



John Goligher 1922-1998

Colorectal and General Surgeon

John Goligher was born in Northern Ireland and trained in Edinburgh. He graduated in 1934 and worked in Edinburgh for a number of years.

At the start of the second world war he was working in London at a small hospital specialising in diseases of the rectum and the colon and this experience was to influence the future course of his career. In 1941 he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps as a surgical specialist. After the war he worked at St Mark's and St Mary's Hospitals and was appointed honorary assistant surgeon in 1947. At the formation of the NHS in 1948 he became a consultant surgeon.

In 1955 having established himself in London, he caused surprise by becoming Professor of Surgery and chairman of the University Department of Surgery at Leeds General Infirmary. He was held in such high regard that St Mark's made him a consulting, later emeritus, surgeon, a post he held for 43 years.

His focus was always to critically evaluate the outcomes of his clinical work and he pioneered the randomised controlled trial to investigate

many of the operations carried out in his department. An example of this were the trials carried out in Leeds and York to assess the various operations that were then used to treat patients with peptic ulcer with special reference to long term outcome. This condition is now normally treated with medicines. This work and other trials resulted in the production of many papers and contributions to surgical meetings and lectures in the UK and abroad. His textbook on colorectal surgery ran to several editions and reprints with translations in Spanish and Italian.

He served on the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England for 12 years, was President of the Royal Society of Medicine section of proctology, President of the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland and President of the British Society of Gastroenterology. He was also an honorary fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and the Brazilian College of Surgeons and received honorary doctorates from universities in Belfast, Göteborg, Uruguay and Leeds.

