

Everyone realizes the great task of the teacher, none so well as the teacher himself. So too, should everyone realize the countless rewards that follow. Perhaps the greatest is the realization that a teacher is a most forceful agent in society, who, when conscientiously striving to live up to the aims and the ideals of his profession, assists, in a special way, his fellow men to greater perfection both here and in the hereafter.

—DANNY O'HANLEY '62

'TIL THE END OF TIME

On a dull, rainy evening some two weeks ago, I was sitting relaxed in my apartment, thinking about nothing in particular and thumbing rather absent mindedly through a popular weekly news magazine, when my eyes was caught by the uncommon yet familiar name of MacLingley. The two short succinct sentences on Mrs. John T. MacLingley said everything that there was to be said; and yet they said nothing at all when I thought of the thousands of words that could be written about her and her husband, Dr. John T. MacLingley.

Behind that name, perhaps, I should say behind his name, there was an amazing story, filled with years of painstaking work, innumerable setbacks and a final great victory. A victory made possible to no small extent by a great affection shared between two wonderful and really very ordinary people.

Those two sentences, written so impersonally in the magazine, spelled out for me, though whether my guess was right or wrong I shall never attempt to find out, the close of a final chapter for two people and not just one.

It was ten years ago this July that I met for the first time Doctor and Mrs. MacLingley. During three weeks of that summer now so seemingly far in the past I got a chance to skim very briefly through a life story that was soon to become almost like a fairy tale to millions of people in every corner of the world. It was ten years ago that the first major breakthrough was made in the search for a cure for cancer. And it was made by a research team headed by Dr. MacLingley at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

It's strange the part that fate or coincidence, call it what you will, sometimes plays in a person's life. During that summer ten years back, I was on the staff of a magazine weekly in Montreal and on the thirtieth of June was endeavouring to pass as quickly as possible the eight hours of my last working day, before flying up to Scotland to conduct a personal interview with Dr. MacLingley. Besides the three weeks I would spend in Scotland, there were two other interviews I had to make, one in France and another in Italy. These would keep me on the continent another five weeks.

The thirtieth was one eight hour day I knew would last longer than my eight weeks abroad. Each dragging minute was snapped out by an electric clock on the office wall: A metallic snap, a period of interminable silence from the clock and another snap. One minute. One of a seemingly infinite 480. Now and again though, vivid technicolour pictures of Scotland flashed through my mind and swept me from the dull world of the newspaper office, with its staccato sound of innumerable type-writers, to a rugged, yet peaceful Scotland: Rugged hills a solid green, scattered with patches of purple heather; winding glens still filled with a shroud like, white mist; silent lochs, shimmering grey-green in the sunlight and babbling sometimes noisily rushing streams, torn by a protruding rock bed and followed by a winding road.

After leaving Glasgow, my small green and rented M.G. laboured up hills and down them; it followed winding roads through glens where trees lifted past the early morning's silvered mist like grass in the melt of spring; and in Dunbarton it clung to Loch Lomond's shore as a caterpillar does to a swaying leaf. Loch Lomond stretching ahead almost limitlessly, green and peaceful with not a ripple on its serene surface. I stopped there for a minute and gazed and listened. There was no movement, no sound. Or was there? Barely catching the eye, a stirring of leaves in a century old oak. The whisper of a myriad of insects, just on the threshold of sound. Almost motionless almost soundless, a scene of peace that drugged the body to give a feeling so rarely felt you hated to break its spell.

The home of the MacLingleys was at Glen Weir at the head of Loch Fyne. It was a cottage of one story, longer than it was wide, built of stone and with a roof of grey slate; a roof that in the past had to have been thatched and overhanging.

Dr. MacLingley struck me as being such an ordinary man that even then, I found it hard to describe him. He was average in height, five ten or eleven, maybe, and of medium build, not weighing more than 170 pounds. Light brown hair, curly and close cropped and blue grey eyes. A face not sharp and not full. A voice with a light Scotch accent, and a smile quick, sincere and disarming. Very ordinary outwardly and very relaxed in manner.

Even before I met her I knew what his wife would be like—his scaled down counterpart. She had warm brown hair, darker than his; eyes wider and bluer, a gay smile, a quiet laugh and a quiet voice. They had no family, but they were happy as I've known few to be. There was a oneness about them that even now, as I think back I could not picture, ever, one without the other.

