

The King's Pneumonectomy

Dr Tony Mark FANZCA



King George VI

- Albert Frederick Arthur George Windsor “Bertie”
- King Charles III Grandfather, QE2 Father
- Abdication of brother Edward VIII 1936
- Reluctant King, ruled for 15 years
- Died Feb 6 1952 Aged 56
- “Kings Speech” Movie 2010
- Pneumonectomy portrayal in Netflix “The Crown”

Past Medical history

- Speech impairment Stutter
- Heavy smoker 2pkt/d 40 years =80 Pack years
- Moderate ETOH intake
- 1949 Peripheral vascular disease
 - Claudication R LL
 - Thromboangiitis obliterans Buerger's disease
 - R Open Lumbar Sympathectomy
 - March 1949
 - Prof Learmonth and Prof Ross, Both later Knighted
 - Good recovery

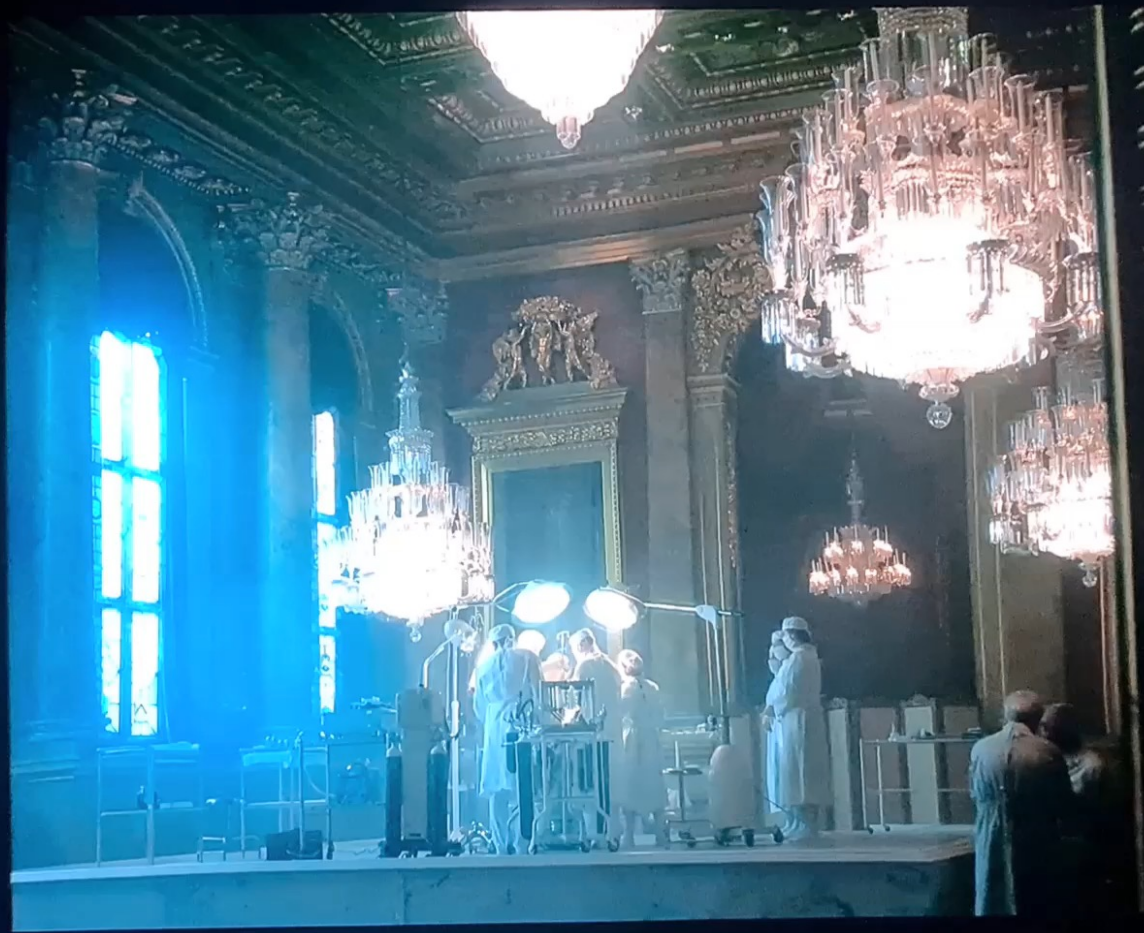
Deteriorating health 1950-1951

- **“Catarrhal Inflammation of the lung”
June 1st 1951**
- Kings Physicians
 - Sir John Weir Royal family Doctor, Homeopath
 - Dr Geoffrey Marshall Chest Physician
 - Sir Daniel Davies Pathologist
 - Sir Horace Evans Renal physicianConvalescence at Balmoral Castle
- **“Structural abnormalities” of lung September 18th 1951**
 - Dr Peter Kerley, Radiologist Westminster Hospital
 - Mr Clement Price Thomas, Thoracic Surgeon Westminster Brompton Hospitals
