Walter Somerville, Editor of the British Heart Journal, 1973-1980

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Though Walter Somerville's term of office as editor has ended, his influence will remain fresh not only because of his continued and vigorous participation in cardiological matters, but also because of the very progressive influence that he has exerted. Following in the footsteps of his much respected predecessors, his particular distinction has been to widen the international influence of the journal, while maintaining the highest standards of scientific merit with clarity of expression. Thoroughly aware of developments, he has a unique ability to spot trends, and likewise to spot changes of interest and perhaps fashion in the subject. Referees will of course have been aware of this; his letters requesting an opinion consistently identified the main strength or weakness of a paper and put specific queries that needed answer, and that at once disclosed his appreciation of the key issues.

His associates have learnt something from him at each encounter and, as he comes to the end of his term of office, in full physical and mental vigour, are happy to know that he remains active in cardiology, doubtless ready gently to draw attention to any infelicities or inadequacies that might appear in the journal which he has done so much to further.

The contents of this issue are a tribute to Walter Somerville as editor. Not only do several of his colleagues, British, Continental, and American, speak of their particular association with him, but there is also a depiction of the city where he was born and grew up, at the time in question. The scientific articles are also a tribute, though in a variety of ways. The authors and subjects reflect a mixture of those who have worked with him and of subjects in which he has had a personal interest as expressed in his editorial work or at meetings of the British Cardiac Society. The breadth of the topics and the quality of their contents are meant to show how strongly he has influenced, and continues to improve, British cardiology.

Editors of the British Heart Journal:
Maurice Campbell and D Evan Bedford, Vols 1–9, 1939–1947
Maurice Campbell, Vols 10–20, 1948–1958
Dennis Krikler, Vol 45–, 1981–.