At dusk, in the "purple light" of Scotland's gloaming I can still see them, two silhouettes walking hand in hand, the flaming brilliance of the sun just beneath the horizon, ahead of them; and behind, the deep purple curtain of evening, merging into another horizon's

dark of night. Whether a peaceful walk at twilight, a laughter filled conversation at dinner, the relative silence of an hour in the garden, both intently pruning a rose bush or grovelling on hand and knee to weed a flower bed, they were always together. Yet they both went out to a stranger sincerely, without affection, or resentment for the intrusion. A stranger never felt on the outside looking in. An hour with them and you were part of them, just as if you'd always been an old and well worn friend.

I'd been there for about a week before I actually started to get anything concrete, that could be put in an article. His life up until he was nineteen was filled with no outstanding events. His family background was not unusual and he had not entered the field of Medicine with any great, overwhelming desire to "relieve the suffering of humanity or make the world a better place to live in."

"There was a little romantic appeal in it," he said, "but that was not my prime reason for deciding to study medicine. In fact, thinking about it, I can't give any outstanding reason for deciding on medicine rather than law or anything else. My father had two friends who were outstanding surgeons, one in London the other in Edinburgh. I admired both of these men a great deal, but I can't say honestly that they influenced me in any way.

"I found though, that in College, before entering Med. School, Biology was a course that particularly interested me. In fact, if there was anything that got me interested in Medicine, I would say that a curiosity in "the mechanics of life", stirred by a couple of early Biology courses, would be it. Medicine, becoming a doctor at the time, seemed the best way to follow the interest up."

Later I asked him another question, still searching for something that would give his personality that dramatic flare, so well loved by the general reading public of North America. I still needed a "headline".

"After you got your M.D.," I asked, "what made you go into research work, especially research in Cancer?"

I had hoped with this question that I would find what I was looking for. Perhaps somebody very close to him, had been stricken by the insidious killer, and it had been this that had inspired him to devote his talents to the cancer research field. But no.

"I practised medicine for two years," he answered slowly, "then went back to the University of Edinburgh to take a general refresher course. During this particular course we did quite a bit of new work in Bio-chemistry, you know hormones and viruses, enzymes and what not. I became quite engrossed in the work and that early interest in "the mechanics of life" was again stirred aflame, only now it was brought closer to the basis of all life, the cell.

"D.N.A., you've probably heard of it, deoxyribonucleic acid in full. Its a giant, highly complex molecule found in the chromosomes of all cells, it had been analyzed in many of its varied forms about one year before I decided to go into research work completely. When I did make the shift it was this and a couple of allied viruses, that intrigued me more than anything else so, that's how it actually began.

"Even before this time" he continued "it was generally agreed that cancer was caused by viruses, and really D.N.A. is only a virus stripped of a few protein molecules. It was already known, when we started work, that D.N.A., in one form or another, governed the cells' vital activities from the nuclei. There remained but two things to do, find out how and which D.N.A. or virus made the cells run amuck by causing them to reproduce too fast and too often, resulting in cancer. Then find how a chemical change could be made in the offending D.N.A. or virus, so that its controlling powers would again return the afflicted cells to normal life. We were lucky enough to hit the right thing first, and that was it. A little curiosity to start off, an excellent group to work with, a great deal of luck and there we were.

"There was no great force driving me, at least not in the romantic sense of a fight against a killer who has struck down some one very close. No conscious thought of ridding humanity of a disease that strikes nearly two hundred people of every 100,000. Although my wife did spur me a little, I guess she realized far more than I did, what it would mean if our group came through with what we were generally heading for. I think now that she influenced me far more than I realized at the time.

"Anyway," he finished up, "you can't make anything dramatic about that."

But now ten years had passed. I looked again at the news-magazine and read once more those two brief, impersonal sentences:

"Died. Maureen MacLingley, wife of Dr. John T. MacLingley, outstanding Bio-chemist, whose research work in the field of cancer led to the development of a practical serum for use against that disease; of a cancerous brain tumour; in Elinburgh, Scotland."

There was a bitter irony there. If the story was written now, there would be that flare of drama I had looked for and a fickle reading public might remember a little longer a great man and his wife.

—A. T. S. '59

The world's tallest building is the Empire State building in New York City. (1,248 ft.)