

Dame Sheila Sherlock
(1918–2001)

Life and Work



by
James S. Dooley

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Cover:

Dame Sheila Sherlock (1979)

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Introduction

Sheila Sherlock was a leading figure in the field of liver disease for fifty years. Her name was known throughout the medical world. She and Hans Popper essentially founded modern hepatology. She chose to enter and research this field when few doctors were applying invasive techniques to medical problems. In her early career she presented new data at a remarkable rate, adding important information and concepts to a rapidly developing specialty. Her intellect and approach to clinical and basic challenges attracted a stream of co-workers from the UK and abroad. Her legacy is the vast contribution that she made to clinical and experimental hepatology, and the fostering of a generation of specialists in liver disease.

She married Dr Geraint James, a renowned physician in his own right. He provided the professional and personal support that allowed her career to flourish. In Gerry, she had a husband who was sympathetic and understanding – qualities that she acknowledged as essential to a successful woman in any profession (1). They were soul-mates who shared fifty years of happy married life.

The direction and achievements of her career (see appendix A on page 40) also owed much to four other individuals.

Professor (later Sir James) Learmonth (illustration 1) was Professor of Surgery at Edinburgh University when she was a medical student (1). After qualification he appointed her as his Assistant Lecturer in Surgery. She wrote



Illustration 1
Professor Sir James Learmonth.



Illustration 2
Professor Sir John McMichael FRS.

that “he taught me how to organise results, how to write a paper and how to review the scientific literature.” He was instrumental in her transfer to work for Dr John McMichael at the Hammersmith Hospital.

Dr (later Sir John) McMichael (illustration 2) also trained at Edinburgh. He was one of a small number of staff remaining at the British Postgraduate Medical School and Hammersmith Hospital during the War. He used interventional techniques, in particular cardiac catheterisation, to study clinical problems. Sheila came to the Postgraduate Medical School in 1942 as McMichael’s house physician and he taught her percutaneous aspiration liver biopsy. With this technique she did her initial work on catarrhal jaundice, the first step in a long career of clinical research. McMichael recognised her tremendous gifts and provided the environment and support for her to apply these to diseases of the liver. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1957, and was knighted in 1965.

Hans Popper, the internationally acclaimed hepatic pathologist, was an academic colleague and life long friend. He trained and worked in pathology, clinical biochemistry and clinical medicine in Vienna where he was recognised as an outstanding medical doctor and researcher (2). He left Austria in 1938 and took a research fellowship in pathology at the Cook County Hospital in Chicago. In 1943 he was appointed Director of the Pathology Department and Professor of Pathology in the Graduate School. In 1947 he met Sheila Sherlock at a meeting in his Unit in Chicago. This was the beginning of a lifelong friendship and intellectual sib ship.

Professor Barbara Billing was invited to join Sherlock’s new Unit at the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine in 1959, as Senior Lecturer in Biochemistry Applied to Medicine. She provided the scientific foundation for many workers on the Unit, and supported the Unit and Sheila Sherlock for the next 25 years.

Early life and schooling (1918–1936) (illustration 3)

Sheila Sherlock was born in Dublin on 31 March 1918, the obstetrician Mr Tiernay conducting an uneventful delivery. Her father was then a Captain in the Green Jackets on a peace-keeping assignment. The family soon moved back to England and lived in Old Quebec Street, behind Marble Arch in London. Sheila's parents loved dogs – a love that she inherited – so they chose to live near Hyde Park, where their pets could be exercised. She attended private schools in this area and in Swiss Cottage until 1929 when they moved to Sandgate in Kent. A Harley Street specialist had decided that her childhood coughs and colds were due to London soot and fog and recommended a sea-side home. The Kent coast was chosen because her grandfather, Colonel



Illustration 3 Sheila as a child.

Beckett, lived at Chilham, near Canterbury. Sheila thrived in Kent and was blessed by a good schooling at Folkestone County School for Girls, under the affectionate attention of its headmistress Miss Ames. There she learnt to play tennis, hockey and cricket.

An account of Sheila's early love of cricket was given by Derek St Clair-Stannard in the Kent County Cricket Club Newsletter in the spring of 2002 (3). Derek St Clair-Stannard's father had died unexpectedly in 1930, and it was arranged that he should stay with a neighbour in Sandgate who was a friend of the family. This was Mrs Sherlock in Devonshire Terrace, who bred Cairn Terriers and had a daughter, Sheila. Derek and Sheila became friends and over the next few summers were inseparable. They followed cricket avidly and travelled locally to see some memorable matches and players. In 1938 they went to Dover by train and saw Frank Woolley's last innings for Kent. Thus her love of cricket started at an early age. In 1951 when they were engaged, Gerry, her fiancé, presented her with Life Membership of Kent County Cricket Club.

Medical School (1936–1941)

Between 1935 and 1936 Sheila Sherlock applied and was interviewed for admission to several medical schools in Britain but had been rejected everywhere. She recalled that she had even studied St Mark's Gospel to take a theological entrance examination at King's College, London, but her application was still unsuccessful. This illustrates the difficulty that women had in that era to enter medical school. In August 1936 she received a late acceptance to study medicine at Edinburgh University.

She started her training in Edinburgh on 1 October 1936. She described her experiences in a chapter for Dannie Abse's book, 'My Medical School'(1). Her account details the wide range of outstanding teachers in Edinburgh, some of whom she later worked with at the Hammersmith Hospital. Many wrote textbooks which were known throughout the world.

She and her mother, who had moved to Edinburgh as well, lived on her annual £60 grant from the Kent Education Committee, of which £30 was a loan, and a scholarship of £120 per year from her old school in Folkestone. She did so well at her studies that after a couple of years the Kent Education Committee decided that she did not have to repay the loan (4). She supplemented her grant and scholarship by working as a part-time tutor in a cramming school in Edinburgh, teaching physics, chemistry and mathematics to students taking University Entrance Exams.

She held her teachers in Edinburgh in high regard. Stanley Davidson, of the internationally-acclaimed Edinburgh textbook, was Professor of Medicine. In the pre-clinical years physicians helped to teach anatomy and physi-

ology. John McMichael, her future chief, was in charge of the bicycle ergometer. J.D.S Cameron, later President of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, taught the physiology of the nervous system.

James Learmonth was appointed Professor of Surgery in 1939, and was her favourite teacher. He had been Regius Professor in Aberdeen. He had high standards and some students were frightened of him. Juniors selected for his support always referred to him as 'Poppa'. He was appointed surgeon to King George VI in Scotland in 1949, and was knighted in the same year.

Sheila always had a special fondness for Edinburgh and her medical education there. She was impressed by the priority given to students and the care taken in the preparation of teaching material. 'Teaching took priority over all clinical activities, except medical emergencies'(1). She enjoyed the social life including dancing on Saturday evening. She remembered wearing a long taffeta gown and dancing the Gay Gordons and the Darling of the Sergeant. She was also a keen tennis player, winning a Blue for the University (illustration 4).

On 6 July 1941 she graduated. She was top of her year (*summa cum laude*) and won the Ettles Scholarship, only the second woman to receive this award. Normally this would have led to a house officer post at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, but at that time this was not possible for a woman. In



Illustration 4 Sheila (seated on left) in the women's tennis team at Medical School.

an interview with Sir Gordon Wolstenholme in 1987 (5), she remembered that this was because there were no proper live-in quarters for women.

