on the encyclopedic.

Osuntokun spent a short spell at the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases, Queens Square, London before he returned to Nigeria at the end of 1965 and was appointed Lecturer in the University of Ibadan.

He started a career in neurology that was to spawn a cornucopia of scientific and scholarly publications, solely and jointly of epilepsy, nutritional and toxic neuropathies, cerebrovascular diseases, headaches and pain problems, neoplasms of the nervous system, the neurology of diabetes mellitus and of the hameglobinopathies of Africa. The coda of his neuroscientific research was neuro-epidemiology which engaged his attention in his last days with the same success that attended his foray into neurology in his prime. Preeminent of his work in neuroepidemiology was that study of community dementia among the Yorubas of Nigeria in comparison with the blacks of United States. In the interest and service of neurology, he visited diverse places in every part of the world and held many appointments. Foundation Member, Nigeria Society of Neurological Sciences and was Secretary from its inception 1966 to 1970 and later President from 1983 until his death in 1995. He was also a Foundation Fellow of the Pan African

Association of Neurological Sciences (PAANS) which was founded in Nairobi in 1972.

In his postgraduate and more mature career, Osuntokun gained a string of postgraduate degrees and professional qualifications: PhD (Ibadan) 1969; MD (London), 1971; FRCP (London) 1974; FMCP (Nigeria) and FWACP, 1976 and DSc (London) 1977. In Nigeria, he was made an Officer of the Federal Republic (OFR) of Nigeria in 1978 and in 1984 he received the highest award of his country, the Nigerian National Merit Award (NNMA) for distinguished contribution at national and international level in the Sciences, Medicine, Literature, Arts and Culture. In addition, in the same year, the University of Maiduguri awarded him DSc (Honoris Causa) and in 1985, shortly after his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, two chieftaincy titles were conferred on him in Ekiti, the district of his origin.

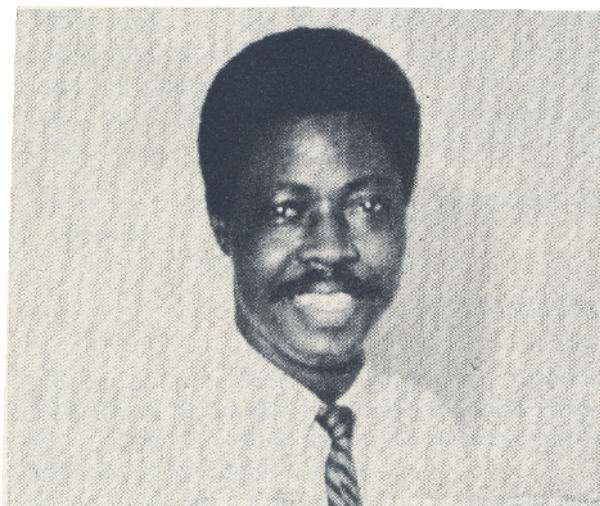
Professor Benjamin Oluwakayode Osuntokun died in Cambridge, England on September 22 1975 after a protracted illness and was buried in his native Okemesi, Ekiti, Nigeria on October 7, 1995. His death robbed Nigeria of its leading neurologists and one of its icons of modern medicine; Africa of one of the Foundation members of the Pan African Association of Neurological Sciences (PAANS) and the World Federation of Neurology of one of its most prolific writers and productive researchers on tropical neurology.

**PROFESSOR E. LATUNDE ODEKU** (B.Sc., M.D., L.M.C.C. (Canada), D.A.B.N.S., F.I.C.S., F.A.C.S., F.M.C.S. (Nigeria))

Latunde Odeku was born at Awe in Oyo province of Western Nigeria on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1927, the son of a Baptist deacon. After his preliminary education in Lagos, he entered Howard University, Washington D.C., in 1947. He gained the first class honours degree of Bachelor of Science in Zoology in 1950 and graduated M.D. in June 1954. A year later, he passed the Licentiate of the Medical Council of Canada. After completing his three years of training in clinical neurosurgery at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich., under Edgar Kahn, he went to the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington D.C. as a postgraduate fellow in neuropathology in 1960, and in the following he was the chief resident in paediatric neurosurgery at the Children's Hospital, Philadelphia, under Dr. Eugene Spitz. He was appointed Instructor in Neuroanatomy and Neurosurgery at the College of Medicine, Howard University, 1961/62. He was awarded a certificate by the American Board of Neurological Surgery in 1961, and became Fellow of the American College of Surgeons in 1963.