- **“Condition of King’s lung gives cause for concern” September 21st**
 - Operation recommended and accepted by King

Left Total Pneumonectomy

Sunday 23rd Sept 1951

- Buckingham palace
- Theatre set up in Buhl room
- Emergency lighting
- Sterile canvas structure, directly under large chandeliers
- Changing of Guard moved to St James palace





Surgical team

Westminster Hospital

- Surgeon Clement Price Thomas
 - Assistants Charles Drew, Peter Jones
- Anaesthetist Dr Robert Machray
 - Assistant Cyril Scurr
- Four Scrub Nurses
 - Patterson, Ross, Ream, Minter
 - Four postop nurses

Sir Clement Price Thomas KCVO

Welshman

Thoracic Surgeon :TB, Tumours

Westminster Brompton Hospitals

Knighthed Dec 1951

First sleeve resection bronchus

Chain smoker Lung cancer

Pneumonectomy by Charles
Drew

Died 1973 aged 79yrs



Nicknames

Clem

CP

Pricey



Figure 17.2 – Caricature of Sir Clement (“Clem”) Price-Thomas, K.C.V.O. Notice the characteristic collection of cigarette stubs at his feet.

Reprinted with permission from *Broadway*, the magazine of the Westminster medical students.

Charles Drew

Cardiothoracic Surgeon

First Coarctation Aorta repair UK

Complex Congenital Valve abnormalities

“The Drew Technique”

