

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SIR DAVID GALLOWAY*

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In attempting to record something of the "Life and Times" of Sir David Galloway I am immensely grateful to the Academy of Medicine for being given this opportunity of delivering this first memorial lecture in memory and in honour of a great Singaporean doctor.

In truth I am feeling nervous lest I should fail to do justice to the idea and ideals which I most sincerely believe to be the object of these talks. The object is the one which David Galloway himself inspired, namely to stimulate discussion, enquiry and understanding of what we owe to medical men, and others, of all races and creeds both now and in the past.

I am encouraged by the thought that this should be the first of a series of orations similar perhaps in scope to those which perpetuate the tradition and ideas of great men of medicine such as John Hunter and Edward Jenner, doctors of a previous generation.

Please let me say at once, in all humility, that I had the good fortune of knowing "David" professionally and later as a philosopher and friend from the year 1920 onwards, indeed we had our first introduction in 1914, nearly half a century ago when he was almost exactly as old, or might I say "as young" as I am now.

It was due to this earlier contact in "1914-pre-first-world-war Singapore" which gave me the incentive to return to live and work in this part of the world.

In achieving this ambition of adopting this part of Malaya as, at least, a secondary home I have had good reason to value the advice and tradition of our great Galloway. Thus it came about that quite early in my career these very special links were forged between us.

It first happened when I came in 1920 to serve as a youthful lecturer in Biology in the Medical College here when Galloway had already for a long time been acclaimed an experienced and learned lecturer in the principles and practice of medicine.

The second link became established when he and a number of his colleagues invited me to become Honorary Secretary of Malaya Branch

B.M.A. a body over which he himself has frequently presided.

Lastly and to me the most agreeable of these links was due to the fact that Galloway was then living in my particular parish. He then occupied a house facing the sea near the 5th mile Pasir Panjang. I got to know this all the better because he was in the habit of walking the full 5 miles to his country home each evening. This was then a truly rural unspoilt country which forms part of what is still familiarly known as "Singapore's Rural Area." I was then also Rural Health Officer under the able guidance of Dr. Gilbert Brook the illustrious Port Health Officer and also a worthy friend of Galloway. These are no doubt trifling anecdotes compared with the age-long back-ground of the man we have come here to honour.

This background has since been dimmed by the clouds of war and by the changes which time has wrought. Yet amongst these are the roots upon which is founded most of what is best in our medical heritage and tradition.

I hope therefore you will excuse me if I skip across the succeeding years to another setting -- this time in Johore where Galloway had settled in retirement to a lovely house overlooking Singapore island across the narrow straits.

Those were two particular occasions in the latter period of Galloway's life of which I hold a vivid recollection. The first of those events happened to be the last of many hospitable gatherings which Galloway was pleased to give to any group of doctors I might be privileged to introduce. The last of those occasions took place on 8th May 1938 and by a happy coincidence it was also David Galloway's 80th Birthday.

That informal party held in Johore Bahru is indeed a measure of Galloway's genuine kindness and liberality, because even then at his great age he was willing and eager to welcome and refresh anyone we recommended to his notice. This particular group, mostly strangers to Malaya were the student delegates and various foreign experts then attending the 5th International Malaria Course sponsored by the League of Nations.

*Lecture given to Academy of Medicine at Singapore — Galloway Memorial Lecture.

These delegates had been visiting the scene of an outstanding Anti Malaria Achievement at the then newly completed Gunong Pulai Reservoir.

We had returned to Johore Bahru following this arduous inspection tour. It was immensely impressive and delightful to be welcomed by this great 80-year-old doctor. It was also most refreshing to find a well selected buffet tiffin ready in the shady lawn.

At the end of the party, there had of course to be a "thank you" speech and it fell to me, as leader of the party, to give it.

