

Obituary

David Francis Clyde, 1925–2002

David Frances Clyde died on 12 November 2002 after a long fight against pancreatic cancer. His life and career spanned three continents and nearly 60 years of dedicated work. He was born in India in 1925, and no doubt inherited his interest in malaria from his father who served in the Indian Medical Services. He was educated first in England, then in the USA before graduating in medicine from McGill University in Canada in 1948. Following his internship in 1949, he married and then joined the British Colonial Medical Service to be stationed in Tanganyika (now United Republic of Tanzania). He served as clinician, malariologist, senior epidemiologist and finally as Deputy Surgeon General in post-independent United Republic of Tanzania. During this period he gained a PhD from the University of London (1963) for his research on malaria.

In 1966, David Clyde left Africa joining the University of Maryland School of Medicine where he pursued his work on therapies and the prevention of malaria. He remained there until 1975; he felt that his best work was done during this period and he retained a deep affection for the University of Maryland. In 1975 he became Director of the Department of Tropical Medicine in Louisiana State University, and in 1979 he joined WHO as Senior Public Health Adviser to the South-East Asia region and Regional Malaria Adviser. As a WHO staff member, David Clyde was a major player in the regional programme of monitoring drug resistance, promoting rational use of antimalarials for the reduction of mortality, and the *Plasmodium falciparum* containment programme in India.

He retired from WHO in 1985 and returned to the USA to become Director of the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health and, until 1992, chief of malaria studies in the Center for Vaccine Development at the University of Maryland.

Among his many achievements were his pioneering studies in malaria

immunology and his key role in establishing that man could be protected against malaria through the bite of irradiated infected mosquitoes, which is still the essential “proof of principle” that successful malaria vaccination is possible.

David Clyde was a person of numerous interests, including the history of medical services, which he studied while in Tanganyika, collecting early German administration reports and later ones from British administrators. These materials were compiled into *A history of the medical services of Tanganyika*, which contains a wealth of information and anecdotes about Robert Koch, Giemsa and others.

It was in the United Republic of Tanzania that Clyde observed and experienced the ravages of malaria, and became convinced that a vaccine would be a key to controlling the disease. His research and commitment to malaria was recognized worldwide, and the many awards he received included the Darling Medal from WHO, the Manson Medal from the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, and the Le Prince Medal of the American Society of Tropical Medicine. In 2002 the David Clyde Research Laboratory was dedicated at the Maryland Center for Vaccine Development.

Clyde was also a great teacher, and it was at Johns Hopkins that that side of his character really blossomed. His encyclopaedic knowledge based on years of hard and varied experience from East Africa gave him a breadth of understanding which was greatly appreciated by his students. His classes would extend well past the closing time as students probed him to tell about his encounters with poisonous snakes, wild animals, and life in the bushveld. His lectures contained anecdotes which enlivened them in highly memorable ways. His work in science and his meticulous attention to detail was put to good effect as a historian. As well as countless research papers, he wrote several fascinating books on the medical services of Tanganyika, Dominica and Grenada.

He accomplished so much in his lifetime, but was also a dedicated husband and father to two daughters, and devoted much time and love to his granddaughter Sarah. David Clyde cast a long shadow, and he will be sorely missed by all who were touched by it. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen, and daughters, Frances and Victoria. ■

Compiled from contributions from:

Clive Shiff, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, 615 Wolfe St, Baltimore, MD 21205, USA,

**Louis Molyneux, Peter Trigg,
& Anatoli Kondrachine**