

in useful endeavours that were designed to improve and enhance the status of Dermatology. Without doubt he was one of the great contributors of all time.”

**PETER EDWARD DARRELL SHELDON WILKINSON (1919-2009). M.D. (Lond.), F.R.C.P. (Lond.), F.R.S.M. - One of the great doyens of British Dermatology.**

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Peter Edward Darrell Sheldon Wilkinson (1919-2009) [Epsom College 1933-1937] has been described as “one of the great doyens of British dermatology.” His father, Dr E. S. Wilkinson, was a surgeon commander in the RNVR and his mother a concert pianist. While at Epsom College his father died, and he was brought up largely by his grandparents. He was also greatly influenced by J.P. Walker, M.A., his housemaster and Latin teacher at Epsom College, and from his mother and housemaster he acquired a lifelong love of Greek and Roman history, classical music, poetry and culture. He did well at school, was made a prefect and won the Claude Calthrop Essay, Botany and Carr Divinity Prizes. Initially, he studied classics, but soon switched to science and he gained a scholarship to St Thomas’s Hospital, where he graduated M.B., B.S. in 1942.

Almost immediately after qualifying Darrell Wilkinson was called up for service in the RNVR and, from this he was recruited in Alexandria, Egypt, by the Special Operations Executive (S.O.E.). He was then parachuted one night into northern Greece. He spent most of his war years behind enemy lines in the Greek mountains and islands, setting up medical camps. After the war he specialised in Dermatology, training with the legendary Dr Geoffrey Dowling at St Thomas’s Hospital. In 1947 he was appointed Consultant Dermatologist at High Wycombe, Amersham and Stoke Mandeville, and from the start covered this large area single-handedly, seeing about 1,200 new patients annually. He was described in *Classics of Clinical Dermatology* (1950) as the leader of ‘a dukedom large enough.’ Over the course of the next few years he published much, including a ‘first,’ known as Sneddon-Wilkinson disease (1956), in recognition of his close cooperation with Dr Ian Sneddon of Sheffield. As his clinics grew, Darrell Wilkinson began to attract informal fellowships from abroad to staff them, and he recognised early the importance of using properly trained dermatological nurses to help staff these large clinics. At the height of his career he was asked to co-edit the *Textbook of Dermatology*, a monumental work that initially ran to two volumes, but by the fourth edition in 1986 had grown to four volumes. Many honours followed. He was invited to join the International Committee of Dermatology as the United Kingdom representative in 1977 and, for the next ten years travelled extensively as an ambassador for British dermatology. It was Darrell Wilkinson’s idea to establish an International Foundation of Dermatology, and this was formalised in 1987 at the World Congress of Dermatology in Berlin. In 1983 he was elected President of the British Association of Dermatology and, the following year, he presented the Prosser-White Oration which he entitled ‘*The dermatologist’s voyage.*’ This summed up Darrell Wilkinson’s philosophy of life, bringing out all his knowledge of the Greek classics and poetry. He was elected President of the Section of Dermatology, Royal Society of Medicine (R.S.M.) in 1981, and a Fellow of the R.S.M. in 1996. In 1986, he was awarded the British Association of Dermatology’s highest award, the Sir Archibald Gray Medal and, while visiting Sydney for the 19<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Dermatology (1997), he was presented with the International League of Dermatological Societies’ highest award – the newly created I.L.D.S. bronze medal. Darrell Wilkinson was made an honorary member of no less than 15 overseas dermatological societies, including the prestigious American Dermatologic Association. In his obituary it was written: “In his friendly inimitable way, Darrell was always innovative and managed to cajole us into engaging

