DOKITA

1960-2010: A SHORT HISTORY OF EARLY YEARS

(previously published in the 50th Anniversary Edition)

THE BIRTH

First, there was the Association of Medical Students (AMS) magazine, (Editor from 1957, Moses Ilo). The magazine served Yaba College students, Kano medical school students, the University College London (Ibadan Pre-Clinical students).

Then, there was the "Hamattan" magazine. The Editor in the year 1957 was Dr. Ralph Hendrickse [consultant physician (Haematology)]. The magazine served the University College Hospital (clinical site of the University College London in Ibadan).

In June 1959, Moses Ilo and Dr. Hendrickse discussed and agreed that the merger of the two magazines would better and more appropriately serve the interest of the medical community, which at the time meant Nigeria. It should be noted that the only medical school in existence in Nigeria was in Ibadan and the only medical journal in West Africa was the West Africa Medical Journal (WAMJ). The journal born of the merger would:

- Be based at the UCH, Ibadan

- Be more clinical and scientific in orientation.

- Be run by the clinical students with overview, direction, and intellectual and academic support of a clinician (consultant) of choice by the board of students. Dr. Ralph Hendrickse was an immediate volunteer to serve.

This was immediately discussed by me with David Olatunbosun, followed by our approaches to agreeable student colleagues. Most of these students and a few others were, at the meeting of the clinical students, voted into what became the board that formally requested Dr. Hendrickse to chair it. A meeting of this team (board) then met at the dining room of the clinical students' hostel.

A name was needed for the journal. The very open and free-minded but enjoyable discussion ended when David Olatunbosun collated all local names for doctors and healers and said, "What about DOKITA?" I remember shouting, "What about that, chief!" (My fond name for David). "That's it!" "Yes!" everyone said in unison. "DOKITA" was born! Its conception was easy and not celebrated, ante-natal fluctuated but uneventful, birth followed, attended by all and sundry but perinatal and teething problems. Management of these needed all efforts and made us realize that children who "must survive must survive" and come from parents that give what it takes without complaints nor seek for adulation. DOKITA survived and was presented first to Nigerians on October 1, 1960 and then a week later spread to nearly all English-speaking medical clinical schools around the world.

The special feature (any others notwithstanding) was the listing of the first 13 medical doctors who graduated with the University (London) degrees from a University in Nigeria - Ibadan.

This synopsis wishes to acknowledge the contribution of well-wishers and the encouragement of all beyond mention. Among others, I recognize the encouragement from outside our immediate academic circles, (as he then was) of Sir James Robertson, the then Governor-General of Nigeria, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe (President-elect, non-executive), Mr. A. K. Blankson (Chief Editor, West African Pilot), Sir Francis Ibiam, Sir Kofo Abayomi, Sir Samuel Manuwa, and Dr. Okechukwu Ikejiani. Care and guidance of Dr. Ralph Hendrickse can never be overstated.

Finally, on this subject, many thanks and gratitude must be given to all who contributed articles (especially the clinical students) and the financial contributors notable amongst which (permit my mention) Dr. and Mrs. Olikoye Ransome-Kuti, as well as the advertisers in the journal. The interest, good reception, and unmitigated goodwill which followed this first edition gave impetus and high motivation for the production of the second edition.

The last encouragement I received in November 1962 (long after I had forgotten the problems we went through) was the annotation in the Lancet Editorial Column which read: "From Africa: always something new".

I therefore urge you to please continue the story of DOKITA.

Dr. Moses Ilo
Founder and Editor,
DOKITA, *1960*