

*Editorial...*

SIR ROBERT REYNOLDS  
MACINTOSH, 1897-1989

**- The First Professor of Anaesthesia in UK -**

Sir Robert Macintosh was the first holder of a full time University Chair of Anaesthesia in Britain. It is doubtful whether anyone has contributed so much to the basic principles underlying the safe practice of anesthesia.

Sir Robert Macintosh was nominated as the Chairman of the Nuffield Department of Anaesthesia in Oxford, founded in 1937. His theme of clinical and academic practice was based on the triad of science safety and simplicity. Those who came from every corner of the globe to study anesthesia in Oxford under the leadership of Sir Macintosh had learned the rational basic and essentially the practical approach to anesthesia which has characterized that Department from its earliest days. The love of Macintosh of clinical anesthesia and his drive for clear simple thinking, made learning opportunities under his Chairmanship both a delight and a privilege.

Sir Robert Macintosh was a quiet and very modest man, with a sparkling sense of humor, and was always supportive to the trainees and associates that worked in his Department. During his career, Macintosh published many books, and designed many equipments that had the greater impact on the practice of anesthesia. During our daily practice in the operating room, we must always remember Sir Robert Macintosh whenever we induce anesthesia, and use the Macintosh laryngoscopy blade for tracheal intubation.

Sir Robert Macintosh traveled all over the World to lecture and demonstrate anesthesia. We, in the Arab World, were honored when he accepted our invitation to visit Lebanon and Egypt. He traveled to our area in 1965 with his EMO (Epstein-Macintosh-Oxford) air-ether vaporizer and Oxford inflating bellows, when he demonstrated simple but safe anesthetic techniques based on the use of air-ether that could be used in any environment. During his visit to the American University of Beirut, Lebanon, aged 68 yrs, he enjoyed swimming in the Mediterranean sea and watching the fantastic Casino show. At the Casino gala dinner, Mrs. Fouad Salim Haddad was seated beside him, and she commented after dinner that it surprised her that the very modest man beside her was the great Sir Robert Macintosh.

At that time, I was a Faculty of the American University of Beirut, and was honored to escort Sir Robert Macintosh and share with him a cabin on a boat sailing from Beirut to Alexandria, Egypt (Fig. 1). Throughout this trip which lasted 24 hours, I was privileged to discuss with Sir Robert many subjects including the use of EMO air-ether vaporizer. However, I never thought at that time, that Lebanon, the Cedar land, which was considered Switzerland of the Middle East will be after 5 years the site of a tragic war that lasted 15 years, and that the EMO air-ether vaporizer of Macintosh will be our anesthetic apparatus during these tragic

events when we became short of oxygen and other anesthetic supplies (Fig. 2).

*Fig. 1*

*Dr. Anis Baraka and Sir Robert Macintosh*



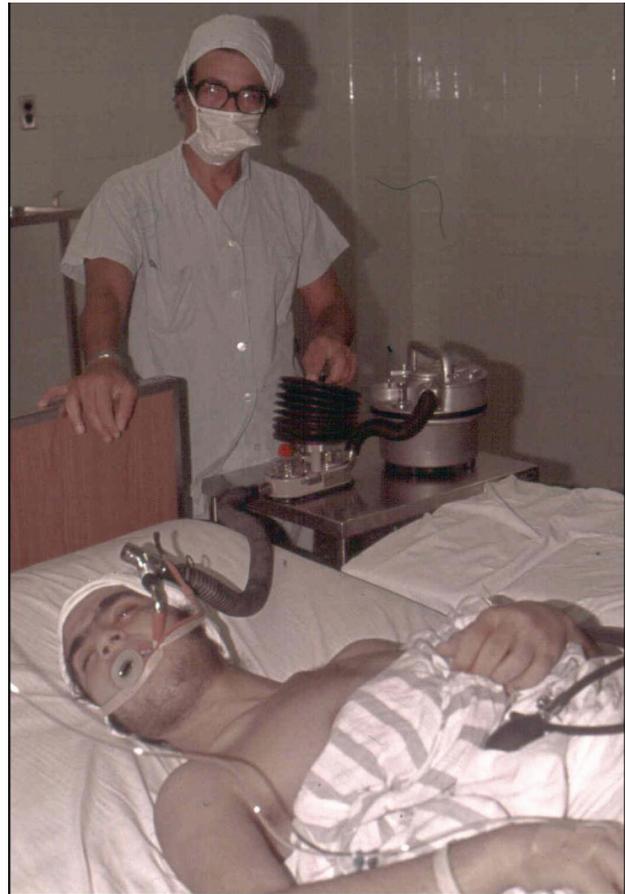
Sir Robert Macintosh died in Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August 1989, at the age of 91. We will never forget Sir Robert Macintosh, the symbol of modesty and the godfather of science, simplicity and safety of clinical anesthesia practice.

## References

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2. TM CROFT: The Resuscitation Greats. Professor Sir Robert Macintosh, 1897-1989. *Resuscitation*; 2002, 54:111-113.
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*Fig. 2*

*Dr. Anis Baraka using the EMO air-ether vaporizer for anesthesia during the tragic events in Lebanon*



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