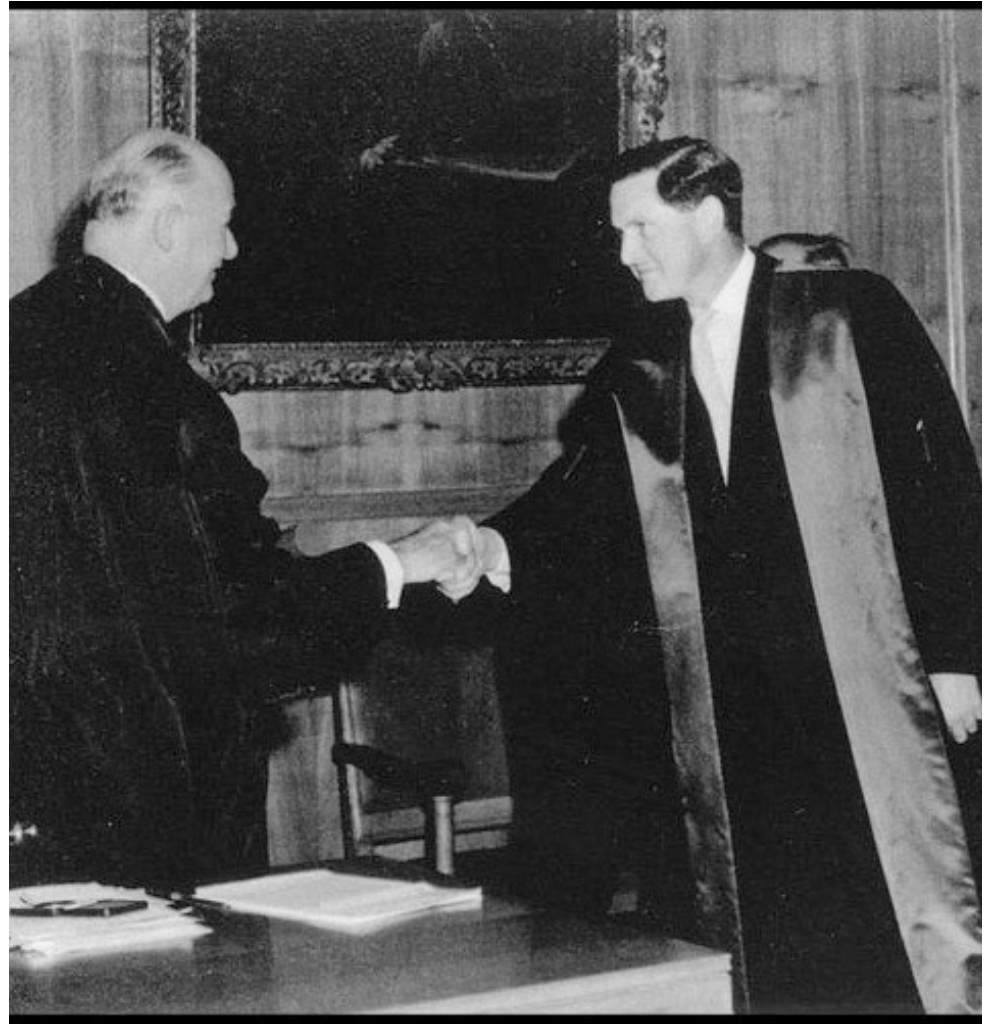
Deep Hypothermic
Circulatory Arrest

First recipient Price Thomas Medal

Retired 1981

Pipe smoker

Died Pharyngeal Ca Aged 70



Robert Mackray

CVO

Consultant Anaesthetist
Westminster and Brompton 1931

Thoracic surgery Anaesthetist

Developed a L endobronchial
tube for R sided TB surgery

Died 1968 aged 61



Cyril Scurr LVO

Clinical Measurement Dept at
WH

Author “ Scientific Foundations”

Scurr & Feldman

Pioneer in Muscle relaxants
Decamethonium
Suxamethonium

Curare

Worked alongside Sir Ivan Magill,
Sir Geoffrey Organe

Died 2012 aged 92





Anaesthetic

- ASA 3 (Patient with severe systemic disease)
- Premedication Omnopon Scopolamine 9am
- GA started at 1020, Surgery started 1100, Finished 1500
- Induced Thiopentone, Muscle relaxant dTC
- “Cut down” IV access
- Rigid Bronchoscopy, Thompson blocker L Main bronchus
- Magill 9.0 ETT, Positioning R Lateral
- Boyles machine 6L FGF , 50% N2O/O2
- Waters CO2 canister, Hand ventilated
- dTC Pethidine Thiopentone No Volatile
- Monitoring BP cuff, ECG
- Pressor Methedrine for SBP < 100

Postoperative

- Uneventful surgery
- Recovered in own bedroom Charles Drew and Peter Jones lived in palace for 2/52
- “Immediate condition satisfactory”
- Recuperated at Sandringham house Norfolk
- New Years Honours 1952 Radiologist, Anaesthetists, Surgical residents all received honours
- Price Thomas had already received his knighthood

Death of King

Feb 1952 aged 56

- Slow uneventful recovery
- Sandringham Norfolk
- Postop hemoptysis ? Spread R lung
- Suddenly and unexpectedly in his sleep
- “Coronary Thrombosis”
- Possibly DVT /PE or massive intrathoracic haemorrhage
- Interred in St Georges chapel Windsor

Operating Table

Genito-Urinary Manufacturing Co

Science Museum 1984

Plaque reads

“To record with gratitude the recovery of His Majesty King George VI from an operation performed by C Price Thomas ...”