She was offered a post as house physician in a peripheral hospital. However her academic successes had brought her to the notice of Professor Learmonth and he offered her the post of Assistant Lecturer in Surgery. This gave her similar experience to a House Surgeon but also brought her into contact with his research. Her first publication was with Professor Learmonth in the *British Journal of Surgery* in 1942 (“Aneurysm of the splenic artery: with an account of an example complicating Gaucher’s disease”), a case report with a review of the literature. With this experience she was set on an academic path from the start, and always acknowledged Learmonth’s major contribution to her career.

Hammersmith Hospital/British Postgraduate Medical School (1942–1947)

On the recommendation of Dr Harold Scarborough in Edinburgh (later Professor of Medicine, Cardiff) she made a visit to the Hammersmith Hospital, looking for an opportunity to work there as a house physician. John McMichael, one of her teachers in Edinburgh, was in charge of the Medical Unit. Sheila expressed an interest in working for him and McMichael remembered the letter of reference from Professor Learmonth: “Dear Jack, if you get Sheila Sherlock as your House Physician you’ll be darned lucky” (6).

Her appointment to the house officer post at the Hammersmith was fundamental to the direction of her career. This hospital had been chosen as the British Postgraduate Medical School – the first institution in the country committed to ‘training specialists and the promotion of medical research in the advance of medical knowledge’. It was opened in January 1935 by King George V who expressed the wish ‘that the school with its happy union of ward and laboratory, joining students and teachers alike from all parts of our Empire...may prosper under God’s blessing’ (7). The Hammersmith with the British Postgraduate Medical School was the key centre in the United Kingdom chosen for clinical science. Le Fanu writes: ‘the contribution of clinical science to the post-war medical achievement was to create an atmosphere within which it was possible to believe that the most difficult of problems might eventually be soluble’ (7).

In 1942 Sheila left Edinburgh and began work as House Physician to McMichael at Hammersmith Hospital. She joined an institution in which at least two individuals were already at the forefront of clinical research. McMichael was studying cardiovascular problems, including the response to shock, using the new technique of cardiac catheterisation. Dr (later Professor)

Eric Bywaters was studying the systemic and renal changes of the “crush” syndrome. These were pertinent clinical problems which needed to be understood at the time of the air raids in London. Every night up to 85 casualties were admitted to the Hammersmith as a result of bomb damage. Bywaters’ studies were an important part of the developing field of nephrology.

Jaundice was a major problem among the troops particularly in North Africa. Some cases were attributed to post-transfusion hepatitis and some followed arsenotherapy for syphilis, occurring two weeks after the end of the first four week course of treatment (due, it turned out later, to improperly sterilised syringes)(5).

McMichael had been interested in the liver and had published pioneering papers on the portal circulation. He wrote his MD thesis on Banti’s syndrome. This was before his interest moved to the heart. He had done liver biopsies and taught Sheila the technique, which she then applied to the problem of hepatitis. The result was a paper on the pathology of acute hepatitis published in the *Lancet* in 1943 by pathologist Professor Henry Dible with McMichael and Sherlock (Pathology of acute hepatitis. Aspiration biopsy studies of epidemic, arsenotherapy and serum hepatitis. *Lancet* 1943; 2:402). This work played an important part in helping to demolish the previously held view that catarrhal jaundice was due to obstruction of the ampulla by a plug of mucus (8). It formed the basis of her MD thesis awarded in 1945 in Edinburgh, for which she won a Gold Medal.

After six months as House Physician to McMichael, she returned to Edinburgh as registrar to Dr Ray Gilchrist. Five months later she received a telegram from McMichael offering her a research post at Hammersmith funded by a Medical Research Council grant for the study of hepatitis (5). She returned to the Hammersmith in 1943 and continued her work on hepatitis. She was then awarded the Beit Memorial Fellowship (for ‘The study of hepatic function in disease’) which supported her from October 1944 until 1947. She wrote up the technique of liver biopsy (*Lancet* 1945;2:397) and was then regularly invited to other hospitals to do liver biopsies for them.

She and Veryan Walshe, a biochemist, wrote several papers analysing the relationship between biochemical investigations of the liver and the changes in histology. They also studied the post-hepatitis syndrome, the liver in diabetes, and the effect of malnutrition on liver histology and function in Wuppertal, near Düsseldorf, after the War. This was part of a major two year MRC project planned by Professor Robert McCance, the famous nutritionist, following on from his important studies on the effect of rationing in Britain during the War. The results of the MRC study led to further experimental studies of malnutrition. Sheila was appointed a Captain in UNRRA (the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) to allow her to visit Wuppertal.

Yale University School of Medicine (1947–1948)

In 1947 she was awarded a Rockefeller Travelling Fellowship and spent a year at the Department of Physiological Chemistry and the Laboratory of Physiology in the Yale University School of Medicine working on carbohydrate metabolism with Professor CNH (Hugh) Long, a Manchester graduate (5). He was best known for his work on the isolation of ACTH. She studied the effect of adrenalin infused into the portal vein on carbohydrate metabolism in an experimental model. This work was published in the *American Journal of Physiology* (1949;157:52–58).

Her visit to the United States was important not only for the laboratory experience at Yale, but also for the contacts that she made in the USA with other clinical researchers in liver physiology and disease. Hans Popper had conceived the idea of an American Liver Association in 1947 and convened a planning meeting in the library of the Hektoen Institute for Medical Research in Chicago. Sheila Sherlock was present with Leon Schiff (Cincinnati), Fred Hoffbauer and Cecil Watson (Minneapolis), and Jesse Bollman (Mayo Clinic). Subsequently there was an informal meeting of the new group in 1948 in Popper's unit, and from this grew the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD). Its first official meeting was in 1950. Sheila was an active participant at the Annual Meetings for the next 50 years, her last attendance being in November 2000 in Dallas. She received the AASLD's Distinguished Service Award in 1988.

Her contact with Americans interested in hepatobiliary disease formed the basis for her lifelong visits to colleagues and centres throughout the United States, lecturing and giving clinico-pathological conferences. Some of the founding members of the American Association took part in the CIBA Symposium on Liver Disease which she organised in London in July 1950 (9).

During her visit to Yale she was invited to lecture in many Universities throughout the USA and Canada. This was the year of her metamorphosis from a sheltered English upbringing and Scottish education to the life of an international academic physician. It also opened her eyes to the food, clothing, way of life, and the social scene of America, so very different from post war Britain.

Lecturer and Consultant Physician at Hammersmith Hospital (1948–1959)

In 1948 Sheila Sherlock returned from America as Lecturer in Medicine and Consultant Physician at Hammersmith Hospital. Only 30 years old she was already an acknowledged pioneer in the study of liver disease. These were particularly special years in her personal as well as professional life. In

1950 she met Dr Geraint James and in 1951 they were married (see Marriage and family). In 1951 she also became the youngest woman to be elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians (illustration 5).

At Hammersmith she immediately continued with her research. In 1949 she turned her attention with Drs Alexander G (Alick) Bearn and Barbara Billing to studies of splanchnic haemodynamics and the hepatic handling of carbohydrates. She used the technique of hepatic vein catheterisation, which had just been described by Warren and Brannon (Proc Soc Exp Biol Med 1948;55:144). This allowed measurement of splanchnic blood flow and pressure, and studies of hepatic metabolism. It was necessary to compare patients with hepatic disease with normal controls. The use of such techniques was not without controversy. However, the tradition for invasive vascular investi-



Illustration 5 Sheila at her election to Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians in 1951.

gations at Hammersmith had already been established by McMichael's use of cardiac catheterisation since 1942 (10) and Sherlock's studies using liver biopsy.

