

From his experiences as a research student, John Pappenheimer retained a deep affection for this country and particularly for Cambridge and for The Physiological Society. He greatly valued his Honorary membership of The Society and took a continuing interest in The Society's development. Apart from numerous brief visits and the occasional holiday in the UK he spent the academic year 1971/72 as a visiting fellow at Churchill College Cambridge and 1975/76 as George Eastmann Visiting Professor at Oxford. An internationalist, he was critical of the inward looking attitudes of some of his American colleagues and devoted much time to the IUPS, serving for 9 years on its Council.

I first met him nearly 40 years ago and, while initially being in awe of his legendary reputation, was delighted by his friendliness and encouragement, particularly as I soon saw how devastatingly critical he could be in discussions at scientific meetings. As I came to know him informally, casual conversations revealed his astonishing breadth of knowledge of English and American literature, of world history and current affairs, quite apart from music, which was probably equal to science in his priorities. It was immensely stimulating to talk to him and even when he was in his late 80s he was full of challenging questions and gentle humour. It was a great privilege to have known him and worked with him for undoubtedly he was one of the greatest physiologists of the 20th century and a very remarkable and delightful person.

The Society also notes with regret the deaths of Margaret Stanier and Peter Lewis.

Margaret became a Society Member in 1964. Based at Babraham, she was a Fellow of Newnham College, Cambridge where she was well known to many medical students.

Peter, a pioneer in the cholinesterase field, became a Member in 1954.

John Ramsey Bronk

1929–2007



Ramsey Bronk, first Professor of Biochemistry at the University of York, died at the age of 78 in Oxford.

Ramsey grew up in Pennsylvania and was exposed to the company of scientists at an early age. His father, Detlev Bronk, was President of the then Rockefeller Institute (now Rockefeller University) and later of the US National Academy of Sciences. After graduation from Princeton University, Ramsey came as a Rhodes Scholar to Oxford in 1952. There he studied for his doctoral degree in the laboratory of the great intestinal physiologists Fisher and Parsons, where he met his wife Sylvia. They returned to Washington in 1956, where they both worked in the National Institutes of Health. Two years later, Ramsey was appointed as Associate Professor of Zoology at Columbia University, where he became full Professor shortly before coming to York. Ramsey was appointed as Professor of Biochemistry by York's first Vice-Chancellor, Lord James, to the Department of Biology headed by Mark Williamson; Ramsey arrived in October 1966 and remained until his retirement in 1997.

Ramsey was instrumental in setting up and developing the very successful biochemistry degree course run jointly by the Departments of Biology and Chemistry. He oversaw the provision of equipment needs essential to the successful launch of biochemistry teaching and research at the University. Many staff had cause to be grateful to Ramsey for he was very supportive of staff at all levels. In particular, Ramsey took a special interest in the technical staff and matters affecting their welfare

and career development long before the more formal systems of today. He also played a key role in setting up cancer research in the Biology Department with laboratories funded by Yorkshire Cancer Research.

Ramsey had a deep understanding of metabolism, which formed a large part of his teaching. He wrote two major successful textbooks; one, *Chemical biology*, which reflected the nature of the York degree course, and the other, *Human metabolism*, which I subsequently used as a textbook for the course we had taught in together. His tutorials, in particular, were very much appreciated by the students. In research, Ramsey was one of the first to appreciate the importance of mitochondria and he produced ground-breaking papers on the regulation of oxidative phosphorylation by thyroid hormones. Subsequently he worked extensively on metabolic aspects of chemotherapeutic drug delivery by peptide transport across the small intestine. His long-standing collaboration with Richard Boyd (Oxford) and Pat Bailey (Keele) contributed strong evidence for the now accepted view that peptide transport is proton-dependent, as opposed to the sodium-dependent transport of many other nutrients. Their work also contributed much to the structural understanding of the delivery of peptide-linked drugs. Always happy to suggest new ideas, Ramsey transformed me in mid-career from a structural biologist to an intestinal physiologist simply by asking me, in the course of one of our many chats, if I would supervise a final year undergraduate project on intestine.

Brought up in America, but a lover of all things English, Ramsey became essentially a mid-Atlantic figure and was also a strong supporter of European Science. He was a founding member of, and regular contributor to, the European Intestinal Transport Group and Chairman of the European Editorial Committee of *Physiological Reviews*, as well as a Distributing Editor for *The Journal of Physiology*.

Ramsey was an expert yachtsman, an accomplished carpenter and an able cook. A great family man, he leaves behind his wife of 52 years, Sylvia, their sons, Richard and Christopher, who are both in academic life, and four grandchildren, Justin, Philip, Edmund and Eleanor.

George Kellett