Professor Odeku will be best remembered for his pioneering work in neurological surgery in Nigeria. He came to the University of Ibadan in 1962 as a lecturer in Neurosurgery, bringing with him many neurosurgical instruments which he had purchased at great personal expense. He soon placed at the disposal of the University and its teaching hospital his highly

developed and discipline surgical conscience and skill and a round-the-clock devotion to patient-care which soon became legendary. He became a senior lecturer in 1963 and a full professor in 1965. He was Head of the Department of Surgery and Dean of the Medical School, University of Ibadan, between 1968 and 1971. In this position he brought to bear on his administration the sound judgment, rich imagination and creative thinking which he had demonstrated in his daily practice of surgery.



As a teacher his presentations were didactic, highly organized and convincingly clear. As a children, he had the uncanny ability of getting quickly to essentials in diagnosis, whether at the busy outpatient clinics or at the formal medical conferences. A prolific writer, he published at least a hundred scientific papers, mostly on neurological subjects. He published his earlier papers in local journals so as to make West Africans aware of the emergence of the novel discipline of neurosurgery at Ibadan. Later, he published extensively in overseas journals.

An extremely humble man and humane doctor, Professor Odeku carried himself with a quite unhurried grace and confidence.

One of his hobbies was poetry. It is impossible to understand the complexity of his nature and his recipe for the solution of problems without reading his two beautiful books on poetry, *Twilight* and *Whispers from the Night*.

During his terminal illness, he showed great fortitude and never lost his gift of lively conversation and good humour.

Dr. E. Latunde Odeku, Professor of the Neurosurgery Unit at the University of Ibadan, died on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> August at the Hammersmith Hospital, Ducane Road, London. He was 47.

He was buried in the churchyard of St. Peter's Church, Burnham Bucks, England on 27<sup>th</sup> August, in a simple Christian ceremony, just as he had requested, and in which he lived. His early death leaves unfulfilled many

of his ideas, and Africa, and tropical neurology in particular, will be poorer for his passing. He is survived by his wife, Katherine Jill, a medical doctor, and two daughters and two sons.

### **PROFESSOR ADELOLA ADELOYE**

(FICS, FMCS, FACS, FWACS, FAS, FCA, East Afr.)

Professor Adelola Adeloye, a native of Ikole Ekiti, Nigeria, was born on July 18, 1935 at Ilesha. He has become internationally renowned for raising many protégés in the teaching, service and research in Surgery, especially in his rare and demanding specialty of Neurological Surgery. Throughout his illustrious career, he had demonstrated excellence. He exhibited brilliance at St. Paul's CMS School at Ikole (1941 to 1946), at the now famous Christ's School, Ado-Ekiti where he was a School Prefect, Captain of the First Eleven Football Team of the School, a government scholar, and winner of several school-prizes and left school with a Grade one Cambridge School Certificate in 1952. He later enrolled for MBBS (London) degree at the University College Hospital between 1953 and 1960. There again, for meritorious scholarship he was a college scholar (1956 to 1960) and won the University Prize in Chemical Pathology in 1958. His postgraduate awards included a Rockefeller Research Fellowship at the University of Cincinnati, USA (1972 to 1973) and the Ratanji Dalal Scholarship of the Royal College of Physicians, London and Royal College of Surgeons, England (1973-1974). These two awards promoted the researches of Professor Adeloye in the realms of congenital malformations of the nervous system of which he is an international authority.