It is thanks to Dr. Gwee that I have before me the photostat copy of what was published the following day in the Straits Times. With your permission I will read it:

"In tendering congratulations and thanks to our host I propose to give those of you who are new-comers to Singapore a brief outline of Sir David Galloway's great and honourable career. That career is an inspiration to all of us who know him.

Born in Scotland in 1858 Galloway arrived in Singapore in 1885. Ten years later he accompanied the late Sultan Abu Bakar to Europe. He has since served the State of Johore in many ways and has been rightly rewarded with the highest honours the present reigning Sultan can bestow. He has moreover shown his love for the land of his adoption by retiring to a beautiful mansion in one of the loveliest spots along our coast.

Amongst his medical colleagues Sir David has proved a tower of strength and inspiration to those who attempt to follow his footsteps. He has impressed a mark on the progress of medicine in this country which will never fade.

Sir David became President of the Straits Medical Association in 1890 and four years later became President of the newly formed Malaya Branch of the B.M.A.

He graduated as a member of the Royal College of Physicians in 1899, the year after Ross's epoch-making discoveries on Malaria. At the turn of the century in 1900 he took his M.D. degree at Edinburgh and two years later he was awarded the Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians. More recently he has received the highest honour our own Singapore College of Medicine can bestow its Licentiate 'Honoris Causa'.

Sir David has also rendered outstanding public service for he was first elected in 1902

an unofficial member of the Legislative Council and later of the Executive Council in Singapore on which bodies he served almost continuously until 1928".

I concluded this valedictory address by remarking that although Sir David had retired from public life and from much of his general medical practice he continued to maintain a deep and abiding interest in medicine and in world affairs.

In the broad view, Galloway's whole professional life had been devoted to achieving racial and international harmony — a great object which medical art and science is particularly well adapted to promote.

Unhappily from this time onwards, I saw nothing at all of Galloway until late in 1941 when the flames of war had engulfed the whole of Europe. It was then he asked me urgently to come to see him. Galloway had only recently returned from the last of many voyages to Japan. I have no doubt he had done his utmost to persuade the Japanese Government to resist from their megalomania of world conquest but this was not his reason for his urgent summons. Some years previously, as many of us knew he had suffered a serious operation but, even then in spite of being in need of careful nursing he remained in reasonably good health.

What he wanted then to do was to give a solemn warning and advice to some of us to leave Malaya before it was too late. He was fully convinced that this would be the last time that we should meet and that his own death was near.

Finally he handed me a typewritten copy of his own obituary notice in such a form as to serve of value to posterity.

In those days of rush and frenzy I had no chance of doing more than to hand this note to the Editor of the Straits Times for safe keeping.

It should be a comfort to all of us to realise that the Japanese War Lords then in Singapore, continued to respect Galloway's great age and professional standing until his death amidst much tragic suffering in an apartment at Meyer Mansion on 5th March 1943 at the age of 85.

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8th May 1858 David Galloway's Birthday.

Also in 1858 "The Dispensary" is opened in Singapore by Dr. John H. Robertson.

1885 Dr. Galloway M.B., C.M. arrives in Singapore (aged 27) to take over from the old family physician Dr. Robertson.

1890 Galloway, Founder and President Straits Medical Association.

Galloway, Original member of Singapore Cycling Club.

1894 Galloway, Founder and President Malaya Branch, B.M.A.

1903 Galloway, Unofficial member of Legislative Council.

1906 Galloway again President of Malaya Branch, B.M.A.

1908 Galloway, Lecturer on Principles and Practice of Medicine at Singapore's New Medical College.

GREAT CONTEMPORARY SCOTSMEN

Hongkong	Patrick Manson	1844 - 1922
Singapore	David Galloway	1858 - 1943
India	Ronald Ross	1857 - 1932
Malaya	Malcolm Watson	1873 - 1955

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Founded 1905 Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States Government Medical School.

Re-named 1913 King Edward VII College of Medicine

1916 Diploma recognised by General Medical Council

(Galloway, Member of College Council).

Post-war it became a Faculty of the University of Malaya.