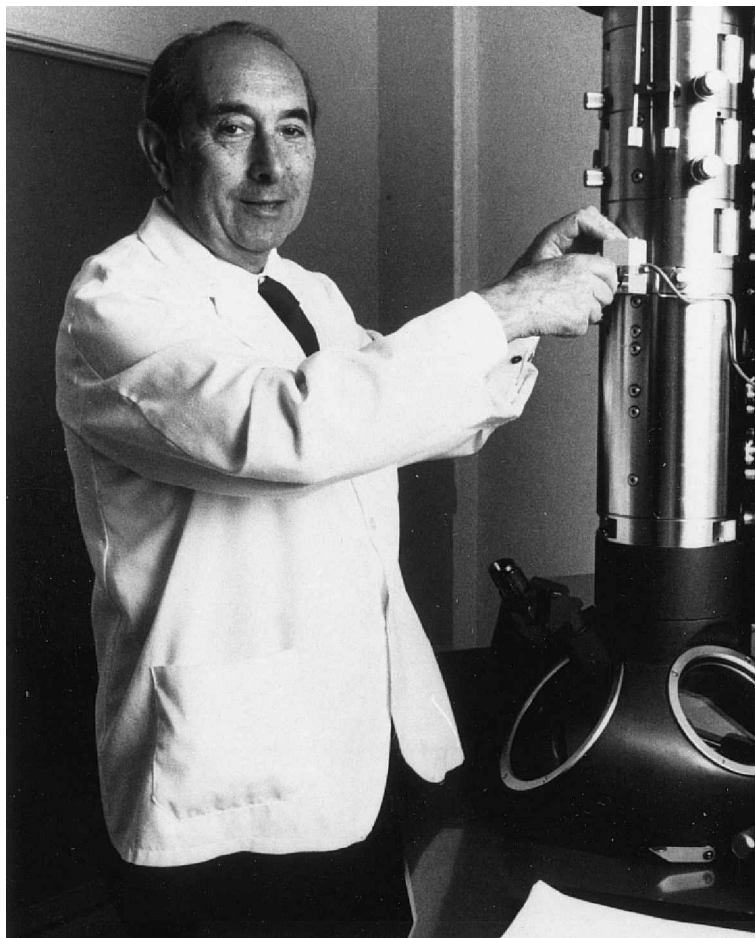


Obituary



IMRICH FRIEDMANN, M.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.Path., F.R.C.S. 1907–2002

Imrich Friedmann, Emeritus Professor of Pathology at the Institute of Laryngology and Otolology in the University of London, died suddenly just a few weeks ago after his 95th birthday on 11th July 2002.

Born in Spišská Nová Ves in what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire, he graduated MD at the Charles University of Prague in 1931 and, showing an early interest in pathology, he became Assistant Pathologist at Kosice State Hospital in the following year. Only four years later he was Pathologist in Chief at the Bat'a Hospital in Zlin.

Then, in 1939, he was to suffer the first of two major setbacks when Czechoslovakia was overtaken by Nazi oppression. With the help of an American Quaker mission he managed to escape to England and in 1940 he had the good fortune to be one of a limited number of Czech doctors to be chosen by a special Selection Board to enter a British medical school; and after two years at University College

Hospital in London he gained his basic English medical qualification. Soon afterwards he was appointed as Demonstrator and Turner Research Fellow in the Department of Pathology at the Hammersmith Hospital under Professor Dible.

Not long after he arrived in England he met his future wife Joan Drew and they were married in 1943. Sadly, they had soon to be separated when he was called up for military service in the Free Czech Army, but he was rejoined by Joan late in 1945, by which time he had become Head of the Department of Pathology at the State Hospital in the newly liberated Kosice.

This happy state of affairs was to last for only three years, and in 1948 Imrich suffered his second major reversal when the communist invasion of Czechoslovakia forced him once again to flee his native country and to return to England, where he spent the rest of his life.

An early appointment at the Institute of Laryngology and Otology in 1949 set him on the career which led him to occupy a unique position as the foremost authority in the highly specialized field of pathology of the ears, nose and throat. Initially as Assistant Pathologist at the Institute, he subsequently became Director of the department, first as Reader in 1952 and eleven years later, in 1963, as Professor.

In the same year he was one of the Founder-Fellows of the Royal College of Pathologists and in 1967 he gained the DSc in the University of London. After retiring in 1972 he became Emeritus Professor.

Imrich Friedmann's opinion was widely sought by clinicians and other pathologists and he made numerous contributions to the specialist literature, including no less than 200 papers, books and chapters in books. He also gave over 200 lectures to learned societies throughout the British Isles and mainland Europe, in the Middle East and Far East, in South Africa and in North, Central and South America. Amongst several prestigious eponymous lectures were the Semon Lecture (University of London) in 1970 and the McBride Lecture (University of Edinburgh) 10 years later.

Imrich received many prizes and awards, including the Harrison Prize in Otology of the Royal Society of Medicine in 1963 and Honorary Fellowship of that Society as recently as 1999. One of his most highly prized honours was the award in 1992 of the Gold Medal of the Slovakian Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Although he will perhaps be remembered mainly for his basic scientific and pathological studies of the ear, there was no part of his expanding field which failed to receive his critical attention, especially in malignant and other granulomatous lesions of the nose and in benign, pre-malignant and malignant lesions of the larynx.

For many years he was an active member of the Collegium Oto-Rhino-Laryngologicum Amicitiae Sacrum and shortly after his retirement from the

Institute he became visiting histopathologist at Northwick Park Hospital. He also held visiting professorships in Denver, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Jerusalem.

Only a few months before Imrich's death Wolfgang Arnold, Professor of Otorhinolaryngology in the University of Munich and for many years a close friend and collaborator, edited a Festschrift on the Occasion of the 95th Birthday of Imrich Friedmann; and in the last paper of that issue of the journal *ORL* Jan Betka, Professor of Otorhinolaryngology at the Charles University in Prague where Imrich himself had graduated, referred to him as 'the founding father of ENT pathology'.

In 1951 Imrich Friedmann became Adviser in Pathology to *The Journal of Laryngology and Otology* and, as in everything he did, he was meticulous in his advisory capacity. If he had any doubt about the quality of a photomicrograph or the validity of an author's interpretation of a pathological specimen, he would ask for the original block, which he would then have sectioned, stained and photographed in his own department, and quite often it was his own versions rather than the originals which appeared in the published articles. He continued to act as Emeritus Adviser until his last illness – a unique period of service to this journal for over 50 years.

A life-long lover of music, he played the violin in two medical orchestras: first, the Three Hospitals Orchestra under the conductorship of the late Norman Del Mar; later, the Hospitals Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Colin (now Sir Colin) Davis.

Throughout almost 60 years of marriage, he enjoyed the loving support of Joan – as wife, secretary, nurse, carer, and hostess to numerous visitors.

Imre was a gentle man; he was a lovable man; he was a great man.

JOHN BALLANTYNE

The *JLO* is pleased to reproduce the following papers by Imrich Friedmann which have been previously published in the Journal. 'The ultrastructure of cholesterol granuloma of the middle ear: an electron microscopic study', written jointly with Malcolm Graham (then at Ann Arbor) is a beautiful study of the ultrastructure of giant cells in cholesterol granuloma. Imrich Friedmann's second main interest was in granulomatous disease of the upper respiratory tract. This huge knowledge is fully demonstrated in the 2nd McBride Lecture given in Edinburgh in 1980.

EDITORS