He trained at the Radecliffe Infirmary Oxford (1965-1966). Queen Square, London and Hammersmith Hospital, London. He returned to Nigeria in 1967 as Senior Registrar under that Nigerian Pioneer Neurosurgeon the late Professor E. Latunde Odeku, both of who later described what became known as *Adeloye-Odeku Disease*, the congenital subgaleal dermoid cyst of the anterior fontanelle. Adeloye's training in

neurotrauma was put to great use during the Nigerian civil war, 1967-1970. The first 500 cases in that conflict provided the materials for many papers on missile head injuries, a book titled *Missile Head Injuries in Nigerian Soldiers*, and a thesis on *Tangenital wound of the Head* for the Master of Surgery (MS) of London University. His experience in civilian neurotrauma was featured in numerous works and seminars and a textbook published under the aegis of the West African College of Surgeons. In 1988-1990 he was in Kuwait where he set up a neurotrauma unit for that emirate just before the invasion by Iraq. He was incarcerated for several weeks in Kuwait. Afterwards, he became the Foundation Professor and Head of Surgery at the new medical school of the University of Malawi in Blantyre where he served for a decade (1991 to 2001) to establish the new school and develop a new curriculum of basic science and clinical integration and medical education.

His other interest is medical history of which he has become a world authority on the history of medicine in West Africa. His book on *African Pioneers of Modern Medicine; Nigerian Doctors of the 19<sup>th</sup> century* won the Concord Press Award for Academic publishing in 1985.

Professor Adeloye has several fellowships to his credit (FICS, FMCS, FACS, FWACS, FAS, FCA, East Afr.) and is a member of over twenty professional societies. He was external examiner in postgraduate surgery in Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Scotland, Australia and South Africa. He was visiting Professor of Neurosurgery to many Universities in Nigeria, Liberia and the London Hospital. He was the founding Editor, *The Ibadan Surgeon* and Editor, *Nigerian Medical Journal* (1980 – 1990). He also served on the Editorial Board of many journals including *paraplegia*, *Child's Nervous System*, *African Journal of Medicine and Medical Sciences*, *Neurosurgery* (Official journal of Congress of Neurological Surgeons) and other. Professor Adeloye has published many bookd and monographs including biographies, history of medicine in West Africa, books on General Surgery, Neurosurgery and over 270 articles in national and international journals on various aspects of neurosciences. Professor Adeloye has attended several national and international conferences on Africa, North America, Europe and the Middle East. He is honorary president of Pan African Association of Neurological Sciences (PAANS). In September 2001, he was elected honorary president of the World Federation of Neurosurgical Societies (WFNS), the apogee of life achievement for a Neurosurgeon. He made history as the first black African to be so recognized and remowarded by the World Federation. In 2003, Professor set another record when he became the First Recipient of the *African Journal of Trauma* Honours award for Excellence and Mentorship (*African Journal of Trauma, Volume 1, No.1 Sept. 2003, page 55*). His Trauma Care will be a source of pleasure and inspiration for his colleagues and students within and outside Africa.

His wife was the late Dr. (Mrs.) Kamala Adeboye, a medical graduate of Madras University, a Pediatrician and Foundation Fellow of the West African College of General Practitioners. She worked at the Ibadan University Health Service and was Director from 1986 to 1988. They are blessed with children.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Objective of these chronicles is to ensure that these indelible contributions to medicine are never forgotten, and that our Heroes shall continually receive the Honour they deserve. We shall from time to time remind ourselves of where we are coming from so that we can see clearly where we ought to be going to. Nigeria has many heroes of medicine and as these chronicles will show in later editions of the

Journal, we have been blessed with great scholars who achieved excellence Nationally and Internationally. It is not enough to read about them and to celebrate them; we must rise up and continue in their legacy. We must replicate their achievements and rise to higher heights. Their expectations of what we ought to achieve is more never less.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The materials used in the chronicles were graciously obtained from the archives of Prof. A. Adeboye with his kind permission.

**Dr. Michael S. O.**

for Editorial Board.