The breadth of the clinical and research output from her team during the 11 years at Hammersmith was remarkable. She published a classic study of the liver in heart failure. There were papers on drug-related liver disease, primary biliary cirrhosis and congenital hepatic fibrosis, and the treatment of cholestatic pruritus. Major contributions were made to the understanding of the neuropsychiatric syndromes associated with cirrhosis and hepatic failure, and to the pathophysiology and treatment of ascites and of portal hypertension.

She coined the term "portal systemic encephalopathy" in a paper in 1954 (*Lancet* 1954;2:453). This classic study formed the basis of the understanding of encephalopathy and led to a logical basis for its management. She and her co-workers (Bill Summerskill, Laurens White and Elizabeth Phear) studied 18 patients with liver disease who were classified as having persistent, transient or terminal neurological disturbance. Most patients had cirrhosis or hepatitis. The clinical features were described and related to measurements of ammonia in peripheral blood and, in 8 patients, hepatic venous blood. EEGs were analysed. The portal-systemic collateral circulation was graded as extensive, moderate or insignificant by physical examination, barium swallow, and oesophagoscopy, with additional data in some patients from splenic venography and post mortem. The authors concluded that 'nitrogenous substances of portal venous origin, normally metabolised in the liver may reach the systemic circulation through a damaged liver, through portal collaterals, or through both, and cause a cerebral disturbance (portal-systemic encephalopathy)'. This work changed the dogma that patients with cirrhosis should be encouraged to eat a high protein diet, to recognising that if the patient had poor hepatic function or collaterals protein could be detrimental (5). It paved the way for therapeutic approaches, for example oral neomycin. The *Lancet* paper was selected for special mention in the review of Sherlock's contribution to hepatology for the Physiological Society in 1993 (4) and in the series of Landmarks in Hepatology by Dr Adrian Reuben (11). The simple diagram from the *Lancet* paper in 1954 summarising the new concept of portal-systemic encephalopathy (illustration 6) still appears in reviews of the subject 50 years later – a testament to its lasting impact.

Sherlock and her group also studied the circulatory and electrolyte changes in patients with cirrhosis. The paper with Hecker (*Lancet* 1956;2:1221–1225) was highlighted in an article in the series of Milestones in Liver Disease (12). Dr Vicente Arroyo wrote that 'I am convinced that the modern concepts on ascites and HRS (hepatorenal syndrome) would have been introduced earlier if these studies (he cites twenty, three from Sherlock's

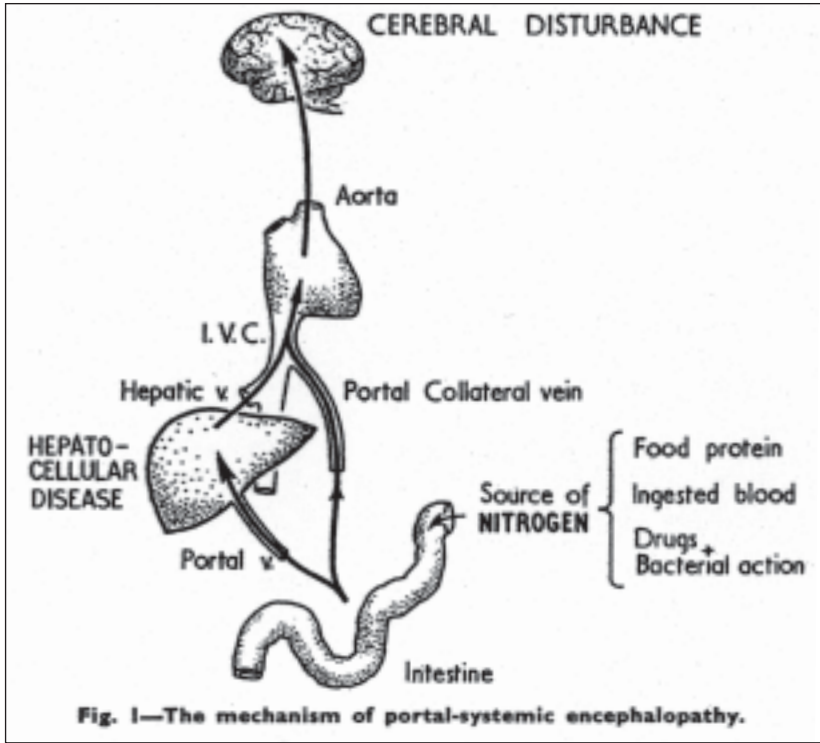


Illustration 6 Original diagram showing the mechanism of portal-systemic encephalopathy (Lancet 1954;2:453–457. Reprinted with permission from Elsevier)

group) had been taken into consideration. The study of Hecker and Sherlock...is clear proof of this because almost 50 years ago it suggested the peripheral arterial vasodilatation hypothesis, the two types of HRS, the treatment of type-1 HRS with vasoconstrictor agents, and the occurrence of paracentesis-induced circulatory dysfunction. This article is a beautiful mixture of clinical skilfulness, physiological expertise and rationality and an important example of how it is possible to reach relevant conclusions from apparently simple clinical data'. This last point is perhaps one of the major attributes of Sherlock in her contributions to hepatology.

Another area in which the Unit at Hammersmith made major contributions was in portal hypertension (13). The technique of hepatic vein catheterisation was extended to measure the wedged hepatic vein pressure so as to assess portal pressure. This was also studied using intrasplenic pulp pressure, usually combined with splenic venography. Splenoportography was funda-

mental to several studies, including that on portal-systemic encephalopathy. Sherlock and her colleagues also showed the clinical benefit of vasopressin in acute variceal haemorrhage.

From her work at Hammersmith she published more than 90 articles. However, perhaps as important for her influence and reputation was the publication of “Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System” in 1955, which was an immediate success. A fuller account of this book is given in a later section. Many hepatologists acknowledge that they entered the specialty after being stimulated by this text.

During these Hammersmith years, other important events included the CIBA Symposium on Liver Disease, and the founding of the International Association for the Study of the Liver (IASL).

CIBA Symposium (9). In 1950 she organised what Hans Popper (14) believed to be the first international meeting solely on liver disease, at the CIBA Foundation in London. Topics included protein metabolism in liver disease, the aetiology of hepatic cirrhosis, the aetiology of portal hypertension and ascites, and its treatment; pigment metabolism, splanchnic blood flow and infectious aspects of liver disease. The list of contributors included eminent clinicians and scientists from across the world. It is difficult to select a short list. John McMichael, Henry Dible and Cecil Watson (from Minnesota and another of Sheila’s mentors) were present. Poul Iversen, who published on liver biopsy in 1939 with Kaj Roholm, presented a paper on the pathogenesis of ascites. Leon Schiff lectured on needle biopsy studies in cirrhosis, and Hans Popper discussed the development of trabeculae in cirrhosis. Sheila’s succinct approach to questioning speakers can be found in the discussion sessions.

International Association for the Study of the Liver (IASL). She was instrumental with Hans Popper in the founding of IASL. The idea for this society apparently was hatched by Sheila and Hans on a bus ride at a conference in Padua (5), and discussed with Adolf Martini at a liver meeting in Perugia in 1957 (2). Sheila was chosen as the first President in 1958 because in that year she had two livers – she was pregnant! The first meeting was held at the Royal Free in April 1960. There were 53 participants from 19 countries.

Marriage and family

Sheila Sherlock married Geraint James in December 1951.

Gerry James qualified in 1944, having trained at Jesus College, Cambridge, and the Middlesex Hospital Medical School. Between 1948 and 1950 he was registrar to Dr JG Scadding at Hammersmith Hospital, where he developed a special interest in respiratory infections and sarcoidosis.

Gerry was already aware of Sheila Sherlock's clinical and research activities at the Hammersmith, but they first met face to face at a New Year's Eve party in 1949–50 held by Sheila. She had asked a mutual friend to bring him along. They recognised that they were soul-mates. Later that year Gerry was given the responsibility for the hospitality for visiting speakers at the CIBA Foundation Symposium on Liver Disease. He clearly acquitted himself well because the relationship continued.

In 1950 he was awarded the Comyns Berkeley Fellowship from the Middlesex Hospital, which allowed him to spend a year at Columbia University in New York. He had already been studying viral pneumonia with Scadding at Hammersmith and in New York tried to isolate the causative virus using egg culture. This was the subject of his MD degree.

He was due to start his Fellowship in New York in September 1950. His route there was somewhat circuitous. Both he and Sheila were presenting papers early in September at the International Congress of Medicine in Paris. They travelled there together and then drove from Paris to Cherbourg where he boarded the SS Queen Elizabeth to New York. At the College of Physicians and Surgeons he had a productive academic and social life, sharing a flat with Dr (later Sir Richard) Bayliss (who became Physician to the Queen).

Despite a separation of three thousand miles, the friendship with Sheila did not fade. In March 1951, she had one month's leave and arranged to join him in New York. They used these weeks to drive across America to Los Angeles and back in a Studebaker temporarily loaned by an American Professor of Law, Dr Gellhorn, who in exchange had Gerry's car in London. This transcontinental drive was not just a holiday trip. They took the opportunity to visit colleagues with an interest in liver and infectious diseases at several centres. Sheila returned to London after this important month of study leave, and he followed in September 1951 to be Senior Registrar in Medicine at the Middlesex Hospital. On his return to London they became engaged. One interesting detail is that Professor James Learmonth, who had been central to her initial career at Edinburgh, travelled down overnight on the sleeper from Edinburgh in order to vet Sheila's fiancé. They all met at the King's Cross Hotel for breakfast, and having met and approved of her proposed consort, he returned to Edinburgh.

Sheila and Gerry were married on 15 December 1951 at the Church of England in Lancaster Gate, London (illustration 7). Sheila was given away by Dr Sharpey-Schafer, and Gerry's best man was Dr Raymond Hierons. The toast to the newly weds was given by McMichael. The wedding reception was held at Bayswater's Marlborough Court Hotel. Guests were predominantly medical friends from the Hammersmith and the Middlesex Hospitals. They spent a five day honeymoon in Dublin, but both took some work – Sheila completed a manuscript and Gerry was proofing the new medical textbook written by his current Consultant Dr Beaumont.



Illustration 7 Sheila and Gerry on their Wedding Day, 15 December 1951.

Sheila had been living in Hammersmith Grove with her mother. Once married, Gerry and Sheila moved to a house in Willesden, in North West London. Eventually they also bought a house in Sandgate, on the Kent coast, for the weekends. So Sheila returned to Sandgate which she had left for Edinburgh thirty years earlier.

Between 1951 and 1958 evening life involved supper followed by work on papers or books. Their first daughter, Amanda Melys Sherlock James was born in September 1958, and their second, Auriole Zara Sherlock James in December 1962. Gerry became a Consultant Physician and Dean at the Royal Northern Hospital in 1959. Life, balancing family with work, changed for both Sheila and Gerry.

The Royal Free Hospital and School of Medicine (Gray's Inn Road) (1959–1974)

In 1959 Sheila Sherlock was appointed to the Chair of the Department of Medicine at the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine. She was the first Professor of Medicine at the Royal Free and the first woman to be appointed to the Chair of Medicine in a British medical school.

The Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine has a special place in the medical education of women in the United Kingdom. In 1877 the Royal Free Hospital agreed to take students from the London School of Medicine for Women, providing clinical training without which they could not qualify. Between the time of its establishment in 1877 and 1947, only women were educated and trained at this medical school. In 1947 the Medical School became coeducational and began to accept men. Peter Scheuer was in one of early intakes of male medical students in 1949.

The new Medical Unit at the Royal Free in 1959 encompassed not only hepatology, but also gastroenterology, nephrology and general medicine. When it was established, Sherlock invited several colleagues from the Hammersmith to join her, including Barbara Billing, Tony Dawson, Roger Williams, Stanley Shaldon and Mike Turner.

Dr Barbara Billing (illustration 8) was a biochemist who had collaborated with Sheila in several studies in the early 1950s. She had studied biochemistry at Newnham College, Cambridge University. After this she served in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) for four and a half years. In 1946 after the War she worked in the Department of Biochemistry at Edinburgh where she did her PhD on post-operative salt and water metabolism. In 1949 she transferred to the Department of Medicine at the Hammersmith and worked with Dr Alick Bearn on splanchnic blood flow and hepatic metabolism of carbohydrates. She spent 18 months with Leon Schiff in Cincinnati and then returned to the Department of Biochemistry at Hammersmith. She worked with Professor Earl King (of Hammersmith) and Dr Grant Lathe at Queen Charlotte's Hospital studying bilirubin metabolism in jaundice of the



Illustration 8 Barbara Billing (right) with Peter Scheuer (centre), at a conference in Brazil in 1967.



Illustration 9 The 'Hut' on the roof at the Royal Free Hospital in Gray's Inn Road.

newborn. One of many important contributions that she made to the understanding of bilirubin metabolism was the role of glucuronidation.

Throughout this time she had contact with Sheila Sherlock and played squash with her. Thus there was both a professional interest in bilirubin and hepatobiliary disease, and social contact. When Sheila moved to the Royal Free in 1959 she invited Barbara Billing to move with her, with an appointment as Senior Lecturer in Biochemistry Applied to Medicine.

Roger Williams, subsequently Director of the Liver Unit at King's College Hospital, had been a registrar at the Hammersmith Hospital. He has described how his mind was already set at that stage to study and specialise in liver disease (15). This was stimulated by the "fascinating presentations made by Sheila's research fellows on the staff rounds". To his delight after two years involvement in respiratory function at Hammersmith, he was invited to join her as one of her two Lecturers at the Royal Free.

The offices and laboratories of the medical unit were housed in the famous rooftop wooden huts (illustration 9). Professor Neil McIntyre has described the lay out (8). He joined the Medical Unit in 1963 as a Medical Research Council Fellow (illustration 10), and after promotion from Lecturer through to Professor succeeded Sheila as Head of the Department in 1983. The roof top complex could only be reached by climbing some rather steep staircases (and 'ladders') which were on the outside of the building. Staff, patients and visitors had to use this route to reach the hut housing her office. Seminars and lectures were held in another rooftop hut, reached along a series of duck boards which protected shoes from the puddles of rain water.

Other workers have also described the difficulty in finding the Unit on the roof. Dr Richard Smallwood, an overseas research fellow and later Chief Medical Officer for Australia, described how ‘from the front entrance one had to cross diagonally across the front square, up one and a half flights of steps and out onto the first roof, across a trail of duck boards to a fire escape, up the fire escape to the second roof and there you were looking at a wooden hut with a little sign saying “Department of Medicine”’ (16). These huts became particularly hot during the summer when there were heat waves. Dr Alick Bearn has written that ‘the best advice on getting to the Academic Department of Medicine, or “The Hut” as the facilities were appropriately called, was that given to me by one of Sheila’s loyal secretaries: “when you get to the roof, keep going!”’ (17).

The day to day running of the laboratories was in the capable hands of Paul Murfin, the chief technician. Patients were cared for in the main hospital on two wards, Milne and Crawshay. Dr Jenny Heathcote, Sheila’s house officer in 1968 recalls vividly being responsible for 30 male patients with a variety of liver diseases (18). Female patients were cared for by another hard pressed member of the team.

Sheila’s Unit at the Royal Free remained pre-eminent and was the Liver Unit for referral of patients, and the Centre, nationally and internationally, in



Illustration 10 With Neil McIntyre

which to train in and research hepatology. She continued to attract the best registrars and house officers, and a stream of fellows from across the world. She had pioneered work on portal hypertension, hepatic encephalopathy, and ascites at Hammersmith and liver biopsy had become an everyday tool. Between 1959 and 1974 research topics included bilirubin metabolism, haemochromatosis, cholestatic liver disease, drug induced hepatotoxicity, albumin synthesis in chronic liver disease, as well as further studies into portal hypertension.

There were immediate opportunities for linking with the Department of Pathology. Its Professor in 1959 was Kenneth Hill who already had an interest in liver disease and had written on veno-occlusive disease and alcoholic hepatitis. Peter Scheuer (see illustration 8) took up an appointment as Lecturer in Pathology on the same day that Sherlock arrived, having completed an MD with Professor Hill's supervision on veno-occlusive disease. He was appointed Professor of Clinical Histopathology at the Royal Free in 1975 and collaborated with Sheila on many studies for the rest of her life. She contributed the foreword to each of the six editions of 'Liver Biopsy Interpretation' that he wrote (later with Jay Lefkowitz) between 1968 and 2000. She described this book as 'the liver biopsy bible' (19).

The Liver Unit also worked closely with expert hepato-biliary surgeons, particularly Phyllis George, and radiologists, Bill Young and later Bob Dick.

At any one time there would be many fellows contributing to the research output from the Unit. Highlights of the advances made in the department over these years (1959–1974) included the identification of antimitochondrial antibodies in primary biliary cirrhosis in collaboration with Dr Deborah Doniach (Walker JG et al, 1965); the link between hepatitis B and chronic liver disease and primary liver cell carcinoma (Sherlock et al, 1970); immunological studies in primary biliary cirrhosis (Fox et al, 1970) and hepatitis B (Dudley et al, 1972); the trial showing the benefit of corticosteroid therapy in autoimmune hepatitis (Cook et al, 1971); the demonstration of the mode of spread of acute type B hepatitis (Heathcote et al, 1973); and studies of renal blood flow and cardiovascular responses in liver disease by Drs Mike Kew, Mike Lunzer and others.

The clinical service was busy and diagnostic and therapeutic approaches were studied. Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) was one such focus of interest, led by Drs Elwyn Elias and John Summerfield. Later, with Bob Dick, they compared its performance against percutaneous cholangiography.

Apart from her leadership of the Liver Unit, Sherlock also had a major influence on the Academic standing of the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine. It became world famous through her work. In addition she pressed for the establishment of other clinical academic chairs. In the years after her appointment, the Chair in Obstetrics was re-established (having been vacant

since 1939), and a new Chair of Surgery was established in 1974 with the appointment of Professor Kenneth Hobbs, a specialist in hepatobiliary surgery.

The Royal Free Hospital and School of Medicine (Hampstead) (1974–1983)

In 1974 the Royal Free Hospital moved to the new building in Hampstead (illustration 11). Sheila Sherlock was instrumental in the planning of her new Medical Unit, occupying the 10th floor of the hospital. The ward for patients with liver diseases was close to the offices and research laboratories of the Academic Department of Medicine. This proximity between clinicians, clinical academics, scientists and ward patients gave the best opportunity for the welfare of the patient and for research. In addition she had the foresight to plan a lead-lined room on the same floor with X-ray screening facilities.

As before her Unit was a busy referral service for liver patients in the UK and from abroad. There were six large laboratories each with a senior staff member leading a research team. The contributions from the unit over the years from 1974 until she stood down as Chair of the Department of Medicine in 1983 covered virtually all areas of hepatobiliary disease.

Viral hepatitis B continued to be a particular interest of the unit, both because of research in antiviral and other treatments and in immunology,



Illustration 11 The Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead.

under Howard Thomas, who was appointed Chair of the Department of Medicine at St Mary's in 1987. John Summerfield, who also became a Professor at St Mary's, led research in cholestasis with Barbara Billing. Marsha Morgan studied alcoholic liver disease and encephalopathy, while Roger Chapman made important contributions in primary sclerosing cholangitis and Owen Epstein in primary biliary cirrhosis.

It is impossible to give details of all contributors over this period, but as an example of the productivity, in 1978 more than 26 research papers were produced from the unit, including articles on hepatitis B, primary liver cell cancer, alcoholic liver disease, primary biliary cirrhosis, bone disease in cholestasis, haemochromatosis, Wilson's disease, dynamic liver function tests, and the use of ERCP.

In 1975 the first Liver Update at the Royal Free was held. Guest speakers from Europe and the USA lectured alongside scientists, clinical academics and clinicians from the home team. There were formal presentations on Thursday afternoon and Friday. The Saturday morning session chaired by Professor Scheuer was particularly enjoyable, with clinicians including Sheila nailing their diagnostic flag to the mast before the all important hepatic histology was demonstrated by Peter Scheuer or Hans Popper, a frequent visitor. Audience participation was always lively.

The day to day pattern of work continued as before including the well-known Wednesday afternoon grand round at which Sheila presented clinical cases. Registrars and house officers were expected to produce a succinct summary. Her style of presentation provided a stimulating forum for discussion, with trainees and senior members of the department often being put on the spot. The sessions were popular but occasionally nerve wracking.

After the clinical meeting there was a pathology meeting at which the slides of current inpatients would be demonstrated by Professor Peter Scheuer and discussed by the clinicians; again, a valuable training experience. At the end of the afternoon at 5.00 p.m. a visiting lecturer would give a clinical or research lecture, always chaired by Sheila and attended by the whole unit. The visiting speaker was also often present during the Grand Round in the afternoon, and not infrequently would be in the firing line for diagnostic suggestions and dissection of research issues. Sherry was always served at the end of the day.

The weekly ward round, radiology conference, research in progress and journal club all provided excellent training. Of the many qualities that Sheila had, that most often remembered was her ability to grasp the central core of a clinical or research issue having been presented with complicated or conflicting data. The speed and accuracy of her thinking was remarkable.

There was pressure to submit abstracts for national and international meetings. Those who were successful had to rehearse their paper at a formal meeting of the unit. This was a memorable event for those involved since the

“comments” on the presentation could be blunt, and questions from Prof were usually more pertinent than those that would be asked at the conference. Usually sufficient time was given between this rehearsal and the scientific meeting to allow slides and posters to be revised.