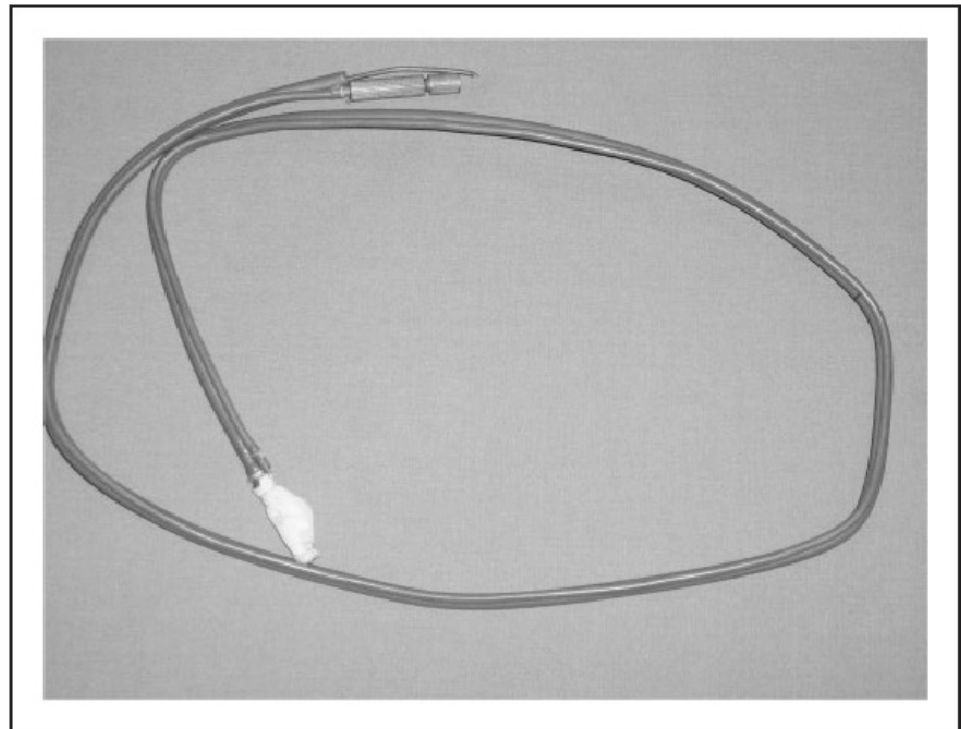
Airway management

Magill ETT and Thompson
Endobronchial blocker

Nowadays R Double lumen
Endobronchial tube

placement checked with
Fiberoptic scope

- Thompson blocker



ECG Machine

Sanborn "Cardiette"

C Scurr donated to AAGBI
Museum



PEOPLE AND EVENTS OF THE WEEK:

PERSONALITIES IN THE PUBLIC EYE.



H.R.H. THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER.

H.R.H. PRINCESS ELIZABETH.

H.M. THE QUEEN.

H.R.H. PRINCESS MARGARET.

H.R.H. THE PRINCESS ROYAL.

On September 27, Buckingham Palace announced: "The King has today signed a warrant authorising the appointment, under Letters Patent, of Counsellors of State to deal temporarily with the current business in the United Kingdom and Colonies which requires the Sovereign's approval." Counsellors

of State were appointed in 1947 when their Majesties and the Princesses were in South Africa; when the King was absent from the country, during the war, in 1943 and 1944; and in 1939, when their Majesties visited Canada and the U.S. This is the first occasion on which Princess Margaret has been appointed.



BEFORE LEAVING FOR SWITZERLAND: QUEEN SURAYA, SEEN WITH THE SHAH OF PERSIA AND PRINCESS SHARNAZ. Queen Suraya of Persia, wife of the Shah, whom she married in February this year, arrived in Geneva by air from Teheran on September 26. She went for medical consultation and was expected to stay for a week or ten days. Princess Sharnaz, born in 1940, is the daughter of the Shah by his former marriage to Princess Fawzeh of Egypt.



CLERK OF THE PARLIAMENTS FROM 1934 UNTIL 1949: THE LATE LORD BADELEY. Lord Badeley, who died on September 27, aged seventy-seven, was Clerk of the Parliaments from 1934 until 1949. He was created a Baron in the Birthday Honours just after his retirement in 1949. Educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Oxford, he entered the Parliament Office in 1927. Before his appointment as Clerk of the Parliaments, he acted as Clerk Assistant, and also as principal clerk of the Judicial Department of the House of Lords. Widely known as an expert of professional standing, he was hon. secretary of the Royal Society of Painter-Engravers from 1911 to 1921, having been elected a Fellow of the Society in 1914.



