

THE RETIRING EDITOR

In its illustrious 30-year history the *British Journal of Plastic Surgery* has known only two Editors. This simple fact speaks for itself and testifies to the success attained by both individuals in the direction of its fortunes. In 1969 Tom Gibson took over as Editor from A. B. Wallace and it was with the greatest regret that we learned that after 10 years of unbroken service he intended to retire as Editor in December 1979.

Tom Gibson graduated from Glasgow University in 1938 and subsequently worked in the Burns Unit of Glasgow Royal Infirmary as a member of the M.R.C. team, lead by Dr Leonard Colebrook. During his tenure of this post the scientific basis of the treatment of the shock phase of burns was established and the observations that he made on wound healing laid the foundation of all the subsequent work on homo-grafting.

He served in the Army in Europe and the Far East and on his return to civilian life he was appointed to the Plastic Surgery Unit at Ballochmyle Hospital. He became F.R.C.S.(Ed) in 1941 and received his Glasgow Fellowship in 1955. He continued his researches into homo-grafting with work on the transplantation of cartilage and the factors involved in distortion of cartilage grafts. He was President of the British Association of Plastic Surgeons in 1970 and following the retirement of J. S. Tough he became Director of the Plastic Surgery Unit at Canniesburn Hospital.

Over the past 15 years he has been associated with the Bio-engineering Department at Strathclyde University, being involved in various research projects particularly on the physical characteristics of skin. He was awarded a D.Sc. by Strathclyde University in 1972 and made a Visiting Professor in the Bio-engineering Department of Strathclyde University.

He became President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow in 1976, a post which he held for two years. As President of the College he attended the 50th Anniversary of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and received an Honorary Fellowship of the Australasian College of Surgeons at that time.

When he succeeded A. B. Wallace as Editor of the *British Journal of Plastic Surgery* he brought a keen analytical mind, a wide experience in the preparation and presentation of successful papers, an inexhaustible fund of energy and sharp business sense, which perhaps owes something to his Scottish heritage. Under his aegis the high standard of the *Journal* has been advanced and its financial success assured. That he has been able to carry out his onerous Editorial duties so successfully during a period when other great demands were being made on him speaks worlds for his competence and resilience. All of us who are privileged to be members of this Association acknowledge a deep debt of gratitude to Tom.

We are fortunate in having Michael Tempest to take over from Tom Gibson and we wish him every success.

R. T. ROUTLEDGE

President: British Association of Plastic Surgeons