All who worked on the unit would acknowledge the training that they had in presentation, including her insistence wherever possible of ‘5 lines maximum per slide’. Complicated slides would be restructured and data simplified to make the message clearer. The style of presentation that Sheila Sherlock and Hans Popper used and taught is acknowledged to have had a wider influence, raising the standard of presentations at meetings in general.

Her editing of ‘final drafts’ of papers was also a learning experience. Although the writer thought he or she had produced the clearest version, a shortened clearer version returned generously illustrated with rearrangements and deletions.

An important aspect of her leadership was that if ‘Prof’ did criticise either a research or clinical decision, once the criticism was made it rarely returned to haunt the individual concerned. Moreover, credit was always given where credit was due.

She was a tough taskmaster but fair. She expected the highest clinical and academic standards in those who worked with her, and led by example.

Other responsibilities; honours

Sheila Sherlock was involved in the foundation of the *British Liver Club* in 1961. This subsequently evolved into the *British Association for the Study of the Liver (BASL)*, of which she was a President. She was the editor of *Gut* between 1967 and 1975, and was the President of the *British Society of Gastroenterology* in 1973. She was a founding member of the *European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL)* in Marburg in 1966, and its second President for the Gothenburg meeting in 1967. She was the first editor of the *Journal of Hepatology* between 1974 and 1979. She was a founding member of the *Digestive Diseases Foundation* and its vice-President in 1985.

Sheila was a regular lecturer and moderator at the *Falk Liver Weeks* in Basel and Freiburg sponsored by the Falk Foundation e.V. (illustration 12). In 1965 Hans Popper and Dr Herbert Falk had the idea of holding an international symposium on liver disease. The first was held in October 1967 in Freiburg and since then Falk Liver Weeks have taken place every three years. The duo of Popper and Sherlock contributed intellectual stimulation and discipline to the sessions. They also took a full part in the social events (illustration 13).



Illustration 12 With Adolph Martini (right) and Hans Popper (left) moderating at the Falk Liver Week in 1970.



Illustration 13 Sheila dancing with Hans at the same conference.



Illustration 14 With Carroll Leevy (left) and Hans Popper (right) in Washington.

In 1972 the World Health Organization asked the IASL to help standardise the nomenclature for diseases of the liver. Carroll Leevy, Hans Popper and Sheila Sherlock facilitated this at a conference in Washington, D.C. (illustration 14) This was published (*Leevy CM, Popper H, Sherlock S: Diseases of the Liver and Biliary Tract. Standardization of Nomenclature, Diagnostic Criteria and Diagnostic Methodology. Fogarty International Center, Washington, D.C., United States Government Printing Office, 1977;22*). An updated second edition was published in 1994.



Illustration 15 Receiving an Honorary DSc from Tom Chalmers, Dean of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine of the City University of New York, in 1977.

Sheila always enjoyed travelling to conferences and other units to lecture and moderate, and to receive her honorary degrees, fellowship and prizes (see appendix; illustration 15). She was delighted to be appointed **Dame Commander of the British Empire (DBE)** in 1978. Officially she became Dame Sheila although most continued to call her “Prof”.

The Royal College of Physicians

As already noted, in 1951 she became the youngest woman elected Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. From that time she maintained a close interest in the social activities of the College and the lectures. She worked particularly closely with Presidents Cyril Clarke and Max Rosenheim. She was a Councillor from 1964–1969, the first woman Censor from 1970–1972, and the first woman Senior Censor and Vice-President between 1976 and 1977. She was narrowly defeated in an election for the Presidency. She gave four College lectures: the Bradshaw (1961), Rolleston (1968), and Lumleian (1978), and the Harveian Oration in 1985. She enjoyed the Royal College both scientifically and socially – she and Gerry lived close by and entertained Fellows, Members and college guests frequently. She was grateful for its support throughout her career (5).

The later years

In 1983, at the age of 65, she relinquished the Chair of the Department of Medicine. The occasion was marked by an international meeting at the Royal Free attended by a large number of previous staff and fellows (illustration 16) followed by a banquet at the Whitbread Brewery Hall at the Barbican in Central London.

Her work and enthusiasm for hepatology worldwide continued. She worked from an office on the 9th floor in the Department of Surgery, kindly provided by Professor Kenneth Hobbs. There she continued to see patients, and write. Until the beginning of 2001, unless she was abroad, she came to the hospital on a daily basis to work and attend meetings. She still presented at the Wednesday afternoon hepatology meeting and enjoyed guiding the trainees in the diagnostic, management and research aspects of clinical problems.

Between 1983 and 2001 she wrote five editions of her textbook, “Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System”, and continued to lecture and moderate at conferences throughout the world (illustration 17). She was a strong supporter of the **British Liver Trust** founded in 1987 and was its President between 1988 and 2001. She was also **President of the Royal Free Hospital**



Illustration 16 Sheila with Alumni at her Festschrift at the Royal Free in 1983.

School of Medicine between 1990 and 1998, the only one not to have been a graduate of the School. Her role in the training of young doctors was recognised by the naming of the new Postgraduate Centre at the Royal Free as the **Sheila Sherlock Education Centre**, which she opened in 1994. Sheila and Gerry regularly attended meetings at the Royal Free, including the hospital grand round. She continued to publish, particularly reviews and commentaries, but also some original papers with other members of the Unit. She continued to contribute an annual academic article for the *Lancet*, which she had done for 43 years.

The outstanding honour that gave her the greatest pleasure came in the summer of 2001 when she was elected a **Fellow of the Royal Society** in recognition of her contributions to medicine and hepatology. A celebration was organised by Professor Mark Pepys FRS, the Head of Medicine at the Royal Free campus of the Royal Free and University College Medical School, who had proposed her for election to this Fellowship. Attendees included many of her former colleagues and collaborators, including Professor Deborah Doniach.

By the time of her death she had contributed nearly 60 years of her life to hepatology, over 40 of these being at the Royal Free. She had published over 600 papers, and written or edited over 25 books. Her enthusiasm for hepatology never waned.



Illustration 17 With the faculty for "Current Concepts in Liver Pathology" at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University, New York City, in May 1984. (From left to right. Front row: Jay Lefkowitz, Hans Popper, Sheila, Hy Zimmerman and Lina Popper. Middle row: John Wigger, Kamal Ishak, Peter Scheuer and Fiorenzo Paronetto. Back row: Jay Hoofnagle, Jules Dienstag, Charles Lieber and Fenton Schaffner.

Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System

‘My aim in writing this book has been to present a comprehensive and up-to-date account of diseases of the liver and biliary system, which I hope will be of value to physicians, surgeons and pathologists and also a reference book for the clinical student’. Sheila Sherlock wrote these words in the preface to the first edition of her textbook in 1955 and they formed the basis of each of the subsequent ten editions, the 11th published just in time for her to see the first copy, especially hand bound for her by Blackwell Science, in December 2001. Her writing style was succinct and clear. She summarised complicated concepts and data in a way that was easy and fun to read. She was adept at producing simple figures to present ideas, pathogenetic pathways, and management plans.

Her aim with each new edition was to replace redundant information and references with the new. Her choice of orange for the cover the 11th edition was a characteristic strike against convention.

