

## **Portsmouth.**

The history of renal medicine in Portsmouth is unique in that dialysis for acute renal failure was practised there when it had been virtually abandoned at the Hammersmith Hospital in favour of the Bull/Borst dietary and electrolytic regimen. J.S. Cameron has described this in his History of the Treatment of Renal Failure (Oxford University Press 2002):-

*“Thus, from 1948 to 1956. no more dialyses were done in the United Kingdom, except for 19 patients treated in Portsmouth. In 1947 -1948, using a development of the Kolff kidney, self-constructed by a local garage for the physician-pathologist E. Michael Darmady (1906 - 1989). Darmady placed his machine in a van and went from hospital to hospital dialysing patients on site. Only two of the 19 survived, however, and a change to full-time pathology put an end to his project. Darmady also designed in 1948, a much more advanced type of artificial kidney involving a flat plate design, but using tubing for the dialysis, and had a flame photometer built to his own specification in 1948 (!). Darmady, although little known today, became internationally known during the 1950s because of his work using the nephron microdissection method of Jean Oliver, and later for morphological studies on the kidney in old age.”*

Dr.Warren appointed as specialist in renal medicina, but his term in this position lasted only a short time.Maintenance dialysis was established in the mid 1960’s.

**Dr.A.Polac takes up the story:-**

I was appointed as a general physician in Portsmouth in 1963 with several sessions set aside to set up a renal service for the Wessex Region. The Region extended Westward all the way to Lyme Regis, and of course it included Southampton. The

surprising choice of such a (literally) eccentric base as Portsmouth, when there was not at that time an East-West motorway, was mainly due to the presence there of Michael Darmady and of the only specialist urology department (under W.Wiggins-Davies) in the Region. Harry Lee joined me, and John Vinnicombe joined Wiggins, in 1965/1966.

Meanwhile the Southampton University Medical School was being set up, and the first students came in about 1969. Michael and I were both appointed Clinical Professors in 1969 and full professors in 1971. John, Harry and our microbiologist Rosalind Maskell also joined the teaching staff. We set up renal outpatient clinics in several centres, including Southampton, in the 1970's, and Harry pioneered the establishment of satellite dialysis units throughout the Region. Now, of course, there are numerous renal and dialysis specialists throughout what used to be the Wessex Region, and numerous urologists too, but I think renal transplantation is still based in Portsmouth.

Harry Lee, whose contribution to all this was huge, was given a personal chair by the University in the 1970's

John Vinnicombe and G.Forbes Agercromie, Urological Surgeons:\_

Forbes Abercrombie was appointed as consultant Urological Surgeon in 1967. Mick Bewick was invited to perform the first renal transplant, after which the two urological surgeons performed the next dozen or so operations. Taffy Slapak was then appointed as renal transplantation surgeon.