

## PROFESSOR WILLIAM W MUSHIN

Dr Peter Lloyd Jones

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Gwesty'r Emlyn Hotel, Newcastle Emlyn

William Wolff Mushin was born in 1910 in Whitechapel, London and educated locally at the *Davenant Foundation School*, a Christian Ecumenical Secondary School, before going on to study medicine at the *The London Hospital Medical School*, Whitechapel. He graduated, with distinction, in 1933 - the year in which *The Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland* was inaugurated.

He passed the *Diploma in Anaesthetics (DA)* shortly after it was introduced in 1934. He joined the Eastman Dental Clinic (later 'Hospital'), specialising in providing anaesthesia for complex chair dental procedures, using only nitrous oxide, augmented by ether, without the addition of oxygen or air. Muscle relaxants were not available at that time so tracheal intubation had to be undertaken using topical anaesthesia and ether - a hazardous procedure requiring great skill. Mushin joined a group of itinerant anaesthetists calling themselves the *Mayfair Gas Company*, which was led by Robert Macintosh, (later Professor Sir Robert Macintosh). When the latter was appointed to the first Chair of Anaesthetics in the Nuffield Department of Anaesthetics at the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, he chose Mushin to be his *First Assistant (1943)*. With Mushin's help, Macintosh established a formal programme of training for anaesthetists along the lines of those pioneered by R M Waters in Madison, Wisconsin, USA. During this time, The pair collaborated in authoring *Physics for the Anaesthetist*, first published by Blackwell Scientific in 1946.

Meanwhile, in Cardiff, the coroner had, in 1938, expressed concern about the high incidence of anaesthetics related deaths at the Cardiff Royal Infirmary and had demanded that a radical improvement was necessary. The outcome was the establishment of a Department of Anaesthetics, based at the CRI, with a Director and facilities for teaching and regulation of the service. The war intervened but in 1947, William Mushin was appointed to the post of Director. He immediately wrote a report to the Provost of the Medical School and the Governors of the CRI, laying out the facilities that would be required for the provision of the service. It included teaching, management and research facilities and the supervision and direction of trainees throughout the Cardiff area. The recommendations were comprehensively adopted. In 1948, the *Faculty of Anaesthetists of the Royal College of Surgeons* was established and the Fellowship qualification (FFARCS) was immediately introduced. Under Mushin's strict supervision and tutelage, The Department rapidly grew, recruiting trainees from all corners of the world. He developed a Museum of anaesthetic equipment for training purposes and ensured that all clinical equipment was collated, regularly maintained and tested. He wrote, edited or directed the production of a number of textbooks and regularly visited centres abroad, lecturing and teaching.

By 1952, he became *Professor of Anaesthetics in the Welsh National School of Medicine*, retaining and extending the scope of his department.

Ever conscious of the need for scientific principles to be observed, he appointed William Mapleson, PhD as scientific officer. A personal chair was soon forthcoming and Professor Mapleson remained within the Department, developing an international reputation.

In 1971, Professor Mushin was awarded a CBE, and received many other awards and accolades. Simply stated, he had become, the 'world's most famous anaesthetist'. Together with numerous department colleagues, particularly Professors Bill Mapleson and Mike Rosen, he had established and sustained a Department that was the envy of the world.

In 1975, aged 65, Professor Mushin retired, continuing with his writing, from home, supported by his wife Betty and their family. He died on the 22nd January 1993.