The first edition was published simultaneously in the UK, the United States and Canada in March 1955. It was reprinted in July the same year and again in October 1956. New editions were published in 1958, 1963, 1968, 1975, 1981, 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997 and 2002. Remarkably she wrote all but

the last three editions on her own; I joined as co-author in 1993. Virtually every edition was reprinted. The book has been translated into German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Portuguese and Spanish.

The clarity of the book reflected her style of presentation whether writing or lecturing. Her hand drawn figures were redrawn by the medical illustrators from within the hospitals in which she worked (she particularly appreciated the expertise of Ms Jan Cox) and the production team at Blackwell Science. Her secretaries, fundamental to all her work, also came in for special mention in the preface of each edition. Ms Aileen Duggan, her last secretary, was a particular support over many years.

A new edition was as current as possible through the cooperation of Blackwell Science who allowed changes, reflecting the latest publications, to be made in the final page proofs of the edition. Thus important papers published in August usually found a place in the finished product in December.

According to Blackwell Science, over 170,000 copies have been sold since 1955. Per Saugman, who joined Blackwell Scientific Publishing in 1952 and was Chairman from 1972, wrote that ‘every publishing firm needs a break and for Blackwell Scientific Publishing it came in 1955 when we published Professor Sheila Sherlock’s book *Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System*, which after eight editions and tremendous sales, is still in a class of its own’ (20).

Professor Juan Rodés wrote that her book ‘may be considered one of the great classics among texts dedicated to clinical training...’ And that it ‘must surely be counted in any list of the most widely read medical books in the last 50 years’ (21). Professor Roger Williams in his review of the 11th edition wrote: ‘to me Sheila’s book on the liver has always been an inspiration, as she was herself in life’ (22).

Colleagues and research fellows

Sheila had a flair for selecting clinical staff and research fellows. She attracted individuals with drive. Many remember Sheila’s habit of introducing them at meetings, as ‘Brown is working with me’ rather than ‘for me’ and never ‘under me’. Of those who had worked with her at Hammersmith or the Royal Free, more than 30 eventually became Professors. This gives an indication of the legacy to hepatology from the unit, but underestimates the overall contribution from all those who worked with Sheila. Several have been mentioned related to specific research.

Many of the registrars and fellows who came through her unit went on to illustrious careers in England and abroad. Dr Alexander Bearn and Dr Pete Reynolds, two of the earliest co-workers at Hammersmith, became distinguished Professors of Medicine in the USA (Cornell, and Los Angeles

respectively). Bill Summerskill, the first author or co-author on many papers on portal systemic encephalopathy became Professor of Medicine at the Mayo Clinic and Medical School, University of Minnesota. Dr Alan Read became Professor of Medicine at the University of Bristol. Dr David Kerr, another Ettles scholar from Edinburgh and her registrar from 1957 to 1959, became a nephrologist and Professor of Medicine at Hammersmith and subsequently the Dean at Hammersmith. Visitors from Europe included Dr Jan de Groot from Belgium and Dr Adolf Martini from Germany. They later held chairs of medicine in Leuven and Marburg respectively.

Dr Tony Dawson who published with her on hepatic coma and portal systemic encephalopathy and its treatment, initially at Hammersmith, was Lecturer and then Senior Lecturer in Medicine (1959–1965) at the Royal Free. At the age of 37 he was almost the first non-Bart's man to be appointed Consultant Physician at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London. He was appointed Physician to the Queen in 1982.

He was succeeded as Senior Lecturer at the Royal Free in 1965 by Ian Bouchier, who had been Assistant Lecturer from 1962–3 and had worked in Boston from 1964–5. These Senior Lecturers on the Unit were responsible for Gastroenterology although many had hepatological interests. They were given free rein by Sheila. Bouchier became Reader at the Royal Free in 1970, then Chair of the Department of Medicine in Dundee (1973–1986) and Edinburgh (1986–97). Other Senior Lecturers on the Unit included Professors Neil McIntyre, Derek Jewell and Roy Pounder. Kaye Ibbertson, Victor Rosenoer and Ian James were responsible for Clinical Pharmacology. Humphrey Hodgson, the current Sheila Sherlock Professor of Medicine, previously a Professor at Hammersmith, had been a research fellow with Derek Jewell in the Department at the Royal Free.

Other colleagues through the years include Professors Leslie (now Lord) Turnbull, who became President of the Royal College of Physicians, and Peter Brunt, Physician to the Royal Household in Scotland; Stephanos Hadziyannis (Athens), Pierre Berthelot (France) and Livio Chiandussi (Italy); Martin Black, John Gollan, Tony Jones, Tony Tavill and David Zimmon (USA); Stan Goulston, Ian MacKay and Lawrie Powell (Australia); Luis Guevara and David Kershenobich (Mexico) and Marta Velasco (Chile); and Geoffrey Dusheiko and Andrew Burroughs, Professors at the Royal Free.

Sheila was always particularly happy to see women succeed in academia, and despite all the difficulties firmly believed that they must advance on merit rather than being given any special dispensation (1). Many are now internationally recognised including Maggie Bassendine (Newcastle), Maria Chiamonte (Padua), Rosemary Fisher (Yale), Jenny Heathcote and Eve Roberts (Toronto), Anna Lok (Ann Arbor) and Marsha Morgan (at the Royal Free).

It is not possible to mention all who worked with her but the experience will have been memorable. As Jenny Heathcote has said: 'These were the most wonderful six years of my academic life'.

Her academic family

The gatherings of current and previous alumni of the Liver Unit were fundamental to the remarkable camaraderie and interaction between those who worked with Sheila. Gerry James was a catalyst at these events bringing together members of the Unit and visitors. In London, there were regular opportunities to meet socially during the year: the Liver Update in July and the tennis tournament that followed; the Christmas dinner and parties given by Sheila and Gerry at home.

The departmental tennis tournament was a long time tradition. From 1975 it took place after the Liver Update in July. Sheila chose her male partner very carefully (these were doubles matches, and she knew the form of most likely combatants) and won the tournament in most years. On one occasion she was not aware that Dr Bob Dick's sister, who was visiting from Australia, was a very accomplished player. Having lost in the final match Sheila remained her enthusiastic, if surprised, self. On another occasion she lost in the final to her husband and daughter Amanda.

Sheila was particularly effective at the net, where her presence was enough to distract even the most practised of players. On one occasion a research fellow forgot etiquette and his volley hit her hard on the nose, drawing blood; his career progressed without further incident.

She enjoyed these events for the tennis but also instinctively saw their catalytic role in forging the members of the Unit together and introducing them to hepatological visitors and their families from abroad.

This was also true for the Christmas Dinner often held in later years at Lord's Tavern in St John's Wood. After dinner, as at other such events, Gerry James would run through the alphabet, country by country, and fellows and other staff would be expected to stand and say a few words, when their country came up. This provided the opportunity to see and hear who was present and helped integrate those who had recently arrived from abroad. Sheila's toast at every dinner was to 'the internationalism of medicine'.

Equally important in the Unit's calendar was the Christmas party, where after welcoming senior colleagues from other departments, Sheila left and music, dancing and mulled wine flowed late into the night.

