

## CITATION

### **HENRY VERNON CROCK, AO MS MD FRCS FRACS FRCS Ed (Hon)**

Henry Crock was born in Perth, Western Australia, and with his identical twin Gerard entered the newly established Faculty of Dental Science in 1947. Having gained equal first place in the second year of the course, they both transferred to the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Melbourne, where they became prosectors in anatomy in the third year of the course, an honour granted to the top students.

On graduation in 1953, Henry Crock began his training at St Vincent's Hospital and performed further anatomical studies before obtaining his FRCS in London. Having obtained a Nuffield Dominions' Clinical Assistantship, he undertook his postgraduate orthopaedic training in Oxford. While in his post of Lecturer in Orthopaedics in the University of Oxford, he developed an interest in the blood supply of bones, publishing his first paper on the arterial supply and venous drainage of the vertebral column of the dog in the *Journal of Anatomy* in 1960.

On returning to Australia in 1961, he took up the post of Senior Orthopaedic Surgeon at St Vincent's Hospital, where, over 25 years, he helped to build up an orthopaedic unit with an international reputation in the field of spinal surgery which had become Henry Crock's special interest. In 1970, he published a paper in the *Medical Journal of Australia* entitled "A Reappraisal of Intervertebral Disc Lesions" which led to a radical change in the surgical management of intervertebral disc lesions. Thirty-five years later it has been cited in *The Spine Journal* of the North American Spine Society as a seminal paper on spinal surgery in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

During his time at St Vincent's Hospital, Henry Crock gained both the MD and MS from the University of Melbourne, and in 1978, he was appointed Professorial Associate in the Department of Surgery at St Vincent's Hospital. In 1985, he retired from St Vincent's Hospital to take up the post of Honorary Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Orthopaedics at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, Hammersmith Hospital, London and Visiting Lecturer and Arnott Demonstrator in the Department of Anatomy, Royal College of Surgeons of England. He was made Director of the Spinal Disorders Unit at the Cromwell Hospital, London, where he practised until his retirement.

In both Australia and the United Kingdom, he was responsible for the training in spinal surgery of many surgical graduates from Japan, Singapore, India, Indonesia, USA and Canada, most of whom assisted with clinical research projects and anatomical studies. Henry Crock had developed special injection and photographic techniques to identify and illustrate the blood supply to human bones and to the spinal cord which led to the publication of many papers and six books. The last "An Atlas of Vascular Anatomy of the Skeleton and Spinal Cord" won the British Medical Association prize for Basic Science and Clinical Medicine in 1996.

Throughout his career, Henry Crock developed an international reputation as a spinal surgeon and lecturer, and was given many awards and prizes. In 1984, he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for services to orthopaedics. In 1985, he was the first Australian to be elected President of the International Society for the Study of the Lumbar Spine and he was recently granted Honorary Membership of the Spine Society of Australia, of which he had been President when it was known as the Facet Club. He was awarded the LO Betts Medal by the Australian Orthopaedic Association, the Sir Alan Newton Prize by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and the Wood Jones Medal by the College of Surgeons of England. In 1990, he was elected Corresponding Fellow of the Japanese Orthopaedic Association. In 1997, he was made an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh.