



Arch. Bas. App. Med. 8 (2020) 1  
www.archivesbamui.com

Editorial

## Dinah Mary James, OBE: Tribute to an Amazon of Pharmacology

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**Professor Dinah Mary James, OBE**  
25 March 1919 - 09 February 2020

She came, she saw and not only did she conquer, she left an enduring legacy in Nigeria, the country she lived for twenty years from 1958 when she arrived. Professor Dinah Mary James, OBE, (fondly called *Iya Pharmacology* or *mother of Pharmacology*) spent her entire productive years for research and training in Pharmacology at the Nigeria's first Medical School, University of Ibadan where she rose to become the first Professor of Pharmacology in 1965.

Professor Dinah Mary James was appointed Senior Lecturer in the Department of Pharmacology in Ibadan in 1958 and was the first Academic staff to be appointed directly in the fledging Department which had been part of Department of Physiology until 1952. She retired from the University in 1978 and returned to the United Kingdom. In 1980, Professor Dinah James was conferred with the prestigious OBE by her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II for services to medicine and research.

Born on Tuesday, the 25<sup>th</sup> March 1919 at Bury Port, Carmarthenshire in Wales, Dinah Mary James attended Aberaeron County Grammar School, Cardiganshire, the University of Wales at Cardiff, followed by the Welsh National School of Medicine (later named University of Wales School of Medicine) where she graduated with a B. Pharm degree in 1942. She also obtained the M. Pharm and PhD degrees in 1948 and 1954 respectively. Prior to her appointment in Ibadan in 1958, Dinah was an assistant lecturer in Chemistry at the London school of Hygiene (1942 – 1944) and a Lecturer in Pharmacology at the University of Wales School of Medicine (1945 – 1958).

The commitment and the impact of Prof. Dinah James in the research and teaching of pharmacology to generations of students from all parts of the country could place her in the same league of *Pharmacology Greats* like: Oswald Schiedeberg (Germany), John Abel (USA), and Arthur Cushny (UK), at least, insofar as Nigeria is concerned! Indeed, the University of Ibadan benefited from great Pharmacologists like Bill Bowman, Eleanor Zaimis, Alan Cuthbert and Heinz Schild who, at the instance of Dinah James, were regularly visiting for purpose of research and training of both undergraduate and postgraduate students of the University.

Prof. Dinah James was appointed Associate Professor and Head of Pharmacology in 1962 and later Professor and Head of Department in 1964. While in Ibadan, Dinah had a number of visiting appointments in other continents of the world. She was visiting professor to the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology at the University of Rochester, New York (1971 – 1972). She was also a visiting research fellow to the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Cambridge in 1975 and 1976.

On Sunday, 09 February 2020, only weeks to her 101<sup>st</sup> birthday on the 25 March 2020, *Amazon*, Professor Dinah Mary James, OBE, took her last breath and finally slept for ever; *Iya Pharmacology*, good night!

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