When members of the Unit attended meetings abroad, there would usually be a get together with ex-members of the Unit. This happened par excellence at the American Liver Meeting in Chicago, where there was an enjoyable dinner bringing together fellows from all eras, including Royal Free fel-

lows visiting Chicago for the first time to give a presentation. The Royal Free Alumni, coordinated as in many previous years by Dr Rosemary Fisher, met at the Boston AASLD meeting in 2002 to honour Dame Sheila, and no doubt will continue to meet for the foreseeable future.

For Sheila and Gerry these events fostered a link – both academic and personal – between several generations of hepatologists. Beyond these events, there was the generous hospitality at their home where overseas visitors would be always welcomed. She remained a continuing support for her previous fellows, always interested in their academic achievements, their personal lives and their difficulties. One particular account, by Dr Jenny Heathcote, demonstrates the depth of Sheila's lifelong friendship and support (18). This was an aspect of Prof's life that is remembered equally with her academic achievements.

Sheila's family

Through the years all the family took part in the social events involving staff, fellows and family friends. These activities took place both in Willesden and then from 1970 at their home in York Terrace East in Regent's Park. During the summer months, the Annual Sunday buffet lunch and tea at the James's house on the promenade at Hythe was a memorable event for many members of the unit (illustration 18).



Illustration 18 Sheila relaxing at Hythe.

Gerry James like Sheila became a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians – they were one of the few husband/wife teams both having the Fellowship. Because of his interest in medical ophthalmology he became Consultant Physician to the Department of Ophthalmology at St Thomas' Hospital. His interest in sarcoidosis led him to be President of the World Association of Sarcoidosis and Other Granulomatous Disorders, and Editor of the International Journal of Sarcoidosis. In the course of their marriage, Sheila enjoyed sharing his Presidency of the Medical Society of London, the Harveian Society and the Osler Club. A Welsh-speaking Welshman, he is a vice-president of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, a bard of the Welsh Gorsedd, and honorary Doctor of Laws of the University of Wales. He has written and edited medical textbooks, and contributed papers on infectious diseases, granulomatous disorders and the history of medicine to journals worldwide.

Amanda was trained as a lay preacher in the Baptist Church, having earlier been a teacher of physical education. Auriole joined the police force and



Illustration 19 The Sherlock James family in 1998. From left to right: Michael, Sheila, Amanda, Gerry and Auriole, with granddaughters Emily and Alice.

in 1989 married Michael Davis. In October 1991 the first grandchild, Alice Sherlock Davis was born, followed by a sister, Emily, in August 1994 (illustration 19).

Sheila had a lifelong love of cricket, and she was always up to date with the latest score for Kent. She also had an interest in other sports and, as befits the wife of any Welshman, could hold her own in discussions of rugby football. However, she loved football, supporting Arsenal. She enjoyed music, particularly ballet in view of her childhood ballet training; speakers at the annual Liver Update at the Royal Free in July were always treated to a musical in the West End.

Despite her intense professional work she had a busy and fulfilling family life with two daughters who have made a success of their chosen career, and two delightful grandchildren. Sheila and Gerry celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary on 15 December 2001.

Conclusion (illustration 20)

This is the story of a hardworking inspiring doctor with an outstanding mind, who applied and developed the newest techniques available to all aspects of liver function and disease. She was one of the leaders of an initially small band of enthusiasts who fostered hepatology as a new specialty. The clarity of her papers and textbook was renowned. Apart from her work in hepatology, she also contributed to her hospital and medical school, to the University of London, and the Royal College of Physicians in London. She was honoured at home and abroad. Fellowships and Awards in her name are now awarded by the Digestive Diseases Foundation and British Liver Trust, AASLD, EASL and the Falk Foundation. Generations of hepatobiliary academics and clinicians and patients remember her fondly and with gratitude.

Isaac Newton wrote to Robert Hooke in 1676: 'If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants'. Those who worked with Sheila Sherlock and those who have followed her writing and lecturing have sat on the shoulders of a giant in hepatology and medicine. They have seen and travelled further than they otherwise would have done. And in the last year of her life, she was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, published the 11th edition of her textbook and celebrated her Golden Wedding Anniversary with her family. A remarkable life.



Illustration 20 Professor Dame Sheila Sherlock.

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Appendix

Professor Dame Sheila Sherlock

Born March 31, 1918 in Dublin

Died December 30, 2001 in London

A: Qualifications; Appointments; Honours

Qualifications:

1941	MB ChB	Edinburgh University (summa cum laude: Ettles Scholarship)
1943	MRCP	London
1945	MD	Edinburgh University (Gold Medal)
1951	FRCP	London
1957	MRCP	Edinburgh
1958	FRCP	Edinburgh

Research Fellowships:

Medical Research Council Fellow	1943–1944
Beit Memorial Research Fellow	1944–1947
Rockefeller Fellow (Yale University, USA)	1948

Appointments:

Physician and Lecturer in Medicine Postgraduate Medical School of London Hammersmith Hospital	1948–1959
Chair of Department of Medicine Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine University of London	1959–1983

Honours:

Dame Commander of the British Empire	1978
Fellow of the Royal Society	2001

B: Professional Societies; Academic Responsibilities

Presidencies:

International Association for the Study of the Liver	1958–1962
European Association for the Study of the Liver	1967
British Society of Gastroenterology	1973

Offices held:

Editor, Gut	1967–1975
Digestive Diseases Foundation	
– Founding Member	1971
– Vice-President	1985
Member of the Senate	
University of London	1976–1981
Founding Editor, Journal of Hepatology	1974–1979
President, British Liver Trust	1988–2001
President, Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine	1990–1998

C: Honorary Degrees, Fellowships and Prizes

Honorary Degrees:

DSc	City Univ of New York	1977
	Yale Univ USA	1983
	Edinburgh	1985
	London	1989
	Cambridge	1995
MD	Lisbon	1981
	Oslo	1981
	Leuven	1984
	Barcelona	1991
	Mainz	1991
	Trinity College Dublin	1992
	Vallodolid	1994
	Wisconsin	1995
	Santiago de Chile	1995
	Padua	1996
Toronto	1996	
Oviedo	1998	
LLD	Aberdeen	1982

Honorary Fellowships and Memberships of Colleges:

FACP	USA	1966
FRCPC	Canada	1972
FRACP	Australia	1984
FRCPI	Ireland	1986
FRCPS	Glasgow	1986
FRCS		1989
Physiological Society		1990
Imperial College, London		1999

Prizes:

Buckston Browne Prize	1953 (Medical Society of London)
William Cullen Prize	1962 (shared)
Hunterian Lecturer	1978 (Hunterian Society)
Jimenez-Diaz Prize	1980
Thannhauser Prize	1980
Fothergill Gold Medal	1983 (Med. Soc. of London)
Gold Medal, British Medical Association	1985
Canadian Liver Foundation Lecture	1986 (Toronto)
Linacre Lecturer, St John's College	1994 (Cambridge)
Held Lecturer, Beth Israel Hospital	1998 (New York)

Honorary Membership of Gastroenterological Societies:

America	1963
Australasia	1965
Mexico	1968
Czechoslovakia	1968
Yugoslavia	1981
Sweden	1983
Association of American Physicians	1973
Association of Alimentary Surgeons	1973
Alpha Omega Alpha Association	1992

D: Royal College of Physicians of London

Councillor	1964–69
Censor	1970–72
Senior Censor and Vice-President	1976–77
Lectures:	
Bradshaw	1961
Rolleston	1968
Lumleian	1978
Harveian Oration	1985

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