

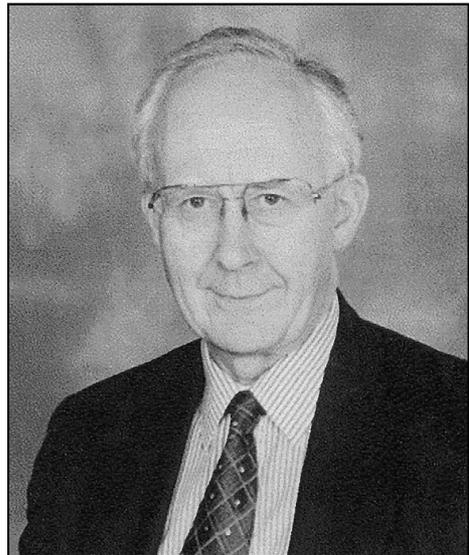
churchyard of St John's Church, Wotton, near Dorking, where he was to have preached on "The Place of Compassion in Modern Medicine," at the St Luke's Day service. He had just delivered the same sermon at the sister church in Holmbury St Mary. In his obituary it was written: "He combined excellence in science, and the craft of surgery, with actually practising the moral life. After studying under him, I wanted to be like him. He was a great role-model, not just for surgeons but for colleagues in all specialties."

PROFESSOR ALAN GODFREY JOHNSON (1938-2007). M.B., M.Ch. (Cantab.), D.Sc. (Sheffield), F.R.C.S. (Eng.) - Leading Gastrointestinal Surgeon and Medical Ethicist.

"He was a man who was very interested in what was right, professionally and personally. He was very concerned about the scientific and ethical basis of surgery."

The Lancet (2006).

Alan Godfrey Johnson (1938-2007) [Epsom College 1951-1956] was a surgeon who comported his life and clinical practice according to strong, practical, ethical principles. His father, Dr Douglas Johnson, of Cheam, Surrey, was the founder of the Christian Medical Fellowship, an organisation of which Alan was president at the time of his death. He studied medicine at Trinity College, Cambridge and University College Hospital, graduating M.B., B.Ch. in 1963. After the usual pre-registration posts, he moved to Charing Cross Hospital, where he remained for twelve years, holding the appointment of Senior Lecturer and Reader in Surgery. In 1979 he was appointed Professor of Surgery at Sheffield University.



Alan Johnson was primarily a gastrointestinal surgeon who pioneered new treatments for conditions of the oesophagus, stomach and biliary tract. In 1967, he performed the first randomised controlled trial of laparoscopic ('keyhole') versus small-incision gall-bladder surgery. He found that they were both equally good, and that both were superior to conventional big-incision surgery. The trial was heralded in *The Lancet* as a new gold-standard for surgical trials. "It was truly a landmark in surgical research," said Professor Sir James Underwood, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Sheffield University. Later, at the request of the Department of Health, in 1992, he performed the first trial that assessed the now-standard ultrasound treatment for gallstones.

Alan Johnson championed the wider introduction of surgery for obesity. His research on gastric motility included discovering the role of the hormone-like substance cholecystokinin, the role of the stomach 'pacemaker,' and the complexities of biliary reflux. He studied the function of the pylorus – the muscular ring at the junction of the stomach with the duodenum – in health and disease, and made the first recordings of gastroduodenal contractions.

Alan Johnson pioneered the teaching of medical ethics and, in 1998, chaired the working party that produced the first detailed guidance on ethics for surgeons. He wrote or edited no less than 10 textbooks, over 35 book chapters and almost 200 original papers. He wrote several major reports for the Department of Health, and was the author of *Aims and Motives in Clinical Medicine* (1975), *Techniques of Vagotomy* (1979), *Liver Disease and Gallstones – The Facts* (1987), and *Making Sense of Medical Ethics* (2007). He was a past President of the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland, and a member of the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons. He was appointed Hunterian Professor at the Royal College of Surgeons in 1988. From 1998 to 2002 he was Chairman of the Standing Medical Advisory Committee to the Secretary of State for Health. He was made an Honorary Fellow of the American Surgical Association and, in 2003 the University of Sheffield recognised his achievements by awarding him the honorary degree of doctor of science. He served on the editorial board of the *British Journal of Surgery*. Alan Johnson's surgical skills were allied to a strong interest in the science underlying his work. In 2007 he died of a heart attack in the