ARRIVING IN LONDON: MR. TRAN VAN HUU, PRIME MINISTER OF VIET-NAM, WITH HIS WIFE AND SON. Mr. Tran Van Huu, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Viet-Nam (French Indo-China), with his wife and two-year-old son, arrived in London from Paris on September 24 for a three-day visit as guests of the British Government. During his visit, Mr. Tran Van Huu saw Mr. Attlee, toured a steel works at Corby, and visited H.M.S. *Victory* and the cruiser *Sheffield* at Portsmouth.



BRITISH RUNNERS WHO SET UP A NEW WORLD RELAY RECORD. G. W. Nankerville, A. Webster, F. Evans and H. J. Parlett (l. to r. in our group), gained Britain a world relay record at the White City on September 26 with a time of mins. 30.6 secs. (which betters by 4 secs. the 4 x 880-yard time of California University), finishing four yards ahead of the Swedish team (time, 7 mins. 21.2 secs.). This was followed by a woman's triumph in the 4 x 220 yards, for Sylvia Chessman, Barbara Foster, Margaret Brian and Dorothy Hall finished in 1 min. 41.4 secs., two seconds better than the time set up a week before by Spartan Ladies A.C.



MISS MARJORIE VEARNCOMBE. The George Medal for Bravery has been awarded to Miss Marjorie Vearncombe, of Worlington, Devon, for going to the assistance of a neighbour, whose husband, in a fit of mental derangement, had attacked her. He was armed with a shotgun and in the struggle it went off, wounding Miss Vearncombe.



MARRIAGE OF AIR CHIEF-MARSHAL LORD DOWDING AND MRS. M. WHITTING. The marriage of Air Chief-Marshal Lord Dowding to Mrs. Muriel Whitting, of Southborough, near Tunbridge Wells, widow of Pilot Officer Maxwell Whitting, and daughter of the late Mr. John Albino, took place at Caxton Hall Register Office on Sept. 25. Lord Dowding, who joined the R.F.C. in 1914, served with distinction in the 1914-18 war, and then held many important posts in the R.A.F. He was Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Fighter Command, 1938-40; Principal Air A.D.C. to the King, 1937-43; and on special duty in the U.S.A., 1940-41. He retired in 1942.



SISTER DOREEN PEARCE.



SISTER JANET CLEMMENSEN.



SISTER RUTH BEWESETHERICK.



SISTER KATHLEEN NORMAN.

Eight nurses, seven of them from Westminster Hospital, formed the nursing staff for the King's operation. The four that have been sharing the nursing at the King's bedside after the operation are shown above. The day duty is shared by Sister Doreen Pearce and Sister Kathleen Norman. On night duty are

Sister Ruth Bewesetherick and Sister Janet Clemmensen. Sister Clemmensen is senior surgical ward sister at King Edward VII. Sanatorium, Midhurst. The four nurses who assisted at the operation were: Sister Vera Pease, Sister Sarah Minter, Staff Nurse Audrey Patterson and Staff Nurse Hilda Ross.

TO THE GLORIOUS MEMORY
OF OUR PATRON

1937-1952

THESE CARED FOR HIM IN HIS LAST ILLNESS

CLEMENT PRICE THOMAS
ROBERT MACHRAY
PETER KERLEY
CHARLES DREW
CYRIL SCURR
PETER JONES
WILLIAM JAYNE

JOSEPH HUMBLE
SARAH MINTER
VERA REAM
DOREEN PEARCE
RUTH BESWETHERICK
KATHLEEN NORMAN
AUDREY PATTERSON
ROSS

HILDA



Take home messages

- Price Thomas insisted that the case should be managed as much as feasible as “a routine case”
 - Usual assistants, anaesthetists, nursing team even the operating table.
 - He understood cardinal principle in clinical medicine
 - Deviation from normal procedures increases risk of errors.
- Don't Smoke

References

- Cyril Scurr Oral History
- Operations that made History Harold Ellis 1996
- The King's anaesthetic ID Conacher Journal of Medical Biography 2015