Arnold Sorsby

Editor, *Journal of Medical Genetics*, 1962–1969

It was a great pleasure to be in close contact with Arnold Sorsby during the years when he was developing his particular interest in the genetics of variations and disorders in ophthalmology. Our collaboration began very soon after the end of World War II and continued for many years. I paid many visits, which I enjoyed very much, to the Royal Eye Hospital. I joined him in interviewing many patients and in sorting out their family histories. His explanations of genetic principles to students and postgraduates were admirable. I was greatly impressed by his rapidly growing mastery of the role of genetics in the causation of ophthalmological disorders. During these years he published a large number of papers of much genetic interest. Many of these will always be remembered and quoted as notable pioneer discoveries. He also prepared a book *Genetics in Ophthalmology*, which was published in 1953 and proved to be a very useful volume. A second edition appeared in 1973 under the amended title of *Ophthalmic Genetics*. Sorsby will always be rightly regarded as a founding father in this field.

During this same period he became increasingly interested in medical genetics as a whole. He edited a book *Clinical Genetics* which was published in 1953. His collaborators included many outstanding authorities. It was a valuable volume. A second edition was published in 1973.

J A FRASER ROBERTS

I first met Arnold Sorsby in 1962 after the editor of the *British Medical Journal* (then Hugh Clegg) had approached him with a view to starting a journal on medical genetics. He agreed to be its first editor and I joined him as technical editor. This was the beginning of a very happy working relationship which soon blossomed into friendship, a friendship that I valued increasingly over the years.

The journal flourished under his wise direction and after he retired as editor at the end of 1969 a Festschrift was planned for him. Workers from Holland, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, and France, from the UK and USA were all anxious to contribute to his Festschrift which appeared in 1970.

Arnold Sorsby was a warm and gentle man, unfailingly courteous; his manner to me, to the editorial staff, to his medical colleagues, and to the messengers who ferried the urgent proofs to the Royal Eye Hospital and back to the BMA was always human and totally lacking in pomposity. We in this office have lively memories of a jolly, cuddly man who cared about ordinary people and not about position or rank. I saw him just 10 days before his last admission to hospital and though he was very ill he still had time to joke and tease. I shall always remember him as a good friend.

RITA CARNE